

Factors Influencing Chinese Consumers' Continuous Use Intention for Cross-Border E-Commerce

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Abstract

This study investigated the factors influencing the continuous use intention of mobile terminal buyers to use cross-border e-commerce platforms for purchases. This research used a quantitative design by developing online questionnaires to collect data during December 2020 to January 2021 through the convenience sampling approach from 559 Chinese consumers who had experience in cross-border online shopping in past 6 month from cross-border mobile e-commerce platforms such as AliExpress, Amazon, eBay, Wish etc. in Yunnan province. Based on the theory of Psychological Distance Theory and Commitment Trust Theory, this study proposed a theoretical model of the influencing factors of user's continuous use intention, and through Structural Equation Model (SEM) analysis, the result showed that psychological distance (spatial distance, temporal distance and social distance), communication quality and customer satisfaction have a significantly positive impact on consumers' trust towards cross-border e-commerce platform. Meanwhile, opportunistic behavior was negatively related to consumers' trust. In addition, customer satisfaction, inputs cost and relationship benefits had a positive impact on relationship commitment. Furthermore, both trust and relationship commitment are proved to have a significant effect on continuous use intention. The findings of this research could provide cross-border e-commerce platforms marketers and merchants valuable insights for developing effective marketing strategies and establishing effective trust mechanism between users and platform to improve their platform service and enhance user stickiness.

Keywords: Commitment Trust Theory, Continuous Use Intention, Cross-Border E-Commerce, Psychological Distance Theory, Yunnan

1. Introduction

The consumer online shopping from merchants located in different areas or countries, the transaction through internet, and deliver/receive the goods via cross-border logistics, is the common definition of cross-border e-commerce (Accenture, 2012). In addition, the cross-border e-commerce defined by Wang (2014, P.141) is an international e-commerce that international business transacting among different countries, making deals and transactions through an e-commerce platform, and delivering goods through cross-border planning and management agreements. Alibaba Group launched the Singles' Day Shopping Carnival for the first time on November 11, 2014, focusing on cross-border e-commerce, covering 217 countries and regions, generating 278 million logistics orders throughout the day and achieving a total turnover of 57.1 billion yuan, of which the mobile phone accounted for 42.6% (Jing & Liang, 2011).

For small and medium-sized foreign trade enterprises, cross-border e-commerce could help them expand overseas distribution channels, enhance the international brand awareness, increase the transaction volume of goods, achieve sales growth, and promote China's import and export trade. In recent years, cross-border e-commerce has gradually become an important part of China's foreign trade. With the popularization of mobile phone terminals and the maturity of mobile communication technology, mobile commerce has become the need of People's Daily life, such as mobile banking, mobile payment, mobile shopping and a series of mobile commerce. However, research on mobile commerce combined with cross-border e-commerce, i.e., cross-border mobile e-commerce, is still in its infancy, and there is little research on cross-border mobile e-commerce in China. Most of the existing researches on domestic local e-commerce buyers take PC-end e-commerce as the research perspective which leads to the mismatch between supply and demand from the research perspective, that is, in reality, more mobile-end e-commerce results are needed, while in practice, research results of PC-end e-commerce are provided. Compared with PC-end e-commerce, mobile e-commerce has the characteristics of portability, mobility, immediacy, identity identification, etc. (Zhang & Liu, 2011).

Hence, the author will adopt the perspective of mobile terminal, which is currently widely popular and will become the development trend of e-commerce in the future, to study the influencing factors of individual buyers' willingness to continue using cross-border e-commerce platform. In addition, almost all existing about the document of mobile e-commerce is aimed at a local mobile e-commerce research, there are very few for cross-border mobile e-commerce, global trade or related research of mobile cross-border e-commerce business, and for many companies, cross-border mobile e-commerce business is the development trend of the future, is also one of the essential development strategy of multinational business operation. Therefore, it is of great significance to study the continuing willingness of cross-border mobile e-commerce buyers for both e-commerce platforms and businesses.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

-Psychological Distance Theory

In general, the individual could perceive the psychological distance through his direct experience (Liberman & Trope, 2008). According to Trope et al. (2007), psychological distance has four dimensions, including temporal distance, spatial distance, social distance and

hypothetical distance. We believe that temporal distance means early or late to the present, spatial distance means far or near here, social distance means familiar or unfamiliar to oneself, and hypothetical distance means certainty and ambiguity to things (Huang., et al.,2016). A number of studies on psychological distance have confirmed its influence on consumer behavior. For example, a study on temporal distance shows that comments from lately purchased goods will more strongly influence other consumers' short-term purchase decisions (Jin, Hu & He, 2014). Studies on spatial distance indicate that geographical distance will affect consumers' judgment and final decision on goods (Fujita, et al., 2006). In addition, for e-commerce companies, only photos showing physical stores will also reduce the psychological distance of consumers (Darke., et al. ,2016). Research on social distance have shown that when two individuals are dissimilar, their psychological distance will increase (Mussweiler, Riiter, & Epstude, 2004) Therefore, when a consumer makes a comment or recommendation, consumers with similar habits are more likely to be influenced than consumers without similar habits (Duhan, et al., 1997). In general, psychological distance plays a quite crucial role in influencing consumer behavior. In other words, the increase of psychological distance will challenge trust and sustained relationship, while the decrease of psychological distance will increase trust and promote the establishment of relationship (Harwood & Lin, 2010).

Cross-border e-commerce is more geographically distant than local e-commerce, so we believe that psychological distance is more important for building the most essential factor in e-commerce, "trust" and the relationship between consumers and merchants. Reducing psychological distance has become the key to the success of cross-border e-commerce, which is also one of the unknown fields that this paper tries to explore. From the perspective of cross-border e-commerce buyers on mobile terminals, three dimensions of psychological distance will be selected in this study, including temporal distance, spatial distance and social distance. This study refines the three dimensions of psychological distance to three attributes applicable to mobile e-commerce (m-commerce), which are used to form three factors affecting m-commerce trust. Temporal distance originally refers to the time when something happens, now or in the future. When we make a purchase decision, it is possible that we are in circumstances that do not allow us to make a purchase, such as we are not at the computer, or the Internet is not connected, so we may postpone the decision to the near future. However, m-commerce overcomes the temporal distance. Thus, this study defines the temporal distance in the context of m-commerce as that mobile phone users could conduct transactions more conveniently at any time through mobile terminals, which reduces the temporal distance (Clarke,2011).

Therefore, this study uses immediacy to measure temporal distance. Spatial distance originally refers to the geographical distance far or near, similarly, in the mobile business situation, we may be due to the constraints of fixed network and equipment could not be online buying and selling, and mobile commerce can overcome this to reduce the space distance, so in this study spatial distance is defined as mobility, which means that the mobile end client could be in any place for transactions. (Schierz, Schilke, & Wirtz, 2010). Social distance originally refers to the perception of familiarity and strangeness. As is known to all, people are willing to trust the people around them, such as relatives, friends and colleagues, but remain suspicious of strangers. The language and behavior of these people who are relatively important to us will deeply influence our own language and behavior, which is also called social influence (Venkatesh, et al., 2003). In the context of mobile e-commerce, we will also be affected by the

people around us. For example, relatives or friends are shopping with mobile phones, or if I cannot shop with mobile phones, my friends will think I am outdated. Therefore, this paper will use social influence to measure social distance.

-The Commitment-Trust Theory (CTT)

The Commitment-Trust Theory (CTT) was first proposed by Morgan and Hunt in 1994 to describe a long-term business partnership (Li, Browne & Wetherbe, 2006). In addition to trust, CTT believes that only when trust and commitment exist at the same time can individuals and organizations become more efficient and productive, so as to shorten relationships and improve performance (Mukhejee & Nath, 2007). In general, CTT is used to explore the reasons for the success and failure of strategic alliances, and it is also a factor influencing the willingness to use relationships in building and maintaining relationships (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). Morgan and Hunt (1994) built the Key Mediating Variable model (KMV) of relationship marketing to show the basic factors and behaviors that affect trust and commitment (as shown in Figure 1). The five antecedent variables of commitment and trust include relationship termination costs, relationship benefits, shared values, communication, and opportunistic behavior. Relationship termination costs are all the costs of switching from one relationship to another due to the lack of a reliable alternative and a range of losses resulting from the termination of the relationship.

Relationship benefits refer to the additional value that both parties derive from a business relationship. Shared values means that online distributors and consumers share the same values to enhance the relationship. Communication refers to the timely exchange of information between two parties in a relationship through formal or informal means. Opportunistic behavior refers to the act of cheating or violating the common interest to damage the relationship due to self-interest. In long-term relationships, of the individuals have a sense of commitment will feel dependent on their partners, willing to go to establish a long-term relationship for mutual benefit, of the individuals have a sense of trust to this long-term relationship, willing to believe that a partner and make a decision and take action accordingly, thereby reducing the perception of uncertainty and increase the risk to bear ability (Mayer, et al, 1995). Hence, both commitment and trust become factors in building and maintaining strong relationships. Researchers in the field of information systems apply CTT to the study of online consumer behavior. Wang et al. (2016) combined the information system success model with CTT to study the consumer stickiness of group buying websites from the dual perspectives of technology and relationship. They found that satisfaction, relationship commitment and trust were the main components of stickiness.

Mukherjee and Nastin (2007) studied on the digital business environment and revealed that in addition to the five antecedent variables mentioned in CTT, privacy and security issues also affect consumer behaviors, such as word of mouth, purchase intention and sticking-relationship. Li et al. (2006) applied CTT to the study of B2C trading companies, and their results showed that investment scale and satisfaction also positively affected commitment relationship and trust. Based on the universality of CTT in the Internet business environment, this study applies the model to cross-border mobile e-commerce. Mobile e-commerce is more convenient and faster than traditional e-commerce (Ko, Eun, & Lee, 2009). E-commerce enterprises should not only focus on convincing consumers, but also realize the significance of belonging.

Therefore, this paper uses CTT to better understand how successful cross-border mobile e-commerce is in terms of commitment relationship.

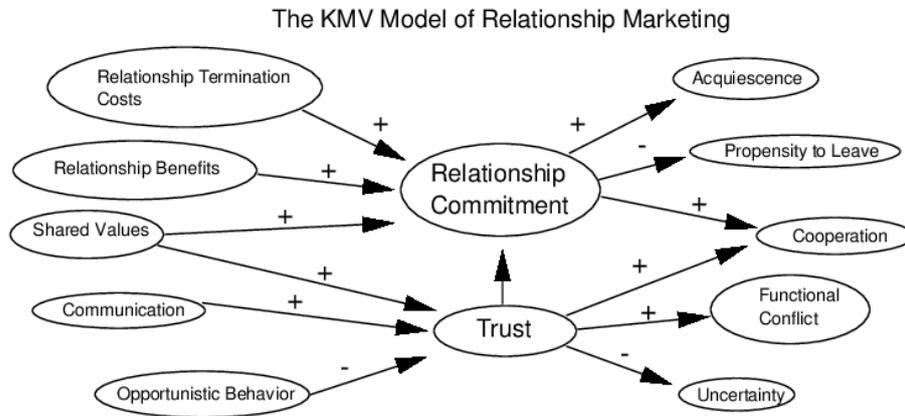


Figure 1: The KMV Model of Relationship Marketing.

Source: Morgan and Hurt (1994)

-Relationship between Psychological Distance and Trust

Psychological distance includes spatial distance, temporal distance and social distance. In mobile e-commerce, we describe spatial distance as the connectivity of mobile e-commerce anywhere, that is to say, it can be used conveniently almost anywhere, and it is not bound by the location of people. Meanwhile, Morgan and Hurt (1994) mentioned that regular communication enhances long-term relationships. Whether it is between people, or between people and things, maintaining communication and connection could narrow the distance between each other. However, nowadays, due to the development of network and mobile communication and the global integration of economy, cross-border online shopping has become more convenient. Using mobile phones to do cross-border shopping makes people more truly feel the need of products, even if they are far away, they could also be close at hand. Therefore, we believe that reducing the sense of spatial distance can significantly increase people's trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.

In mobile commerce, we describe temporal distance as the instantaneous connectivity of mobile e-commerce, that is, whenever people would like to go shopping online, they could do cross-border e-commerce shopping through mobile phone. As one of the unique properties of mobile e-commerce, transient connectivity is considered to be one of the reasons why mobile e-commerce exceeds traditional e-commerce (Lee & Park, 2006). As a non-economic benefit, instantaneous connectivity help reduce time costs and provide convenience, both related to its perceived value (Kim, Chan & Gupta, 2007). Mobile phone users access the Internet service anytime and anywhere, and through the Internet this effective channel, mobile phone users could communicate with retailers more quickly. Moorman et al. (1993) and Morgan and Hunt (1994) found timely communication fosters trust. Besides, the faster the communication through the system, the greater the perception of interactivity. Thus, we assert that the reduction of temporal distance would significantly increase people's trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce. Social distance in mobile commerce is explained more as a social influence or subjective norm. It is defined as an individual's perception of what important people around

him think he should or should not do (Venkatesh, et al., 2003). For example, a person was inclined to go to store shopping, and his friends and relatives all thought it is very convenient to use e-commerce online shopping, which is the habit of people who are in the modern age. Meanwhile, his friends also think that it is quite outdated without online shopping. Hence, under these multiple effects, this person will have a strong tendency of online shopping, and the influence factors of these tendencies is social impact. In studies on mobile commerce, social influence has also been proved to affect users' acceptance level (Chong & Chan, 2013), perceived usefulness and intention behavior (Kalinic & Marinkovic, 2016). In real life, when users are recommended by their colleagues, family, and friends, they perceive that m-commerce is useful to them. From a psychological point of view, information from people close to them or who are important to them is more trustworthy and more influential. This is because the people who share the information with them are likely to be similar to themselves in one respect, in other words, they are socially close, and therefore they may share some preferences (Hernandez-Ortega, 2017).

From the above description, in general, psychological distance is one of the main factors affecting trust, and psychological distance are divided into spatial distance, temporal distance, and social distance. We could map these three distances into cross-border mobile e-commerce, and the uniqueness of these three distances could be matched with the uniqueness of mobile commerce. Therefore, based on the above analysis, we propose the following hypotheses:

- H₁.** The reduction of perceived spatial distance of mobile e-commerce positively affects users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.
- H₂.** The narrowing of perceived temporal distance of mobile e-commerce positively affects users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.
- H₃.** The reduction of perceived social distance of mobile e-commerce positively affects users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Communication is defined as sharing timely and meaningful information in a formal or informal manner (Anderson & Narus, 1990). Communication Quality is crucial to the development of trust, as well as to better convey information (McAllister & Daniel, 1995). In daily life, communication is everywhere, among friends, relatives, colleagues, and strangers, people not only use communication as the main way of information exchange, but also through communication deepen the understanding of each other, increase the feelings between each other, to cultivate mutual trust. For mobile e-commerce, communication is more important, and compared with traditional e-commerce, communication in mobile commerce has convenient conditions that could be carried out anytime and anywhere. Li et al. (2006) pointed out that communication quality is an essential component of trust in the e-commerce field. It is easy to imagine that if we desire to buy goods through e-commerce or mobile e-commerce, both the uncertainty of goods and the precautionary psychology of merchants will reduce our trust in this platform, thus reducing our purchase intention. Therefore, the communication between the customer service staffs of the platform and the buyers, as well as the communication between the merchants and the buyers, has played a pivotal role. Through the platform's services and merchants' detailed explanation, customers' perception of costs can be reduced, their perception of benefits will be increased, and customers may have more "adventurous spirit" in purchasing behavior (Li et al., 2006). In mobile e-commerce, buyers could ask questions to platforms and merchants anytime and anywhere.

Due to the time difference between buyers and sellers in cross-border e-commerce, the immediacy of communication becomes more vital. With mobile e-commerce, buyers do not have to wait until they get home to log on to the website and then ask a merchant, and merchants do not have to wait until they went to the office to answer questions (Kim, et al, 2007). Through timely and effective communication, trust between buyers and sellers would be established more quickly (Wang, 2014). In this study, communication quality refers to whether the mobile commerce application could remind customers of its new functions, provide customers timely information, and also provide customers with activity opportunities, and consider the suggestions and advice of customers to carry out marketing. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4. Communication quality positively influence users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Opportunistic behavior, defined as deliberate violation of rules or deliberate distortion of information by both parties to an agreement, will be extremely damaging to trust (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995). Any unanticipated tampering of information and failure to perform obligations that should be performed are considered opportunistic (John, 1984) For e-commerce, the honesty of merchants is closely related to the probability of opportunistic behavior, which is also a prerequisite for consumer trust (Lee & Turban, 2001). For cross-border e-commerce, opportunistic is crucial for both buyers and sellers (Guo, et al., 2017). Relative to mobile e-commerce, both domestic and cross-border, opportunistic behavior is the same. Although opportunistic behaviors often occur in the e-commerce due to information asymmetry and lack of experience, more and more platforms and merchants begin to pay attention to the monitoring and elimination of opportunistic behaviors. This is because the consequences of speculation are so serious that, even if only once, the platform will lose its trust with the consumers, the merchants will hurt the consumers, and even the brands and related brands and stores will be affected. In this study, opportunistic behavior refers to whether the mobile commerce platform slightly changes the fact, whether it promises to do something but does not actually do it, whether it provides consumers with the support they are supposed to provide, and whether there is no formal or informal agreement for the benefit of the platform. Therefore, this study puts forward the following hypotheses:

H5. Opportunistic behavior negatively affects users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Shared values are defined as people's shared beliefs about behaviors, ideas, goals, and norms, and the cognitive patterns of these perceptions. Simply, it is the belief that certain actions, ideas, goals, or norms are important, correct, and appropriate (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In the e-commerce market, whether merchants have high standards of ethics is particularly important for online transactions and the establishment of trust (Mukhejee & Nath, 2007). In the previous hypothesis, we mentioned that opportunistic behavior has a great negative impact on the integrity of online shopping, where high standards and professional ethics are the opposite of opportunistic behavior. It can be seen from this that when merchants strictly enforce their own moral standards, they not only reduce speculative behaviors, but also increase customers' trust in merchants. Different from merchants with low moral quality, merchants with high moral standards will greatly reduce opportunistic behaviors (Cho & Lee, 2017).

In addition, existing studies on online retail have shown that the relationship between shared values, trust, and relationship commitment is positive (Mukhejee & Nath, 2007). But in this study, we do not use shared values as a variable in the research model, because this variable is exactly opposite to opportunistic behavior in meaning. In order to avoid the linear relationship between the two variables, we choose satisfaction to replace the variable of shared values. First of all, satisfaction represents a part of shared values, because as long as consumers and businesses share the same values, consumers will tend to be satisfied with those businesses that share the same values. Secondly, there is no direct connection between satisfaction and opportunistic behavior. Perhaps the final result of opportunistic behavior will reduce satisfaction. However, as a comprehensive evaluation, satisfaction has more influencing factors than opportunistic behavior. Thirdly, satisfaction is often used as a major variable to study in the field of e-commerce, and its influence on other variables is also significant. So, in our study, we replace the shared values variable with satisfaction. Moreover, empirical studies show that satisfaction has a positive impact on relationship commitment (Rusbult, 1983). In the study of mobile commerce, satisfaction is also one of the main factors that form trust (Lin. et al., 2014). In this research, satisfaction mainly refers to the comprehensive satisfaction with the platform, the pleasure of the platform experience, and the estimation of the platform's ability to meet one's own needs. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₆. Customer Satisfaction positively influence users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce.

H₇. Customer Satisfaction positively influence users' relationship commitment to cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Relationship termination costs are defined as all anticipated losses arising from the termination of the relationship, including lack of potential partners, termination costs, and switching costs (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In enterprise cooperation, relationship termination may happen at any time, and the long-term and stable common development of more enterprises comes from mutual trust and mutual relationship commitment. Then, in the e-commerce industry, there are relationship termination costs as well. In e-commerce, the relationship termination cost between consumers and the e-commerce platform or the seller's store is mostly related to consumers' input in the platform and the store. These inputs include both time and economic inputs, which are known as consumer input costs (Li, et al, 2006). These input costs are ubiquitous for both local and cross-border e-commerce companies. However, the authors believe that input costs are more influential in the relationship commitment of users in the context of cross-border e-commerce, because cross-border e-commerce is not yet as prevalent or pervasive as local e-commerce, and there is less selectivity than local e-commerce. So, once the buying and selling relationship is established, and once the input costs are incurred, it is very difficult to change platforms or merchants. In this study, relationship termination cost mainly refers to the time users spend on mobile e-commerce websites, the weight of mobile e-commerce in consumers' lives, the perceived cost of learning to use mobile e-commerce, and the comparison with the usage of similar platforms. From the consumer's point of view, it is easier to understand the substitution of input costs for relationship termination costs. Therefore, we assume:

H₈. Input cost positively influence users' relationship commitment to cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Relationship benefits refer to the customer value that partners give to each other in the process of cooperation, which comes from the connection and sense of belonging between them. This value is reflected in the personalization of service and the reward of loyalty (Mukheqee & Nath, 2007). For example, if a website presents consumers with more personalized information or more information that they are interested in, then consumers will perceive it as a relationship benefit. Consumers also benefit from sites that offer special promotions or offers tailored to their individual needs. Over time, consumers will subconsciously form a sense of belonging to the site, also known as relationship commitment. In this study, the relationship would be reflected in whether the merchant will give some special discounts and rebates to common customers, whether the cross-border mobile e-commerce platform will provide users with the information they need, whether the merchant will pay attention to users' complaints, and whether the advertisements and preferential activities provided by cross-border mobile e-commerce platform are based on personal preferences. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₉. Relationship benefits positively influence users' relationship commitment to cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Trust is crucial to the establishment and maintenance of relationships between partners, and the existence of trust greatly reduce perceived uncertainty (Mayer. et al, 1995). The more trust there is, the more interdependent the cooperation will be, the more satisfied they will be with each other, and the more adventurous they will be. Relationship commitment is another major factor in promoting win-win cooperation, which can give both parties a sense of belonging (Moorman, Zaltman & Deshpande, 1992) In a long-term cooperative relationship, distrust or suspicion reduces the commitment to each other, as well as the mutual dependence and sense of belonging, whereas trust increases these commitments and belongingness (Mukheqee & Nath, 2007). Additionally, trust and relationship commitment play complementary roles in maintaining the stable development of cooperative relationships and future cooperation (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Some studies have shown that trust and relationship commitment are positively correlated in investment model and commitment trust theory (Mukheqee & Nath, 2007; Wieselquist, et al., 1999).

For e-commerce, trust and relationship commitment have also been proved to significantly influence intentional behaviors, such as good word-of-mouth, purchase intention, and continued use intention, etc. (Li, et al, 2006; Mukheqee & Nath, 2007). It is not difficult to imagine that if a consumer is accustomed to buying a certain product from a certain merchant, then the consumer will become dependent on that merchant. This kind of dependence comes from the trust generated by the daily transaction behavior, and also comes from the consumer's sense of belonging to the business. He will feel that if he wants to buy this item, he does not need any reason or doubt to find a long-term cooperative merchant to make the purchase, because he trusts this merchant and he belongs to this merchant. This phenomenon is also applicable to mobile e-commerce, and a few studies on consumer behavior of mobile e-commerce also show that trust is an important prerequisite factor affecting consumers' purchase intention (Wang, Shen & Sun, 2013). In this study, trust for cross-border mobile e-commerce refers to users' comprehensive evaluation of the most commonly used cross-border mobile e-commerce applications, such as whether they can be trusted, whether they can meet consumers' needs as promised by merchants, and whether consumers' interests are put in the first place.

Relationship commitment mainly refers to, whether the user hope the cross-border mobile e-commerce application to continue developing, the user is worth paying a lot of effort to maintain relations with the cross-border mobile e-commerce application, whether users will feel regret when the cross-border mobile e-commerce application disappeared, and whether user have a sense of belonging towards cross-border mobile e-commerce platforms. Continued use intention refers to whether the user will use the cross-border mobile e-commerce application in the near future, whether the user believes that they are becoming more and more interested in the cross-border mobile e-commerce application, and whether the user will recommend others such as their friends, relatives to use the cross-border mobile e-commerce application. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁₀. Users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce positively influences users' relationship commitment to cross-border mobile e-commerce.

H₁₁. Users' trust in cross-border mobile e-commerce positively influences their continuous use intention.

H₁₂. Users' relationship commitment to cross-border mobile e-commerce positively influences their continuous use intention.

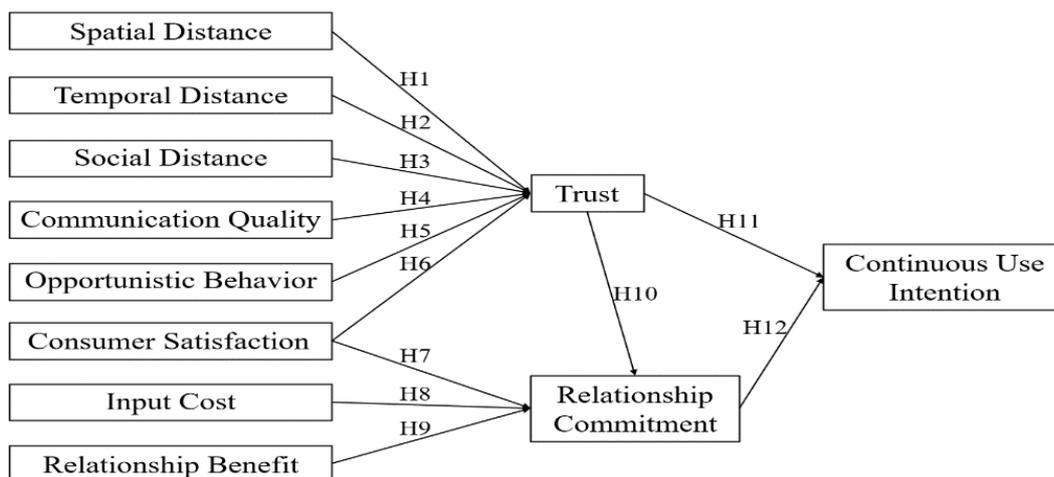


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

3. Research Methodology

-Sampling and Data Collection

The population of this study comprised of Chinese consumers who have experience in cross-border online shopping in past 6 month from cross-border mobile e-commerce platforms such as AliExpress, Amazon, eBay, Wish etc. in Yunnan province. A questionnaire survey is the main research method used in this study. The self-administered structured questionnaire was distributed by online electronic questionnaire with convenience sampling approach to collect data during December, 2020 to January, 2021. The sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula at a confidence level and error term of 95% and 5%, respectively (Cochran, 1977). The sample size was 385 after calculating. A total of 760 questionnaires were received. After eliminating some responses due to insincerity or incompleteness through data filtering, a sample of 559 usable responses was ultimately employed in our analysis.

-Measurement Development

The questionnaire is divided into 2 sections: The first section of the questionnaire is demographic information which includes such questions as: gender, age, education, occupation etc. The second section contained 44 items aimed at measuring constructs as recommended in the conceptual framework shown. Each construct was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items in the questionnaire were developed by adjusting measures validated by other researchers or by converting the definition of the constructs into a questionnaire format. The constructs in this model were adapted from previous studies and multi-item scales were used for these constructs. The detailed measurement items of the constructs are presented in Table 1.

-Data Analysis Methods

In this study, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to analyze our data and test hypotheses. SEM is a combination of confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis. The SEM method of data analysis is considered more appropriate to test the multi-level conceptual framework shown in Figure 2 since the SEM method applies multivariate analysis to the model in a holistic manner. SEM is a multivariate technique used to estimate a series of interrelated dependent relationships simultaneously (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 1: Source of Measurement Item in Questionnaire

Constructs	Measurement Items	Source
Spatial Distance (SD)	I can use mobile e-commerce anywhere.	Kalinic & Marinkovic (2016)
	I can use mobile e-commerce while traveling.	
	It is very convenient to use mobile e-commerce because my mobile phone is just around me.	
Temporal Distance (TD)	I can use mobile e-commerce at any time.	Ko. et al. (2009)
	I can confirm orders at any time through my mobile phone.	
	Mobile e-commerce provides me with timely services and updates the information I am interested in.	
	Mobile e-commerce can answer my questions at any time.	
Social Distance (SoD)	The people who influenced my use of mobile ecommerce want me to keep using it.	Lu (2014)
	The people who matter to me think I should keep using mobile ecommerce.	
	My friends think I need to continue using mobile e-commerce.	
Communication Quality (CQ)	The mobile cross-border e-commerce platform will remind me of its new features.	Li. et al. (2006)
	This mobile cross-border e-commerce platform gave me first-hand information.	
	The mobile cross-border e-commerce platform was reluctant to give me a lot of useful information.	
	This mobile cross-border e-commerce platform is willing to	

	provide me with frequent activity opportunities.	
	The mobile cross-border e-commerce platform will consider my advice for marketing.	
Opportunistic Behavior (OB)	This mobile cross-border e-commerce platform will change the reality slightly.	
	The mobile cross-border e-commerce platform promises things it won't actually do.	
	The mobile cross-border e-commerce platform did not provide me with the support that should have been provided.	
	The cross-border mobile ecommerce platform will destroy formal and informal agreements to protect its own interests.	
Consumer Satisfaction (CS)	I am very satisfied with this cross-border mobile e-commerce application.	
	My shopping experience on this cross-border mobile e-commerce application was very enjoyable	
	This cross-border mobile e-commerce application makes me happy.	
	This cross-border mobile e-commerce application can meet my needs.	
Input Cost (IC)	I have invested a lot of time in this cross-border mobile e-commerce application.	
	Many aspects of my life are related to this cross-border mobile e-commerce application.	
	I spent a lot of time on learning to use this cross-border mobile e-commerce application.	
	I spend a lot of time on this cross-border mobile e-commerce application.	
	I spent more on this cross-border mobile e-commerce application than any other application.	
Relationship Benefit (RB)	Platform merchants will offer special offers to frequent users.	Mukheqee & Nath (2007)
	Platform merchants will give regular users some rebates.	
	The cross-border mobile e-commerce application will provide users with the information they need.	
	Platform vendors pay attention to user complaints.	
	The cross-border mobile e-commerce application offers ads and promotions based on personal preference.	
Trust (TR)	Cross-border mobile e-commerce applications are trustworthy.	Kim, Ferrin, & Rao (2009)
	The merchants of cross-border mobile e-commerce application gave me the impression that they kept their promises.	
	I believe that cross-border mobile e-commerce application considers my best interests.	
Relationship Commitment	I hope this cross-border mobile e-commerce platform will continue to develop.	Wang. et al. (2016)

(RC)	My relationship with this mobile cross-border e-commerce platform is worth the effort.	
	I would be sorry if this mobile cross-border mobile ecommerce platform disappeared.	
	I have a sense of belonging to this mobile cross-border mobile e-commerce platform.	
Continuous Use Intention (CUI)	I would like to continue to use this mobile cross-border mobile e-commerce platform for shopping	Kalinic & Marinkovic (2016)
	I will take this mobile cross-border mobile e-commerce platform as a common way of shopping.	
	I will recommend this cross-border mobile e-commerce platform to my friends, relatives and others.	
	I will increase the frequency of shopping on this platform.	

4. Results

-Descriptive Analysis

Among 559 valid questionnaires, there were 391 female users and 168 male users. More female respondents are than males. This is most likely because generally women prefer shopping purchasing more than male and therefore tend to be the main respondents. 559 respondents in the study also showed the characteristics of being young (the age of respondents is mainly between 18 and 30 years old) and highly educated, most of whom were middle-or low-income students and office workers with a bachelor degree or above. The study also shows that most of respondent have 6-9 years' experience in on-line shopping. In addition, for purchases on cross-border e-commerce platforms, most respondents spend between RMB500 and RMB1,500 a month. Table 2 gives the detailed demographic information.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographics Characteristics		Frequency	% (n=559)
Gender	Male	168	30.05%
	Female	391	69.95%
Age (years old)	Under 18	35	6.26%
	19-30	257	45.97%
	31-40	190	33.99%
	41-50	52	9.30%
	Above 51	25	4.47%
Education Level	High school or less	62	11.09%
	Diploma	79	14.13%
	Bachelor's Degree	263	47.05%
	Master's Degree	139	24.87%
Years of Using Internet	Doctoral Degree	16	2.86%
	< 2 Years	47	8.41%
	3-5 Years	126	22.54%

Occupation	6-9 Years	315	56.35%
	> 10 Years	71	12.70%
	Student	267	47.76%
	Office worker	256	45.80%
	Self-employed	29	5.19%
	Others	7	1.25%
Monthly Purchase Amount on Cross-border E-commerce Platforms	<500RMB	36	6.44%
	501–1,500 RMB	243	43.47%
	1,501–2,500 RMB	127	22.72%
	2,501–3,500 RMB	92	16.46%
	>3,501 RMB	61	10.91%

-Reliability and Validity Assessment

Reliability is “an assessment of the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable” (Hair et al., 2013, pp123). The Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure reliability of the measures. As per Hair et al. (2013) the value of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.7 was taken as the threshold level in order to ensure the stability and consistency of the instruments. According to Table 3, the Cronbach’s alpha value of all constructs were above 0.7. Hence, the reliability of the construct is established.

Validity focuses on identifying, extent to which the research concept is correctly represented by the measures (Hair et al., 2013). Construct validity was measured by utilizing convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was assessed with Composite Reliability (CR), Factor Loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). If the value of CR reached 0.7 or above, and the value of factor loadings and AVE both reached 0.5 or above, the measurement model has good convergence validity ((Hair et al., 2013). As per Table 3, all indicators met the standard, indicating that the measurement model in this study had good convergent validity. In order to determine discriminant validity, square root of AVE of each construct was compared to the squared correlations of other constructs. From Table 4, it is evident that square root of AVE value of each construct is greater than the squared correlations of this construct to any other construct. Hence, the discriminant validity is established (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 3: Results of Validity and Reliability Analysis

Factors	Indicators	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach’s Alpha
Spatial Distance (SD)	SD1	0.821	0.782	0.954	0.934
	SD2	0.804			
	SD3	0.726			
Temporal Distance (TD)	TD1	0.785	0.886	0.949	0.928
	TD2	0.739			

	TD3	0.788			
	TD4	0.820			
Social Distance (SoD)	SoD1	0.866	0.788	0.925	0.912
	SoD2	0.859			
	SoD3	0.818			
Communication Quality (CQ)	CQ1	0.793	0.854	0.936	0.903
	CQ2	0.825			
	CQ3	0.837			
	CQ4	0.941			
	CQ5	0.918			
Opportunistic Behavior (OB)	OB1	0.890	0.833	0.913	0.899
	OB2	0.893			
	OB3	0.924			
	OB4	0.855			
Consumer Satisfaction (CS)	CS1	0.861	0.865	0.948	0.931
	CS2	0.853			
	CS3	0.842			
	CS4	0.883			
Input Cost (IC)	IC1	0.936	0.779	0.935	0.914
	IC2	0.955			
	IC3	0.917			
	IC4	0.865			
	IC5	0.922			
Relationship Benefit (RB)	RB1	0.959	0.883	0.937	0.922
	RB2	0.897			
	RB3	0.834			
	RB4	0.858			
	RB5	0.899			
Trust (TR)	TR1	0.961	0.874	0.958	0.938
	TR2	0.914			
	TR3	0.912			
Relationship Commitment (RC)	RC1	0.906	0.835	0.966	0.941
	RC2	0.907			
	RC3	0.874			
	RC4	0.924			
Continuous Intention (CUI)	CUI1	0.912	0.827	0.935	0.952
	CUI2	0.908			
	CUI3	0.925			
	CUI4	0.913			

Table 4: Discriminant Validity of Scale Test

Variable	SD	TD	SoD	CQ	OB	CS	IC	RB	TR	RC	CUI
SD	0.832										
TD	0.656	0.912									
SoD	0.684	0.589	0.903								
CQ	0.621	0.559	0.725	0.854							
OB	-0.596	-0.498	-0.662	-0.795	0.891						
CS	0.696	0.623	0.596	0.745	-0.722	0.836					
IC	0.638	0.663	0.689	0.702	-0.781	0.789	0.877				
RB	0.735	0.678	0.739	0.751	-0.596	0.741	0.781	0.882			
TR	0.759	0.639	0.781	0.795	-0.689	0.681	0.792	0.742	0.896		
RC	0.781	0.628	0.775	0.698	-0.781	0.669	0.772	0.778	0.815	0.935	
CUI	0.753	0.602	0.628	0.706	-0.692	0.731	0.715	0.713	0.768	0.841	0.941

-Measurement and Structural Model Analysis

If the implied covariance structure of the model is similar to that of the sample data, as implied by the acceptable value of the goodness of fit index (GFI), the model is considered appropriate (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002). The authors firstly verified and evaluated the measurement model and then analyzed and fitted the structural model. According to the data in Table 5, the χ^2/df of the structural equation model is 2.011 ($P=0.000$), which is less than 3. RMSEA is 0.043, which is smaller than the minimum standard of 0.05. CFI is 0.925, AGFI is 0.926, NFI is 0.936, and GFI is 0.969, all of which are greater than the minimum standard of 0.9 (Kline, 2011). Therefore, the indices of the model all met the evaluation standard, indicating that the theoretical model presented in the study aligned with the actual survey data.

Table 5: Fit Indices of Measurement and Structural Models

Fit indices	χ^2/df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Recommended Values	<3	>0.9	>0.8	>0.9	>0.9	<0.05
Measurement Model	2.032	0.923	0.928	0.932	0.968	0.045
Structural Model	2.011	0.925	0.926	0.936	0.969	0.043

Table 6: Test Results of Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	S.E.	C.R.	Results
H ₁	SD→TR	0.351	0.042	6.720***	Supported
H ₂	TD→TR	0.169	0.029	4.358***	Supported
H ₃	SoD→TR	0.234	0.046	5.365***	Supported
H ₄	CQ→TR	0.198	0.058	4.529***	Supported
H ₅	OB→TR	-0.265	0.056	-4.962***	Supported

H ₆	CS→TR	0.432	0.043	5.298***	Supported
H ₇	CS→RC	0.195	0.039	8.519***	Supported
H ₈	IC→RC	0.136	0.042	5.289***	Supported
H ₉	RC→RC	0.298	0.038	4.526***	Supported
H ₁₀	TR→RC	0.426	0.049	7.956***	Supported
H ₁₁	TR→CUI	0.485	0.041	8.925***	Supported
H ₁₂	RC→CUI	0.598	0.034	9.513***	Supported

Note: *P< 0.05; **P<0.01; ***P<0.001

-Results of Hypotheses Testing

Table 6 showed the standardized path coefficient and path significance for each of the hypotheses. It indicates that all the hypotheses proposed in this paper were all supported. With regard to H₁, H₂ and H₃, it can be observed that a significant and positive correlation between psychological distance including spatial distance ($\beta= 0.351$, $p<0.001$), temporal distance ($\beta= 0.169$, $p<0.001$) and social distance ($\beta= 0.234$, $p<0.001$), and user trust towards the cross-border mobile e-commerce, which means that H₁, H₂ and H₃ were supported. Concerning H₄, H₅ and H₆, communication quality ($\beta= 0.198$, $p<0.001$) and consumer satisfaction ($\beta= 0.432$, $p<0.001$) are significantly positive affect the user trust towards the cross-border mobile e-commerce, while opportunistic behavior ($\beta= -0.265$, $p<0.001$) was found have negative effect on user trust. Thus, supporting H₄, H₅ and H₆. Similarly, a positive link existed between relationship commitment and consumer satisfaction ($\beta=0.195$, $p<0.001$), input cost ($\beta=0.136$, $p<0.001$) and input cost ($\beta=0.298$, $p<0.001$). Hence, H₇, H₈, and H₉ were all supported. When H₁₀ and H₁₁ were examined, it was found that user trust was positively correlated with both relationship commitment ($\beta=0.426$, $p<0.001$) and continuous use intention ($\beta=0.485$, $p<0.001$). Thus, H₁₀ and H₁₁ were supported. The standardized path coefficients also presented an obvious positive correlation between relationship commitment and continuous use intention ($\beta=0.598$, $p<0.001$). Hence, H₁₂ was fully verified.

5. Discussion

The aim of our study was to investigate the factors such as psychological distance (spatial distance, temporal distance and social distance), communication quality, customer satisfaction, opportunistic behavior, inputs cost and relationship benefits that influence Chinese consumers' trust towards cross-border e-commerce platforms and the continuous use intention, which could help strengthen the Chinese in terms of cross-border e-commerce development and enhance China's cross-border trade position in the global economy. From the research results, we extracted six factors that were conducive to promoting the use behavior of buyers, and one factor that hinders buyers from using cross-border mobile e-commerce.

Firstly, the positive influence of perceived distance, including both spatial distance and temporal distance, of mobile e-commerce on trust of cross-border mobile e-commerce can affect users' behavior of using mobile e-commerce. The results also are consistent with Kim, Zhang and Li (2008) who found that users' behavior of using mobile e-commerce was impacted by the psychological distance of users and products. The perceived distance mainly reflects

that mobile e-commerce has the characteristics of being used anytime and anywhere. It is also the main difference and advantage of mobile e-commerce compared with traditional PC terminal e-commerce. Therefore, e-commerce platform enterprises and cross-border e-commerce platform enterprises can market to consumers based on the convenience of mobile terminal. In particular, cross-border e-commerce platform enterprises could channel PC customers to mobile phones through marketing means to reduce customers' perception of cross-border distance, so as to increase their trust in cross-border e-commerce.

Secondly, social distance is another personal perception factor that influence users' willingness to continue using. Such a result also appeared in Liu and Xu (2015) who presented that social distance affected the choice of consumers' preferences. The main origin of this factor is people's herd mentality, especially willing to follow the people close to them, such as relatives, friends, colleagues. Thus, e-commerce platform enterprises may take advantage of this trend to promote mobile e-commerce and cross-border mobile e-commerce. Cross-border e-commerce enterprises could increase the utilization rate of customers through exclusive preferential activities or coupons, recommendation and reward mechanism on mobile phones. Compared with enterprises' direct promotion of the system or products to customers, interpersonal promotion is more effective, particularly among those familiar with the system, which would greatly increase customers' trust in the system and products and thus promote their use behavior.

Thirdly, communication quality positively affects users' trust in e-commerce platform enterprises. The result is consistent with the previous researcher Li et al. (2006) who found communication is a factor influencing user's trust in online shopping. Compared with traditional e-commerce, convenience is the biggest advantage of mobile e-commerce. The convenience of mobile e-commerce is not only reflected in the browsing of product information and the purchase of products, but also reflected in the instant communication with platforms and merchants. Communication quality is also reflected in the ability to solve customer problems and the willingness to communicate effectively. Due to cultural differences, time differences, and language differences, communication issues are quite essential in cross-border situations. Therefore, the professionalism and attitude of the platform in communicating with customers and sellers determines whether a cross-border e-commerce platform could attract more users to use it, thus affecting the success of the cross-border e-commerce platform.

Fourthly, opportunistic behavior is the only factor that has negative effect on trust among all the variables in this study. Whether it is traditional or mobile e-commerce, and whether it is local or cross-border e-commerce, the impact of opportunistic behavior on consumers and sellers is extremely serious. The result is also consistent with Guo, et al. (2017) who find significant relationships between opportunistic behavior and users' trust. The platform should clearly describe the rules and regulations, as well as the policies and fees charged by the seller. As for the customer, the platform is accountable to the customer. On the one hand, platforms cannot cheat consumers by "peddling power for personal gain" to gain profits or reduce economic losses. On the other hand, the platform needs to strictly control the opportunistic behaviors of sellers. It can find out the opportunistic intentions of sellers in time through user evaluation and transaction record tracking of sellers, so as to avoid such dishonest and fraudulent behaviors. Meanwhile, the sellers who have opportunistic behaviors should be

strictly punished, and the customers whose interests are infringed should be compensated twice to reduce the recurrence of opportunistic behaviors and the loss of customers' trust in the platform.

Fifthly, customers' satisfaction with the platform can determine customers' trust in the platform and their sense of belonging to the platform, so as to determine whether users will continue to use the platform. This supported the study carried out by Leninkumar (2017) who found there was a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer trust. According to the law of trigonometry in customer relationship management, customer satisfaction is equal to customer experience minus customer expectations. Hence, customer expectations need to be guided and maintained at an appropriate level and they need to be aligned with the customer experience. In cross-border e-commerce, the customer's perceived value is not just the product's own value (including product quality, product price, product function, product design, product packaging, and product taste), but more important is the spiritual value of the product. This is because the customer perceiving the product through direct contact. Therefore, the e-commerce platform should improve the spiritual value of customers through the following three points which finally achieve the purpose of improving customer satisfaction. One is visual satisfaction, including the seller's web page design, content design, enterprise design, etc. Second, behavioral satisfaction, including behavioral mechanism satisfaction, behavioral rules satisfaction, advertising behavior satisfaction, and online etiquette satisfaction. The third is service satisfaction, including service reliability, immediacy, accuracy, completeness, and emotion.

Sixthly, input cost would increase consumers' sense of belonging to the platform from the result of this study. Not only in terms of e-commerce, but in terms of work, life and entertainment as well, the amount of input positively influences the sense of belonging and lead to repeated use and participation. The results from this study agreed with the ideology from Li et al. (2006) who mentioned input costs is quite influential in the relationship commitment of users in the context of e-commerce. The input cost in the e-commerce mainly includes material resources cost and financial resources. Material cost mainly refers to time cost, that is, the time spent on cross-border e-commerce platform. As a result, many sites have user check-ins and offer different promotions every day. These functions are designed to increase the amount of time users spend on the site and thus increase their input. On the other hand, the website tries to attract more merchants to provide more products with high quality and low price for promoting consumers' consumption behavior, which in turn increases the cost to consumers of their financial resources. This also increase customer stickiness for the website.

Finally, relationship benefit between customer and platform has a positive significant effect on the relationship commitment towards the cross-border e-commerce platforms. The finding is consistent with the research of Li et al. (2006) and Mukheqee and Nath (2007) who presented that relationship benefit has a great influence on relationship commitment of customers. Relationship benefit refer to the special benefits that consumers can obtain in transactions or interactions with websites. This kind of special benefit is the benefit that the platform website provides to consumers to increase the sense of belonging of consumers. This special interest includes financial benefits as well as perceived interests. The financial benefits contain regular offers of more gifts, vouchers, discounts, and loyalty rewards. In terms of perceived benefit, it

is mainly reflected in paying attention to consumer feedback, solving consumer problems, and actively providing consumers with information and advertisements about products according to personalized needs. Once established, these relationships give consumers a sense that the platform is tailored to their needs, rather than a "grocery market" experience.

-Implication

This study has some theoretical contributions. Firstly, this research proposes a powerful research model to study consumers' trust and belonging through the combination of psychological distance theory and commitment trust theory. This model clearly explains the influencing factors of consumers' acceptance of cross-border mobile e-commerce from the perspective of consumers themselves and the relationship between consumers and businesses. Secondly, this study proposes a new variable for the perception of mobile e-commerce and cross-border mobile e-commerce, namely the perceived distance of mobile e-commerce. This variable describes the inherent advantage of mobile phone over PC, namely anytime and anywhere. Thirdly, this study confirms the validity of psychological distance theory and commitment and trust theory in the field of cross-border mobile e-commerce. In terms of practical implications, this study first illustrates the importance of perceived distance in mobile e-commerce, especially cross-border mobile e-commerce. Therefore, cross-border mobile e-commerce enterprises should focus on publicizing the advantages of cross-border mobile e-commerce in terms of perceived distance compared with traditional cross-border e-commerce, so as to improve consumers' willingness to continue using. For example, advertisements could promote slogans such as "the cheapest and fastest shopping malls are at your fingertips" in view of the anytime and anywhere nature of mobile phones. Improving instant messaging systems to make communication faster and more accurate, or adding features such as language services, can reduce consumers' perceived distance, especially in cross-border situations where time differences and language differences exist. Moreover, satisfaction is crucial for trust and relationship commitment. Thus, both platforms and enterprises should give priority to consumers' satisfaction in any business decision, communication with consumers and handling emergencies. In special cases, such as when dealing with disputes, it is even possible to consider sacrificing benefits to satisfy consumers.

-Limitations and Recommendations for Further Research

This study has several limitations. Firstly, the research sample is mainly Chinese consumers, and the vast majority of respondents conduct transactions through domestic platforms. Therefore, as for the questionnaire survey, respondents' answers are for domestic platforms. Future research needs to expand the sample, and the sample also needs to diversify. For example, future researchers could conduct research on different platforms, both China and other countries. It is also necessary to conduct classified research on buyers from different countries, so as to find out the differences among them, to provide feasible business strategies and opinions for cross-border e-commerce platform enterprises according to their strategic target locations more accurately. Furthermore, in this research, only the quantitative research method was adopted and all questions are closed questions. If respondents answered "strongly disagree" to a question, the researcher was unable to find out the reason and details. Chew et al. (2012) comment that to ensure the effectiveness of research, and interviewing method

should be incorporated into a survey because it will help to produce more in-depth data and improve analysis outcomes in terms of qualitative aspects. Therefore, in the future study, open opinions and suggestions from respondents are necessary to find more inputs on what would be the influence factors toward customer continuous use intention. Finally, in terms of research content, there are many factors that can affect the success of cross-border e-commerce platforms, including national policies, infrastructure construction, national economic conditions, etc., as well as enterprise operation, management ability and enterprise capital. The main factors of this study are the consideration of user behavior. For the future research, it should not be limited to the study of user behavior, but also need to be expanded horizontally, including national policies, enterprise capital, enterprise operation capacity, the interaction between buyers and sellers, and other relevant factors.

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