



# **Critical Appraisal Of Coronavirus Pandemic On The Enterprise And International Aspirations Of Online Ordering And Payment Platform Entrepreneurs.**

**Seth Bah Maisamari**

**Electrical and Electronics Technology Department  
Federal College of Education (Technical),  
Potiskum, Yobe State, Nigeria**

## **ABSTRACT**

This article aims to critically review the strategies adopted by online ordering and payment platforms in the event of a global pandemic. It has been gathered that during the coronavirus, there was a pre coronavirus business trend. The coronavirus business trend and the post coronavirus business trend. This has led to three phases of business strategies adopted especially by the digitalized companies. The methodology of this research is largely on the review and factual descriptive analysis of the business activities of certain online ordering and payment platforms such as the Yoello online ordering and payment platform which deals mainly with the hospitality industry. Amazon sells groceries and home utensils. AliExpress provides a platform for producing companies and individuals to sell their products directly to consumers. While securing payment, they also provide money return cover for goods with inferior quality rejected by customers. Certain entrepreneurship strategies used by these entrepreneurs with internalization interest include innovation and technology, entrepreneurial and managerial knowledge, entrepreneurial orientation, effectuation logic, international networks and dynamic capabilities. Data were drawn from the company's websites, articles and online sources have been analysed critically and descriptively. The positive use of the aforementioned business and entrepreneurship strategies undoubtedly favoured the survival and expansion of the online ordering platforms in the phases of the global pandemic. Entrepreneurs who are interested in international business are encouraged to utilise the pandemic survival strategies mentioned.

**Keywords:** Coronavirus pandemic, Online Ordering Services, Entrepreneurship, Internationalization Aspiration

## **INTRODUCTION**

Online ordering platforms such as Yoello, Aliexpress, Alibaba, Jumai, Amazon, and eBay are a few examples of the numerous online ordering and payment platforms used by online citizens' for ordering, payment, and delivery. During the pandemic, buying and selling shifted from the physical purchase of goods to online trading Dannenberg et al., (2020). This led to the expansion of the online ordering platform business. More job opportunities were created to cater for the demand of customers. The hospitality and groceries received the most patronage and connection.

The online ordering platforms continued to innovate on their platforms to make them easier, secure and reliable for their customers. Customers can read menus, select products, select preferred delivery methods

and make payments. Customers develop trust in secured websites and platforms for reliable transactions Shankar, & Jebarajakirthy, (2019). The online ordering platforms have entrepreneur advantages, especially in internalization. A critical review largely from published articles and the information from the company's websites will be explored to understand the potential associated with the digitalization of buying and selling as compared with the traditional method of physical buying and selling. The implications for indigenous companies will be explored too. The act of careful and systematic review will be used.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research aims to critically evaluate the strategies adopted by online ordering platforms in surviving the ever-changing and shifting nature of the market and to explore their international aspirations as entrepreneurs. The concept of digitalization and its advantages in doing business on the international scene will be explored along with entrepreneurship and internalization strategies.

The study is largely descriptive, and factual and draws its strength on the secondary data retrieved from the company's websites, journal articles and other online resources.

### **About the online ordering platforms (OOPs)**

Yoello is an online ordering platform that allows customers of the hospitality and food industry to access food vendors' services in their comfort zones as well as other services News Wales, (2020). The objective of YOOP is to afford food and hospitality customers the platform to order and pay for food and drink safely on your table without contact with staff, physical menus, cash, and no queues. The mobile version of the app-less mobile ordering platform allows customers to view menus, place orders, and make payments. The founder is also the brainchild of the platform with consumer's features such as satisfaction, simplicity of use, time-saving reduced risk of theft, expenditure control, functionality, rate of use, and expediency. The company belongs to the hospitality industry with a company size of 51 to 200 employees. The headquarters of the company is in Cardiff, Wales News Wales, (2020). The company is a private company founded in 2017. The company offers specialized services in payment processing, social networking, marketing, split payment, point of sale, mobile payments, nightlife, and mobile ordering. Key features of the company are best in class ordering experience, dynamic menu, customer analytics and marketing tools, reporting tools, promotions and discounts, multiple vendor groups, no app download needed, low transactions the form of a website or mobile app was created by Sina Yamani.

Aliexpress is a reliable online ordering platform. The company was founded in 2010 with its location in China. The online ordering platform sells via [www.aliexpress.com](http://www.aliexpress.com). This company is owned by Alibaba Group Holding Limited (AGHL). The AGHL is one of the biggest conglomerates of the Chinese e-commerce, internet, technology and retailer specialist founded by Jack Ma and Co Tsydenova, Nadezhda (2020).

From the comfort of your home, items can be ordered online with a browser. Over 100 million products are available for shopping. The OOP offers ease and convenience of shopping such that there is no interference in your window shopping experience. Money-back guarantee with Buyer protection is a feature of the platform that stands in check for display items that do not meet their descriptions. The customer service of OOP is 24 hours. Payment is easy and secure. Communication between the seller and buyer is enabled in the pre and post business transactions. Product reviews are readily available with the feedback displayed for information.

The OOP requires individuals to create accounts on the platform with their emails. Shipping address, mobile number and password to unlock the features of the OOP. Login requires email and password with a browser such as a google chrome, Facebook or Twitter.

Aliexpress ships directly to Nigeria via AliExpress Standard Shipping, EMS, POS Malaysia, UPS, DHL, Singapore Post, China Air Post Registered Mail, etc. These features have made business transactions undoubtedly easier.

The business model of AliExpress started as a portal that buys and sells, it expanded to consumer-consumer, business-consumer, payment services and cloud computing. By 2016, AliExpress was run in

Dutch, Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese, Turkish, German, Polish, Indonesian, and Russian languages. Other countries were served in the English Language. Companies and individuals sell on the AliExpress OOP (Hsiao & Aron, 2019). In Russia, it is the most visited e-commerce website. In Brazil, it is the 10<sup>th</sup> most popular e-commerce website.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEIT) banned 43 mobile handset apps from China including AliExpress in 2020. Similarly, the Office of the United States Trade Representatives (OUSTR) included AliExpress among the notorious list of markets counterfeiting and piracy in 2022 (The Indian Express, 2022).

Amazon.com Inc is another OOP founded by Jeffrey Preston Bezos with origin from America and headquarters in Seattle, Washington. It has a multinational technology that is e-commerce inclined with artificial intelligence, cloud computing and digital streaming. It is referred to as an economic and cultural influencer based on its economic impact John F. Furth (2018). The OOP provides online retail services, electronic books and web services, provider. Amazon uses principles such as customer obsession, invention passion, operational excellence and long term projections. With the strive to become the safest earth place of work and employer, Amazon provides 1-click shopping, customer reviews, Amazon echo, Fire tablets, Alexa, AWS, Amazon studios, climate pledge, career choice, kindle, and technology for a workout.

Over the years, Amazon strive to maintain customers' desire for lower costs, convenient services and better selection. Other services include doorstep fresh produce delivery and music or video distributions to delight the customers (Fortune Editor, 2020).

In the past decade, Amazon created most jobs compared to other U.S companies with a \$530 billion investment in the U.S. about 1.6 million indirect jobs in the hospitality and construction industry were created by Amazon's investment. Amazon actively responds to the urgent needs of homelessness and hunger. The OOP invests in children's education and young adults.

### **Differences between the Online Ordering Platforms**

Sellers on Yoello are mostly companies hospitality companies, sellers on AliExpress are either company are either companies or individuals. Amazon sells its products on the e-commerce platform. AliExpress does not sell directly to customers, the OOP connects Chinese businesses to buyers. Although most retailers operating on AliExpress are Chinese, AliExpress aims and targets international buyers. Customers on China's mainland use a subsidiary of Alibaba called Taobao due to the convenience in service, payment and delivery. Based on the foregoing, AliExpress has drawn a comparison to eBay whose sellers are independent, while the platform is only used to offer services, payments and products to buyers.

Yoello is an app-less smarter mobile order and payment platform that provides customers with orders without the need to download an application. The OOP was founded by Sima Yamani and launched in July 2020 ([www.yoello.com](http://www.yoello.com), 2022). Yoello customers only need to scan a QR code to order contactless food and drinks to their tables. The same platform allows merchants to operate take away and delivery services. Since the mobile order and pay solution launch, the company expanded and experienced growth from strength to strength during the coronavirus pandemic while supporting thousands of hospitality industries.

Yoello's strategy is the disruption of the current outdated and expensive payment networks. They process their payments with open banking rules hence bringing the customers and operators closer with instantaneous cheaper transactions. Currently, the YOOP is mainly focused on the hospitality industry. From cafes to luxury hotels with the capability to grow into retail and tourism.

The YOOP is interested in improved revenue, efficiency and customers' experience using mobile technology while operating with a reduced staff number with increased customers. Heading towards achieving a cashless society and enabling technology in line with coronavirus and future services. The YOOP has a vital role in keeping and maintaining the survival of the hospitality industry even in pandemics.

AliExpress displays product prices from the lowest prices for its products. So far it has a wide range of products from accessories to cars. Free shipping services are provided on AliExpress to many countries. The buyer protection covers customers sent poor quality goods, as refunds are made (Oláh, et al., 2018). Aliexpress is constrained with shipping times of weeks to months and the inability of customers to assess product quality before purchase.

Amazon which maintains the same cost on its products has a variety of hundreds of thousands of goods on its online supermarket. The same quality of the product as seen online is assured. The search engines are clever to find products with associated words making the platform convenient. Promotions allow buyers the opportunity to buy expensive products at loyal prices. The OOP is constrained by price variation depending on the model or size. Shipping on Amazon could cost more than the item itself and is limited to the U.S.

### **Critical discussion of international entrepreneurship and the online ordering platform enterprise**

International entrepreneurship (IE) is a combination of international business and entrepreneurship knowledge, which makes it an intersectional domain. The IE research hinges on the view that internationalism entrepreneurial behaviour is discovery-oriented. It requires evaluation, enactment, discovery and exploitation of ideas and international opportunities to create value and acquire a competitive advantage. Since the IE emphasis is focused on opportunity behaviours, the article will look at those operating mechanisms favourable for international opportunities and their processes. The section will look at those entrepreneurial opportunities oriented behaviours favourable for international opportunities for individuals and firms. Also, new progressive insights that create competitive international advantages will be considered.

Different definitions for the evolving IE field have conceptualised those elements that suggest the dynamic process of exploitation, evaluation and discovery of opportunity ideas on the international scene to create value for a business (Bertello et al., 2022).

### **Antecedents influencing the cross-national borders opportunities process**

The three levels of antecedents outlined by the IE include an individual, a firm and the environment. These are the driving aspects leading to the discovery, evaluation, enactment and utilisation of cross-national borders opportunities.

#### **The individual analysis**

The significant variables identified by Pidduck, and Clark, ( 2021) and Nyberg et al., (2014) for successful finding, enacting, evaluation and utilisation of international opportunities (IO) are related to cognition, social capital (SC) and human capital (HC) features that distinguish how certain individuals pursue and behave differently in pursuance of international opportunities (IO). Multiple studies have reported that cognitive and mental models play a vital role in finding, enacting, assessing and utilisation of international opportunities (IOs) (Vink et al., 2019). Individuals possessing entrepreneurial objectives with desirability and self-efficacy intent are more equipped psychologically to pursue IO successfully. Similarly, individuals with a high sense of alertness, commitment, willingness, flexibility and imagination can sense and exploit IO more effectively (Chan, 2021). Related cognitive concepts leading to opportunities related behaviours are equally attributed to proactiveness, global mindset, and risk-taking proneness that aid individuals pursue objective IOs. Hence, the mentioned schemas of cognitive order according to Kalaignanam et al (2021) aid individuals in decision makings on IOs that requires possession and growth on the international markets. The mentioned schemas equally equip the individuals with the right information and process to respond to and resolve changing and dynamic nature of the market conditions.

Individual social capital (ISC), scholarly articles have reported that the ISC provides learning sources and information needed by individuals to acquire knowledge about clients, and providers in cross border countries to pursue their international opportunities (Bai et al., 2020). The ISC aid individuals to acquire financial resources and know where to find them for sustained internalization. Other studies have reported that personal ties of individuals with cross country borders traders in export, promoters, international

distributors and trade exhibitors are instrumental to successful finding, enacting, evaluating and utilising IOs. Furthermore, social, family and business ties are instrumental to the discovery of critical resources required for pursuing, and eventual exploitation of international opportunities. Even casual verbal ties with international market intermediaries can trigger huge international opportunities for individuals (Bai et al., 2020).

The individual human capital as reported by some studies submits that investments into education, training and other forms of learning such as languages are instrumental in the pursuit of international opportunities (Emilsson and Mozetič, 2021). Another set of studies according to Lafuente et al (2021), reported that prior experiential knowledge of the following areas market experience, entrepreneurial experience, business with international clients, competitors, international cultural experience, internationalization experience, capabilities, strategies and markets are instrumental to identifying broader international opportunities at the individual level of analysis. The aforementioned they believe help the individual better in the identification and pursuit of international opportunities.

### **The Film Analysis of International Entrepreneurship**

In the individual-level analysis, personal traits are essential factors needed for the pursuit of international opportunities. To a complex level, the personal traits of an individual will not be sufficient to find, enact, assess and utilisation of international opportunities. The film analysis level requires the influence of the unique characteristics of the individual embedded with the orientation and entrepreneurial vision of the company's founder. An organizational structure is hence built to facilitate and effectively pursue IOs with competitive advantageous achievement (Thorpe et al., 2018). The four main variables identified at the level of the film for finding, enacting, assessing and utilisation of international opportunities are the film's links, the film's belief, the film's assets and the film's strategy. Literature on IE shows that the collective cognition or shared beliefs and values help the company members with the needed understanding of the company's performance which instils the company's norms in the film. The collective knowledge or cognition equips the films to pursue IOs and respond positively to emerging challenges or external events. The organisational culture invariably becomes the foundation of a competitive advantage which helps the employees of the film in the pursuit and exploitation of international market opportunities.

Some studies report that the film gains a competitive advantage in IOs markets by accessing and controlling knowledge which is a unique resource. Even though the knowledge resources are embedded in the individuals' human capital ability. The organization integrates these potentials through processes and collective routines the organization does and reconfigures identified new and existing resources for the pursuit of IOs with advantage (Crupi et al., 2020). The organization also leverages the ability to find enact, assess and utilisation of international opportunities from film knowledge got from experiential knowledge within the international networks, market knowledge, international industry, international industry, internationalization knowledge, institutional knowledge and technological knowledge.

Different works of literature have reported on the films' network, some think that the alliance and relationships of the films provide better access to IOs and equip them with the ability to overcome liabilities associated with new and foreign challenges. Other findings believe that organizational networks provide insight and learning on offer information associated with politics, suppliers, economics, risks and competitive resources that lead to higher knowledge and incremental commitment which can be used to pursue IOs competitively and successfully. Another set of findings reported that bonding in trust, bridging networks and security facilitates firms' finding, enacting, assessment and utilisation of international opportunities.

There is an underscore from IE researchers on the films' strategy, they argued that the firm's strategy is a road that provides ways of dealing with the uncertainty of events that constitute the changing and dynamic business environment. Three dimensions of the films' strategy are postulated by some studies as organisational ability reconfiguration strategy, an entrepreneurs' posture strategy and decision making statute strategy. The films' readiness to find and exploit IOs is dependent upon the firms' entrepreneurial orientation in terms of being proactive, risk posture and innovation. The film pursues, assesses and exploits IOs through its decision rules of effective or practical logic. With capability reconfiguration, a

film can exploit IOs by responding to the dynamic environment with a combination, modifications and efficient use of the previous current and new possessions

### **Environmental level analysis of International Entrepreneurship**

Multiple studies have reported on how the environmental level conditions act and moderate the ways firms and individuals pursue various IOs. Three main environmental conditions have been identified as a moderator forces for IOs. The first condition is the state of the technology comprising the internet and other ICT related technologies. The second and third conditions revolve around political, legal, economic, cultural and social features of the national and international borders. More specifically the environmental conditions are categorized into formal and informal institutions. The formal institution comprises apparatuses of the government that enforces social acceptability, laws and regulations. The informal category comprises beliefs that define legitimate behaviour and socio-cultural ethics. The mentioned conditions constrain and enable the effective pursuit of IOs for different actors Aceto et al., (2019).

Other studies emphasise the role of technological advancement as a moderator to current ways of pursuing IOs by individuals and films. The advances in technology have opened up opportunities for both big and small entrepreneurial oriented organisations firms to pursue and exploit upcoming IOs competitively and efficiently using the liberalization of internationalisation barriers. On a general note, the new technologies provide films and individuals with various ways of pursuing IOs quicker and more successfully.

Some studies underscore the formal role of institutions as moderators for successful or constrained specific actor behaviour that facilitate the finding, enacting, evaluation and exploitation of IOs on the national and international scene. Economic liberalisation and national rights protection laws open the way to the accelerated pursuit of IOs of stable nations. On the contrary, the lack of government regulations, laws and unregulated markets constrain the willingness of individuals and films in pursuing IOs. Certain IE reports that weak formal and void institutions ultimately trigger opportunities needed to solve socially related problems worldwide (Balachandran et al., 2018).

Informal institutions are reported to play a vital role in IOs seeking actors. Socio-cultural ethics and beliefs are required for relationships that lead to the formation of joint ventures in social communities which in turn influence the individual and film IOs development. Similarly, collective beliefs are instrumental to cultural and societal expectations coupled with the educational system of the country. These factors influence the way different actors find, assess, measure and exploit IOs. The social and organizational stratification process and the socio-cultural structure of a nation accelerate the rate at which different actors find, assess, measure and exploit IOs about cost and benefits given gaps in knowledge about the cultures Aceto et al., (2019). Communal societal responsibility movements and worldwide wealth inequality encourage films and individuals the pursuit of their IOs as reported by other studies.

### **Theories associated with the adoption of innovation in the e- ordering platform**

The common feature of all the models and theories hinges on use as a predictor of intention to use. The combined theories resulted in technology acceptance and use theory. The major basis influences the envisioned use result from the new technology perspective. The three major constructs include performance, business, and social expectations (Nguyen et al., 2018). The extent to which users of new technology believe that using the technology will help achieve the desired result is called performance expectation. The business expectation is defined as the comfort associated with the use of the new technology which can be perceived by the user as friendly or difficult to use. Socialization is defined as the level to which people perceive certain levels of referenced behaviour seen as important in the use of certain technologies.

Since the relationship between competition and growth is directly proportional, the use of e-commerce is likely to be maintained due to its intensity Zhu et al., (2022). Determinants of Human acceptance of a particular technology are a function of the customer's preferences. Hence, customers' service favourites or aims are determined by checking this acceptance. Acceptance differentiator forms the basis for further

development for upholding competitive advantage. The importance of acceptance is measured in terms of the value of the service perceived by the customer while using the service.

### **Key constructs relevant to the entrepreneur-related internationalisation process**

#### **Innovation and technology**

Technological innovation draws on unique programs that involve entrepreneurship teams with all-around expertise in known disciplines to design starting technological based business plans. Innovation involves the concept of the introduction of new ideas and things. This concept of newness cuts across business models, ideas, services, and products (Antonizzi & Smuts, 2020, April). Entrepreneurship turns great ideas and business models into business opportunities.

#### **Entrepreneurial and managerial knowledge**

Entrepreneurial and business management are often designed by experienced teams of academics or professionals with working experience who have successfully worked in multiple sectors. Skills and attitudes are required by entrepreneurs to launch an effective business with international opportunities. Managerial knowledge tends to drive businesses on the international scene with successful strategies. Success is therefore gained by developing an international alliance with companies or firms with similar services or operations (Barnard et al., 2018).

#### **Entrepreneurial orientation**

Entrepreneurial orientation in its broad conceptualization broadly influences internationalism positively. Research on entrepreneurial orientation reveals that its effect is the ability to drive internationalism in exploitive and explorative dimensions for positive internationalism performance (Matthews et al., 2018). Due to the shift from mono function to meta-functions of opportunity coordination, judgemental decision making and market analysis rightly indicate the impossibility of describing the entrepreneurial orientation in mono function. It has been argued that multifunctional approaches consist of entrepreneurial functions of the mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive overarching framework of entrepreneurial challenges of internationalisation firms. The emergence and renewal of firms, protection of firms from external and internal threats and the effective and efficient exploitation of the firm's potential build on the entrepreneurial orientation.

#### **Effectuation logic**

Effectuation contrast with the traditional international entrepreneurship body. Traditional international entrepreneurship thinks of the rational decision-making model called causation. This model analysis long term opportunities and the selection of plausible solutions. It designs a strategy that takes the best advantage of capabilities and resources while analyzing the market competitor and implementing the process that will achieve the goals.

In contrast to the narrative, effectuation is concerned with means driven approach where the future remains unpredictable. The logic of effectuation is decision making on processes that involve capacities and resources mobilisation within the control of their system to co-create the future. The focus is on opportunity development and taking the advantage of unexpected outcomes (Silva et al., 2020).

#### **International networks**

The international network has its advantages on internationalism. An effective network is built around a promising vision to accomplish an identified goal. it comprises of working, as a set of tools used by peers to help them work and progress further faster. With decentralization, people work together as peers.

Because of the limitations of the company's strategic discretion in an attempt to internalise, the international network theory takes note since the actions and decisions are determined by the network and the relationships (Chi et al., 2019)

#### **Dynamic capabilities**

Dynamic capabilities use the internal strength of the firm to sustain the firm in the ever-changing dynamic market. Such internal strengths include capital investment and workforce. The firm does not depend on the external forces of market trends and government policies to sustain and gain the dynamic nature of the market Malecki, (2018).

Hence dynamic capabilities are the higher-level activities that can help a firm to direct the ordinary activities of the firm into higher demand uses. Develop new capabilities that can effectively coordinate the internal and external for effective redress and shaping of the shifting business environments.

## CONCLUSION

It is possible that not all global industries adversely suffered an economic setback. Due to changes the coronavirus brought, the society also changed its normal routines ranging from lockdowns to regulated shopping hours. The entrepreneurs due to these changes required more in-depth thinking to sustain their businesses. Those who designed their businesses with safety and security experienced expansion during the pandemic. The hospitality industry was necessary for survival. The online ordering and payment platform took advantage of digitalization and processed food orders, payment and delivery services. Amazon and AliExpress also provided a shopping window to reduce the effect of the pandemic.

Indigenous OOP is currently not available, especially in the Nigerian context. Entrepreneurship potentials are waiting to be tapped. Local products such as food items, animals and properties are not exposed due to the non-digitalization of marketing. Hence, buyers and sellers depend on traditional offline stores for buying and selling. The traditional method of buying and selling is highly limited in terms of information on available products, inconvenience and inaccessibility during lockdowns. This calls for meaningful exploration and exploitation of the huge entrepreneurial benefits associated with online ordering and payment platforms.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommended for further studies

- i. In the future, further research is needed on the impact of coronavirus on local business performance.
- ii. Research on the pre and post-pandemic effects on local and indigenous markets should be explored.
- iii. Research on how to manage local markets in global pandemic

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