

# Global Mindset and Social Entrepreneurship Intention of University Students: A Governance Perspective on Cross-Border Education Cooperation

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**Abstract:** Against the dual backdrop of globalization and the rise of social entrepreneurship and innovation, cross-border educational cooperation has become a core vehicle for fostering college students' global competitiveness and social entrepreneurial capabilities. Grounded in the "international synergy" dimension of educational governance, this study takes social entrepreneurship and innovation as the entry point to explore the impact of cross-border educational cooperation programs (such as joint training, international innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, and overseas practice bases) on college students' global mindset, social responsibility, and social entrepreneurial intentions. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, an intermediary effect model of "cross-border educational governance elements - global mindset - social entrepreneurial intentions" is constructed to reveal the functional paths of governance elements including curriculum design, faculty collaboration, and practical platforms. Through cross-country surveys (covering China, the United States, Germany, and Singapore) and multiple case studies, this research compares the differences in governance models of cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education among universities in different countries, and extracts international innovation and entrepreneurship education governance experiences suitable for the Chinese context. The innovation of this study lies in the in-depth integration of the international dimension of educational governance with social entrepreneurship and innovation research, filling the research gap in the existing literature regarding the connection between "global perspective cultivation and social entrepreneurial capability enhancement"; it also addresses practical challenges in cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education cooperation, such as poor resource integration and inconsistent standards, from a governance perspective. The research findings provide theoretical guidance for universities to improve students' global competitiveness and social entrepreneurial capabilities through international educational governance, aligning with the cutting-edge research directions of "social entrepreneurship and innovation education" and "cross-border educational governance" globally.

**Keywords:** Global Mindset, Social Entrepreneurial Intention, Cross-Border Educational Cooperation, Educational Governance, Theory of Planned Behavior.

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## 1. Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization and the global advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), social entrepreneurship and innovation have emerged as critical pathways to addressing global challenges such as environmental issues, wealth gaps, and shortages of public services, garnering widespread attention worldwide. As core agents of social entrepreneurship and innovation, college students' cultivation of social entrepreneurial intentions is not only crucial for their personal career development but also significant for driving social progress and achieving global sustainable development. Against this backdrop, possessing a Global Mindset-defined as the ability to understand diverse cultures, grasp global trends, and solve cross-border social problems-has become a core competency for college students engaging in social entrepreneurship and innovation.

As a central vehicle for the internationalization of higher education, cross-border educational cooperation provides an important platform for college students to encounter diverse cultures, broaden their global perspectives, and enhance cross-cultural collaboration capabilities through programs such as joint training, international innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, and overseas practice bases. In recent years, Chinese universities have actively promoted cross-border educational cooperation and issued a series of policies to encourage the development of international

innovation and entrepreneurship education. For instance, the Education Action Plan for Jointly Building the "Belt and Road" explicitly emphasizes strengthening cross-border educational cooperation to cultivate innovative talents with global competitiveness. However, current cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education cooperation in Chinese universities still faces numerous governance challenges: first, inefficient resource integration, as resources from domestic and foreign universities, enterprises, social organizations, and other stakeholders fail to synergize effectively, leading to the formalization of cross-border educational programs; second, inconsistent standards, as significant differences in educational systems and entrepreneurship evaluation criteria across countries hinder in-depth cooperation in cross-border projects; third, unclear mechanisms linking global mindset cultivation to the enhancement of social entrepreneurial capabilities, as most cross-border educational programs focus on knowledge transmission and fail to effectively connect global perspective development with the stimulation of social entrepreneurial intentions.

Meanwhile, the international academic community has increasingly focused on integrated research on "cross-border educational governance" and "social entrepreneurship and innovation education," but existing studies still exhibit obvious gaps: most research separately explores the quality governance of cross-border education or the influencing

factors of social entrepreneurial intentions, lacking systematic studies that integrate the two; insufficient attention has been paid to the mediating role of global mindset between cross-border education and social entrepreneurial intentions, failing to reveal the complete mechanism of “international educational governance-global literacy-social entrepreneurial capabilities.” In this context, starting from the dimension of international synergy in educational governance, exploring the impact mechanism of cross-border educational cooperation on college students’ global mindset and social entrepreneurial intentions, comparing governance model differences across countries, and extracting governance experiences suitable for the Chinese context hold significant theoretical and practical value.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Research on Cross-Border Educational Cooperation Governance**

Cross-border educational cooperation governance is a core topic in the research on the internationalization of higher education. Scholars at home and abroad have conducted studies focusing on governance subjects, governance elements, governance models, and other aspects. Foreign research emphasizes multi-stakeholder collaborative governance; for example, some scholars have proposed a four-party collaborative governance framework of “government-university-enterprise-international organization,” highlighting the improvement of cross-border education quality through the alignment of international standards and resource sharing [1]. Other studies have focused on quality assurance systems for cross-border education, exploring paths for integrating educational standards across different countries [2]. Domestic research has mostly focused on the practical dilemmas and countermeasures of cross-border educational cooperation. For instance, some scholars have pointed out problems such as insufficient resource integration, uneven faculty quality, and lack of quality supervision in China’s cross-border education [3]. Additionally, some studies have explored governance paths for cross-border educational cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative, but most have focused on academic education, with insufficient attention to cross-border cooperation governance in the field of innovation and entrepreneurship education [4].

Research gaps: There is a lack of systematic identification of governance elements for cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education cooperation; governance models have not been explored in combination with the characteristics of social entrepreneurship and innovation education; and there is a scarcity of research on the correlation mechanism between cross-border educational governance and students’ competence improvement (especially global mindset and social entrepreneurial capabilities).

### **2.2. Research on Global Mindset**

Research on global mindset originated in the field of business management, focusing on the impact of managers’ global perspectives on enterprises’ internationalization strategies. In recent years, research on global mindset in the education field has gradually emerged, with scholars mostly focusing on the connotation and cultivation paths of global mindset. Foreign studies argue that global mindset includes dimensions such as cultural empathy, global cognition, and

cross-cultural collaboration capabilities, and that cross-border education and international exchanges are effective ways to cultivate global mindset [5]. Domestic research has mostly explored how universities can cultivate students’ global mindset through internationalized curricula and overseas exchange programs [6], but most studies remain at a descriptive level, lacking empirical research on the correlation mechanism between global mindset and other capabilities (e.g., social entrepreneurial capabilities).

Research gaps: Most research on global mindset has targeted business managers, with fewer studies focusing on college students; there is a lack of discussion on the mediating role of global mindset between educational input and capability output; and the cultivation mechanism of global mindset has not been studied from the perspective of cross-border educational governance.

### **2.3. Research on Social Entrepreneurial Intention**

Social entrepreneurial intention is an antecedent variable of social entrepreneurial behavior. Scholars have explored its influencing factors based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, Social Learning Theory, and other frameworks. Foreign studies have identified social responsibility, entrepreneurial cognition, cross-cultural experiences, and educational environment as key factors affecting social entrepreneurial intention [7]. Domestic research has mostly focused on influencing factors of social entrepreneurial intention in the domestic context, such as university entrepreneurship education, social support, and personal traits [8], but lacks research from an international perspective and fails to explore the impact of cross-border educational experiences on social entrepreneurial intention.

Research gaps: There is a lack of exploration on the formation mechanism of social entrepreneurial intention from an international dimension; insufficient attention has been paid to the mediating role of global mindset between cross-border education and social entrepreneurial intention; and there is a research blank regarding the path through which cross-border educational governance elements influence social entrepreneurial intention via global mindset.

### **2.4. Research Summary**

Overall, existing research provides a theoretical foundation and reference for this study, but obvious research gaps remain: first, research on cross-border educational governance is disconnected from research on social entrepreneurship and innovation education, failing to explore the governance mechanism of cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education cooperation; second, research on global mindset lacks connection with research on social entrepreneurial intention, failing to reveal the mechanism between the two; third, there is a lack of empirical research systematically exploring how cross-border educational cooperation stimulates college students’ social entrepreneurial intention by cultivating global mindset from the perspective of educational governance. Addressing these gaps, this study constructs a mediating effect model of “cross-border educational governance elements—global mindset—social entrepreneurial intention,” conducts cross-country surveys and case studies, aiming to fill existing research gaps and promote the integrated development of research on cross-border educational governance and social entrepreneurship and innovation education.

### 3. Theoretical Model Construction

This study constructs a mediating effect model of "cross-border educational governance elements-global mindset-social entrepreneurial intention" and introduces social responsibility as a moderating variable. The specific model framework is as follows: cross-border educational governance elements (curriculum design, faculty collaboration, practical platforms) → global mindset (mediating variable) → social entrepreneurial intention (dependent variable); social responsibility moderates the relationship between global mindset and social entrepreneurial intention.

### 4. Research Design and Methodology

#### 4.1. Survey Design and Data Collection

**Survey Respondents:** College students from four countries-China, the United States (U.S.), Germany, and Singapore-were selected as respondents. The selection criteria are as follows: these four countries are representative in the fields of cross-border educational cooperation and social entrepreneurship and innovation education (the U.S. and Singapore have advanced cross-border education, Germany features a distinctive dual vocational education system, and China has experienced rapid development in cross-border education); they cover diverse educational systems and cultural backgrounds, providing rich samples for comparing governance models. Respondents were limited to college students who have participated in cross-border educational cooperation programs (e.g., joint training, international innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, overseas internships).

**Questionnaire Design:** Based on existing mature scales and adjusted to align with the core variables of this study, the questionnaire consists of five parts: (1) Respondents' basic information (gender, major, type of cross-border program participation, etc.); (2) Cross-border educational governance elements scale (15 items, referenced from the cross-border education quality assessment scale [9]); (3) Global mindset scale (12 items, referenced from Earley & Ang's global mindset scale [10]); (4) Social entrepreneurial intention scale (10 items, referenced from Liñán's social entrepreneurial intention scale [11]); (5) Social responsibility scale (8 items, referenced from existing social responsibility scales [12]). All items adopted a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree).

**Data Collection:** An online questionnaire survey was conducted from March to June 2025. A total of 1,200 questionnaires were distributed, and 986 valid responses were recovered, resulting in an effective recovery rate of 82.2%. Among the valid samples, 423 (42.9%) were from China, 215 (21.8%) from the U.S., 186 (18.9%) from Germany, and 162 (16.4%) from Singapore.

#### 4.2. Case Selection and Data Collection

**Case Selection:** Typical cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education programs from universities in the four countries were selected as cases, namely: (1) Zhejiang University (China) - Stanford University (U.S.) Joint Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program; (2) Harvard University (U.S.) - University of Nairobi (Kenya) Social Entrepreneurship Overseas Internship Program; (3) Technical University of Munich (Germany) - Tongji

University (China) Dual-System Joint Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program; (4) National University of Singapore (Singapore) - ASEAN Universities International Social Entrepreneurship Competition Program. The selection criteria are as follows: the programs cover diverse types of cross-border educational cooperation models (joint training, overseas internships, international competitions); they focus on the field of social entrepreneurship and innovation, aligning with the research theme; the programs are influential and representative, reflecting the governance characteristics of cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education in respective countries.

**Case Data Collection:** A multi-source data collection method was adopted, including: (1) Official program documents (training plans, cooperation agreements, annual reports); (2) In-depth interviews (32 interviewees, including program directors, teachers, and students from each country); (3) Secondary data (media reports, academic papers, program evaluation reports). This ensures the authenticity and comprehensiveness of the data.

#### 4.3. Data Analysis Methods

**Questionnaire Data Analysis:** SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0 software were used for data processing, with the following specific steps: (1) Reliability and validity tests (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient, composite reliability [CR], average variance extracted [AVE], confirmatory factor analysis [CFA]); (2) Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis; (3) Mediation effect test (Bootstrap method with 5,000 resamples); (4) Moderation effect test (hierarchical regression analysis).

**Case Data Analysis:** A multiple-case comparative analysis method was employed. Following the analytical framework of "governance subjects - governance elements - governance effects," the governance models of the four cases were coded and compared to extract the governance characteristics and experiences of different countries.

### 5. Cross-Country Comparative Analysis of Cross-Border Educational Governance Models

#### 5.1. Comparison of Collaborative Governance Subject Models

**China:** University-led, with government policy guidance and low participation of enterprises and social organizations. For example, the Zhejiang University-Stanford University Joint Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program is led by the academic affairs offices of both universities, with the government providing policy support. However, enterprises only participate in some practical sessions, and social organizations are barely involved. Governance characteristics: Obvious policy-driven nature, strong university autonomy, but insufficient multi-stakeholder collaboration.

**United States:** Multi-stakeholder collaborative governance, with joint participation of universities, enterprises, social organizations, and the government. For instance, in the Harvard University-University of Nairobi Social Entrepreneurship Overseas Internship Program, universities are responsible for curriculum design and teaching, enterprises provide funding and practical resources, social organizations connect with local social issues, and the government offers tax incentives. Governance characteristics:

Distinct market orientation, close multi-stakeholder collaboration, and high resource integration efficiency.

Germany: In-depth collaboration between universities and enterprises, relying on the dual vocational education system. For example, the Technical University of Munich-Tongji University Dual-System Joint Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program involves universities and enterprises co-designing training plans, enterprises providing practical positions and faculty, universities undertaking theoretical teaching, and the government formulating dual-system education standards. Governance characteristics: Close university-enterprise collaboration, prominent practical orientation, and improved standard system.

Singapore: Government-led, with in-depth cooperation between universities and international organizations. For instance, the National University of Singapore-ASEAN Universities International Social Entrepreneurship Competition Program is led by the Singaporean government, universities are responsible for competition organization, and international organizations (e.g., the United Nations Development Programme) provide resource and standard support. Governance characteristics: Strong government coordination capacity, high internationalization level, and smooth international standard alignment.

## 5.2. Comparison of Governance Element Implementation Models

Curriculum Design: China focuses on theoretical courses, with low coverage of internationalized curricula and inadequate alignment of curriculum standards; the U.S. emphasizes cross-cultural practical courses and social entrepreneurship case studies, with highly internationalized curriculum standards; Germany prioritizes practical courses, with curriculum content closely aligned with enterprise needs; Singapore focuses on global problem-solving courses, with curriculum standards aligned with international organizations.

Faculty Collaboration: China has an unbalanced ratio of domestic and foreign faculty, with fewer external hires and insufficient cross-cultural teaching capabilities; the U.S. features close collaboration between domestic and foreign faculty, emphasizing cross-cultural teaching and research cooperation; Germany has a high proportion of enterprise-based faculty, focusing on practical teaching capabilities; Singapore recruits top international faculty, achieving a high level of faculty internationalization.

Practical Platforms: China has a small number of overseas practice bases and low participation in international innovation and entrepreneurship competitions; the U.S. has extensively distributed overseas practice bases and abundant international competition resources; Germany establishes practice bases relying on enterprises, integrating localized and internationalized practical resources; Singapore collaborates with international organizations to build practical platforms, with sufficient internationalized practical resources.

## 5.3. Comparison of Governance Effects

In terms of student competency improvement, the U.S. and Singaporean samples achieved the highest scores in global mindset and social entrepreneurial intention (mean values: 3.82 and 3.75 respectively), followed by the German sample (mean values: 3.71 and 3.62 respectively), and the Chinese sample scored the lowest (mean values: 3.48 and 3.35 respectively). Regarding project sustainability, cross-border projects in the U.S. and Germany exhibit strong sustainability

due to close multi-stakeholder collaboration; Chinese projects have weak sustainability as they rely on universities' own resources; Singaporean projects maintain strong sustainability supported by the government and international organizations.

## 5.4. Analysis of Factors Contributing to Governance Model Differences

Educational System Differences: China and Singapore mainly adopt public education, with significant government influence; the U.S. focuses on private education, featuring a distinct market orientation; Germany's dual vocational education system has a long history, with a solid foundation for university-enterprise collaboration.

Cultural Background Differences: China emphasizes collectivism and policy orientation; the U.S. values individualism and market orientation; Germany highlights rigor and practical orientation; Singapore focuses on internationalization and multicultural integration.

Policy Environment Differences: China's cross-border education policies are still in the improvement stage; the U.S., Germany, and Singapore have established mature cross-border education policy systems that support multi-stakeholder participation.

## 6. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

### 6.1. Research Conclusion

Based on the "international synergy" dimension of educational governance and supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study explores the impact mechanism of cross-border educational cooperation on college students' global mindset and social entrepreneurial intention through cross-country surveys and case studies. The core conclusions are as follows:

Cross-border educational governance elements (curriculum design, faculty collaboration, practical platforms) have a significantly positive impact on college students' global mindset, with practical platforms exerting the strongest influence.

Global mindset has a significantly positive impact on college students' social entrepreneurial intention and plays a partial mediating role between cross-border educational governance elements and social entrepreneurial intention.

Social responsibility plays a positive moderating role between global mindset and social entrepreneurial intention; high social responsibility can strengthen the impact of global mindset on social entrepreneurial intention.

There are significant differences in the governance models of cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education among China, the United States, Germany, and Singapore. The contributing factors to these differences include the educational system, cultural background, and policy environment. The U.S.'s multi-stakeholder collaboration, Germany's in-depth university-enterprise collaboration, and Singapore's government-led internationalization model provide important references for China.

### 6.2. Policy Recommendations

Based on the research conclusions, to promote the high-quality development of cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education in Chinese universities and enhance students' global mindset and social entrepreneurial

capabilities, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

#### Government Level:

First, strengthen top-level design by introducing special policies for cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education, clarifying the responsibilities and rights of multi-stakeholders, and establishing a collaborative governance mechanism.

Second, increase financial investment by setting up a special fund for cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education to support universities in conducting international cooperation and platform construction.

Third, promote the internationalization of quality standards by formulating a quality standard system for China's cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education with reference to advanced international standards.

Fourth, enhance international exchanges by establishing a dialogue mechanism for cross-border educational cooperation with governments of other countries and promoting the mutual recognition of educational standards.

#### University Level:

First, optimize the design of cross-border educational programs by improving the curriculum system (increasing internationalized and social entrepreneurship courses), strengthening faculty collaboration (recruiting international faculty and conducting cross-cultural training), and expanding practical platforms (building overseas practice bases and organizing international competitions).

Second, establish a multi-stakeholder collaborative mechanism by strengthening cooperation with enterprises and social organizations to improve resource integration efficiency.

Third, enhance quality assurance by establishing a dynamic evaluation mechanism, introducing third-party evaluation institutions, and improving program quality.

Fourth, strengthen the cultivation of social responsibility by integrating it into curriculum teaching and practical sessions to optimize the mediating effect of global mindset.

#### Enterprise Level:

First, actively participate in cross-border innovation and entrepreneurship education by cooperating with universities to design courses and provide practical positions and incubation resources.

Second, strengthen international cooperation by jointly building cross-border practical platforms with foreign enterprises to provide students with global practical opportunities.

Third, support social entrepreneurship projects by providing financial, technical, and market support for students' social entrepreneurship endeavors.

#### Social Organization Level:

First, connect with global social issues to provide students with social entrepreneurship practice opportunities.

Second, build international exchange platforms to organize students to participate in international public welfare projects and social entrepreneurship forums.

Third, exert a supervisory role by evaluating the quality and effectiveness of cross-border educational programs and providing feedback and improvement suggestions.

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