International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Management (IJHSSM)
Volume 5, Issue 4, Jul. - Aug., 2025, pp: 505-521 ISSN: 3048-6874
www.ijhssm.org

A Survey Study on the Current Situation of Career Planning Course Learning for English Majors in Application-Oriented Universities: A Case Study of Panzhihua University

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Date of Submission: 01-08-2025 Date of Acceptance: 11-08-2025

ABSTRACT
Against the backdrop of the popularization of higher education and increasingly fierce employment competition, the career planning ability of English majors in application-oriented universities has a direct impact on their employment quality. However, there remains a significant gap between the actual effectiveness of current career planning courses and students' learning needs. This study takes 404 students from the School of Foreign Languages at Panzhihua University as the research sample, aiming to investigate the current state of career planning course learning among English majors in application-oriented universities, identify existing problems, and propose paths for improvement. Data were collected through a questionnaire survey covering four dimensions: course awareness, participation behavior, satisfaction, and effectiveness evaluation. Descriptive and correlation analyses were conducted using SPSS 26.0. The results indicate that students' overall awareness of the course is relatively low, and their primary needs are concentrated in two aspects: course duration and university-enterprise integration. The findings provide data support for the development and reform of career planning courses in application-oriented universities and offer valuable references for practical improvement.

Keywords
Application-oriented university, career planning courses, Course duration, University-enterprise integration

I. Introduction

In this section, the background, objectives, and significance of the study will be presented. The context of career planning for English majors in application-oriented universities is presented, and the rationale for conducting this research is clarified to lay a foundation for the following chapters.

1.1 Research Background

With the continuous expansion of higher education and factors such as adjustments to the statutory retirement age, the issue of graduate employment has become increasingly prominent. In this context, career planning ability has emerged as one of the core competencies that university students must possess. This is particularly important in application-oriented universities, where students' ability to plan their careers effectively plays a vital role in enhancing their employability and supporting their future development. Under such circumstances, scientifically designed and effectively implemented career planning is essential for college students, prompting universities across China to offer career planning courses. These courses help students clarify their career direction, improve their competitiveness in the job market, and better adapt to the evolving demands of society.

As a regional application-oriented undergraduate institution, Panzhihua University (PZHU) adheres to its mission of "based in Panzhihua and Xichang, serving Sichuan, facing the whole country, and reaching Southeast Asia," and is committed to cultivating high-quality applied talents. In recent years, the university has attached great importance to career planning education for students and has actively explored reforms in career planning courses, achieving some progress. However, with changes in market demands and the broader social environment, employers are placing new expectations on college graduates' career planning and employability skills. Accordingly, universities must update their approaches to cultivating students' career planning competencies. In light of these new challenges and tasks, the current state of career planning course learning at PZHU requires further research and exploration. Therefore, studying the current learning status of career planning courses in application-oriented universities is of great significance for improving the quality of talent cultivation and promoting students' holistic development.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study aims to explore in depth the current state of career planning course learning among English majors in application-oriented universities,

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identify the key factors that affect the effectiveness of such courses, and provide data support and relevant recommendations for the design and reform of career planning education in higher education institutions. Investigating the learning status of college students in career planning courses essentially addresses the fundamental challenge of bridging higher education with the labor market. By participating in these courses, students can transform from passive job seekers into proactive architects of their own careers. At the same time, this process supports universities in enhancing the effectiveness of talent cultivation, developing a more scientific curriculum system, and forming training models that align with national conditions and industry needs. Ultimately, this ensures that graduates are better equipped to transition smoothly from school to the workplace and are capable of meeting job requirements in real-world employment settings.

1.3 Research Significance

Existing research has made significant progress in the construction of university career planning courses and the cultivation of students' career planning abilities. However, notable limitations remain. Most studies have focused on topics such as "the development of career planning courses" and "the integration of career planning courses with ideological and political education," without conducting deeper investigations from the perspective of the learners themselves. This study adopts a combination of questionnaire surveys and data analysis to systematically examine the current learning status of career planning courses among English majors, as well as their needs and evaluations of the courses. Based on the findings, the study proposes targeted improvements to career planning courses and offers strategies for enhancing students' career planning competencies, aiming to provide valuable insights for universities in cultivating students' career readiness.

II. Literature Review

In this section, literature on the development of university career planning courses and the cultivation of college students' career planning abilities will be presented. The purpose is to summarize existing research, identify gaps, and establish a theoretical foundation for the present study.

2.1 College Career Planning Courses

Career planning courses refer to those offered by universities to assist students in planning their career paths. The goal of such courses is to help students understand themselves, learn about the professional world, acquire career planning methods and techniques, and enhance their career planning abilities. According to research by Tian Feng, Li Hong, Wang Juan, and others, the course is defined as follows: based on providing information on career choices and development, its core objective is to deepen students' career literacy and decision-making skills. The course uses innovative teaching strategies to stimulate students' active participation and self-exploration, and guides them in effectively planning their careers[0]. Offering career planning courses provides college students with career guidance, cultivates their professional skills, enhances their employability, nurtures their career adaptability, and promotes lifelong learning and personal development. At the same time, career planning education emphasizes the cultivation of students' professional skills, including communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and innovation abilities—personal competencies that will play a crucial role in students' future careers[0].

With society's evolving talent demands and the reform of educational systems, the research focus on university career planning courses has shifted over time.

From 2011 to 2015, research mainly focused on the investigation and reform of college career planning courses under the new employment context. For example, in 2012, Zhao Wei, Zhao Lingyun, and Wang Yutan conducted a study using Hebei Agricultural University as a case to examine the career planning and quality development of students in agricultural and forestry universities. The results indicated a significant correlation between students' career planning and self-assessed personal qualities, showing that career guidance positively influences personal development[0]. As the employment landscape evolved, students' demand for career planning courses increased. In 2014, Sun Cuicui, Yu Liping, and Gao Han investigated college students' demand for general career planning courses at Qingdao University. Their findings revealed that students had a strong need for such courses to better prepare for employment[0]. At the same time, outdated teaching models could no longer meet these growing needs. Problems such as lack of systematic course design and monotonous teaching methods were identified, prompting recommendations such as constructing comprehensive, full-process curricula and expanding "second classroom" opportunities[0]. From early 2016 to the end of 2020, research increasingly highlighted the importance of offering career planning courses. For instance, in 2016, Ren Zhimeng emphasized the necessity and urgency of introducing compulsory career planning courses in the first year of college. The study found that such courses help freshmen better understand themselves, their careers, and society, and play a key role in

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clarifying career goals and developing career plans[0]. Since 2021, studies have turned to innovations in career planning courses in the context of the digital era. Lin Yan pointed out that with the advancement of information technology and evolving teaching methods, mobile and blended learning have become the norm in vocational education. Based on the Chaoxing Learning Platform, her study incorporated mobile learning into career planning courses for vocational college students, designing and implementing a blended teaching model. The results showed that this model effectively improved students' learning outcomes[0].

In addition, international researchers have focused not only on improving career planning courses but also on students' psychological well-being. Studies have shown that integrating psychological theories into career planning education helps address students' emotional changes, providing targeted guidance and significantly alleviating employment anxiety[0]. Other research suggests that incorporating competition elements into career planning courses enhances student engagement and practical ability, while also strengthening their career awareness and employability[0].

2.2 College Students' Career Planning Ability

Career planning ability refers to an individual's comprehensive capacity to clarify career goals and take effective actions to achieve career development through self-understanding, environmental analysis, and decision-making during the career development process[0]. This concept encompasses several core dimensions: First, self-awareness, which involves a clear understanding of one's interests, values, skills, and personality traits[0]. According to the person–job fit theory in career planning, accurate self-assessment serves as the foundation for effective career choice. Second, career information acquisition and analysis, which refers to the ability to access up-to-date labor market information and analyze it rationally in light of one's own conditions and goals[0]. Third, goal setting and decision-making, whereby individuals establish realistic career goals based on internal and external factors and make informed, strategic decisions accordingly[0]. In addition, execution and adjustment refers to the ability to respond flexibly to changes during career development and adjust planning strategies when necessary[0].

With the evolution of society and educational systems over time, scholars have placed varying emphases on different aspects of college students' career planning abilities during different historical periods.

Domestic scholars have continuously explored college students' career planning abilities from 2005 to the present. Initially, researchers focused on the concept of career planning ability and its importance. For example, in the study by Shao Haiyan and Hu Fang, the rapid expansion of student enrollment in China, driven by the shift from "elite education" to "mass education" was examined. However, employment opportunities did not increase accordingly, leading to significant employment difficulties for college graduates. Therefore, it was suggested that students should prepare for their career choices in advance by analyzing their strengths, weaknesses, and the challenges they face, both currently and in the future, to determine their career development direction[0]. From 2010 to 2014, research began to focus on how to improve college students' career planning abilities, employing more advanced research methods. Huang Yanping, for instance, used the SWOT analysis to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the job market for Chinese university students at that time. The study suggested measures to enhance students' career planning abilities, such as strengthening self-awareness, offering career planning courses, promoting social practice, and encouraging participation in career-related competitions and activities[0]. From early 2015 to late 2019, research gradually shifted to address the new demands for career planning abilities as society evolved. In a 2016 study by Wang Ziwei, Fan Guilin, and Duan Sha, the authors noted that the rapidly changing online environment presented new opportunities and challenges for students. They argued that university teachers should leverage new media to help students with their career planning, enabling them to face employment challenges with better preparation[0]. Research from 2020 to the present has mainly focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on college students' career planning abilities and coping strategies, as well as innovations in career planning education. Research by Zhang Hongqi and Zhao Yue'e revealed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, external pressures such as a reduction in job openings, an increase in competition, and shorter timeframes for job searching contributed to the employment difficulties faced by university students. Moreover, outdated employment views, weak job skills, and unclear career planning further exacerbated these challenges. As a result, the study suggested that students must update their employment perspectives, develop comprehensive career plans, pre-check recruitment conditions, and improve employability to seize new opportunities during such challenging times[0].

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International scholars, on the other hand, have focused more on factors that influence students' career planning abilities. Research shows that students' interest in their academic discipline is a significant predictor of their career decision-making ability. This interest affects career decisions by influencing the students' desire to pursue careers related to their academic interests. Additionally, studies have found that career decision-making is influenced by factors such as course assignments, proactive career exploration, work experience, interests, feasibility, and family connections[0].

III. Research Design

In this section, the overall research design will be presented, including the formulation of research questions, the selection of participants, the methods and instruments employed, and the procedures followed. This design is intended to provide a rigorous and scientific foundation for the subsequent data analysis and findings.

3.1 Research Questions

In the context of an increasingly challenging employment situation, career planning courses have become an important means of enhancing college students' employability. Therefore, the effectiveness and practical application of such courses deserve in-depth exploration. However, current career planning courses in universities still face several issues in terms of course content, teaching methods, student engagement, and actual outcomes. This study aims to analyze the current status of college students' career planning course learning and explore the key factors influencing course effectiveness. The specific research questions are as follows:

Course Awareness and Demand Issues

What is the level of awareness of career planning courses among college students? Do students generally perceive the course as valuable for their career development?

Course Content and Teaching Method Issues

Does the content of the current career planning course meet the actual needs of students? Does it cover key modules such as career awareness, skill development, and job market analysis?

Student Engagement and Learning Outcomes Issues

How motivated are college students in career planning courses? Is there any evidence of students being disengaged or merely going through the motions? After completing the course, have students' career planning awareness, job-seeking skills, and career decision-making abilities significantly improved?

Course Evaluation and Improvement Issues

What is the students' satisfaction level with the current career planning course? What are the existing shortcomings? How can the course be optimized to better meet students' career development needs and enhance its practicality and relevance?

Through the exploration of these research questions, this study aims to provide valuable insights for the reform and optimization of career planning courses in universities, ultimately helping to better support the career development of college students.

3.2 Research Subjects

This study selected all undergraduate students from the School of Foreign Languages at PZHU as the research sample, including students majoring in English, Translation, and Business English, with a total of 404 participants. A structured questionnaire was administered to investigate students' perceptions and experiences regarding the university's career planning courses. Specifically, the questionnaire examined four main dimensions: Course Awareness, which assessed students' understanding of the content, objectives, and perceived importance of the career planning course; Participation Behavior, focusing on the level of student engagement and motivation during the course; Satisfaction, measuring students' subjective evaluations of the course design, instructional methods, and content relevance; Perceived Outcomes, aimed at evaluating the course's impact on students' career planning abilities, including self-awareness, career information acquisition, goal setting, and decision-making.

By analyzing responses from this sample group, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of career planning course participation among English majors in application-oriented universities. The findings are intended to identify existing issues in course design and implementation and to offer evidence-based recommendations for curriculum improvement and teaching reform.

3.3 Research Tools

Based on relevant literature and advisor recommendations, the author developed a 41-item questionnaire titled "Survey on the Relationship Between Career Planning Competence and Career Planning Courses for Students in Applied Universities" using the Questionnaire Star platform. The questionnaire primarily covers: course duration of career planning programs, integration level between courses and enterprises, students' career planning competence before and after taking the courses, and suggestions for improving university career planning courses. It comprises 28 single-choice questions, 6 multiple-choice questions, and 4 open-ended

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questions, including 3 items collecting basic demographic information.

3.4 Research Procedures

In late February 2025, a questionnaire survey was distributed to students of the School of Foreign Languages at PZHU via QQ group. A total of 404 valid responses were collected. The respondents included students from freshman to senior year, covering three majors: English, Translation, and Business English. Among them, 66 were male (16.34%) and 338 were female (83.66%). There were 91 freshmen (22.52%), 166 sophomores (41.09%), 92 juniors (22.77%), and 55 seniors (13.61%). By major, 177 students (43.81%) were from the English major, 140 students (34.65%) from the Translation major, and 87 students (21.53%) from Business English. After collecting the data, SPSS 26.0 was used to conduct descriptive statistics and correlation analysis in order to investigate the current state of students' learning in career planning courses.

IV. Data Analysis

In this section, the data collected through the questionnaire survey will be presented and analyzed. Based on the statistical analysis of 404 valid responses, the current learning situation of English majors in application-oriented universities regarding career planning courses is systematically examined through structural validity and reliability testing, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

4.1 Validity and Reliability Analysis

When evaluating the quality of a survey instrument, reliability and validity analysis are essential steps. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a statistical modeling technique that integrates factor analysis and path analysis, allowing for the simultaneous examination of relationships between multiple latent variables and their observed indicators. It is widely used in research fields such as psychology, education, and the social sciences. In the validation of measurement tools, SEM is commonly employed to test the degree of alignment between latent constructs (i.e., theoretical dimensions) and their associated indicators (i.e., questionnaire items), thereby assessing the structural validity of the measurement model.

Traditional SEM approaches typically rely on a substantial number of scale-based items and latent variables, and structural reliability and validity are assessed using model fit indices, factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). However, in this study, the questionnaire was primarily composed of self-developed items, with relatively few scale-based questions, making it difficult to construct a comprehensive SEM. Therefore, standardized factor loadings (standardized regression coefficients) were used as an alternative approach to examine the strength of the relationship between each item and its corresponding dimension. Based on these coefficients, structural reliability and validity were calculated to evaluate the internal consistency and explanatory power of each measurement dimension.

4.1.1 Structural Equation Model Construction

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a statistical modeling method that combines factor analysis and path analysis, enabling the simultaneous examination of relationships between multiple latent variables and their observed indicators. It is widely used in fields such as psychology, education, and the social sciences. In the validation of measurement instruments, SEM is commonly employed to assess the degree of alignment between latent constructs (i.e., theoretical dimensions) and their observed indicators (i.e., items), in order to evaluate the structural validity of the measurement model.

In Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), model fit indices reflect the degree to which the theoretical model corresponds with the observed data. Commonly used fit indices include: CMIN/df (Chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio): This measures the trade-off between model complexity and goodness of fit. A value less than 5 is generally acceptable, while a value below 3 indicates good fit. RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation): This evaluates how well the model, with unknown but optimally chosen parameter estimates, would fit the population's covariance matrix. A value below 0.08 is considered good, and below 0.10 is acceptable. GFI (Goodness-of-Fit Index) and AGFI (Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index): These indices indicate the proportion of variance accounted for by the estimated population covariance. Values closer to 1 indicate better fit, with $\geq$0.90 considered ideal and $\geq$0.80 acceptable. PGFI (Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index): This adjusts the GFI by incorporating model parsimony. Values of 0.50 or higher are generally regarded as acceptable.

Based on the above indices, the overall structure of the model can be assessed to determine its theoretical soundness, thus providing a basis for evaluating structural validity. In this study, 19 representative measurement items were selected through preliminary item analysis, and a structural equation model was constructed comprising five dimensions: three dimensions of career planning ability (self-awareness, career information acquisition and analysis, and goal setting and decision-making) and two dimensions of career planning courses (course duration and course-enterprise integration). The analysis was conducted

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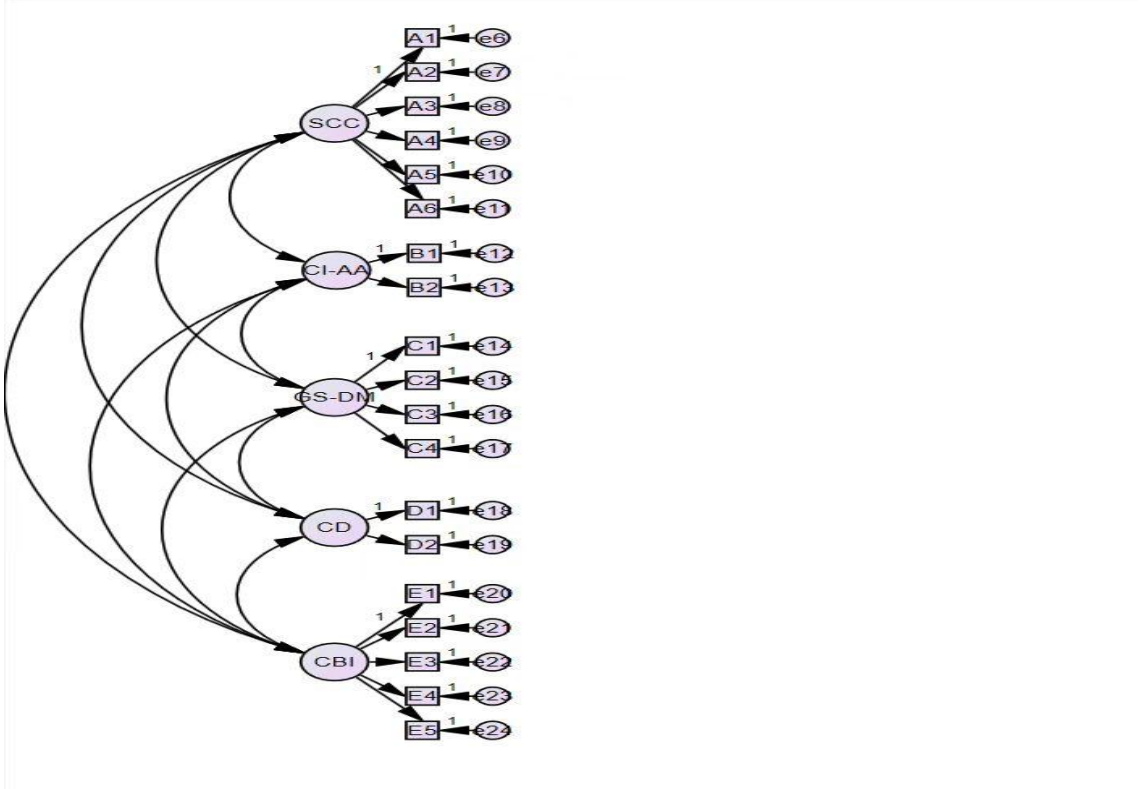
using AMOS 5.0, with a sample size of 404 participants. The model fit indices were as follows: CMIN/df = 5.057, p = 0.000; RMSEA = 0.100; AGFI = 0.778; PGFI = 0.623; GFI = 0.834. These indices meet the general psychometric standards for model fit, indicating that the model has acceptable statistical fit. Although some indices (e.g., GFI and AGFI) did not reach the ideal threshold of 0.90, this can be attributed to the use of self-developed items, the relatively small number of items in certain dimensions, and the sample size effect. Taken together, the overall model fit is considered acceptable from a statistical perspective and aligns with the theoretical expectations of the model. (see Figure 4.1.1)

Figure 4.1 Structural Equation Construction



Notes: SCC: Self-cognitive Competence; CI-AA: Career Information Acquisition & Analysis; GS-DM: Goal Setting & Decision-making; CD: Course Duration; CBI: Curriculum-Business Integration

4.1.2 Standardized Coefficient Analysis

When evaluating the quality of a measurement instrument, reliability and validity analyses are essential steps. Traditional Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) typically relies on a large number of scale items and latent variables, assessing structural reliability and validity through model fit indices, factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). However, in this study, the questionnaire was primarily composed of self-developed items, with relatively few scale-type questions, making it difficult to construct a complex SEM framework. Therefore, standardized factor loadings (i.e., standardized regression coefficients) were used as an alternative approach to analyze the strength of the relationships between each item and its corresponding dimension. Based on these loadings, structural reliability and structural validity were calculated to assess the internal consistency and explanatory power of each measurement dimension.

In this approach, the standardized coefficient reflects the degree to which each item contributes to its corresponding dimension—that is, the standardized correlation between variables. A coefficient of at least 0.4 is generally considered acceptable. Construct reliability indicates the internal consistency among the measurement items within a dimension, and it is comparable to Cronbach's α or Composite Reliability (CR); higher values suggest better internal consistency. Construct validity represents the extent to which a dimension explains the variance in its associated items. Values closer to 1 indicate stronger explanatory power, with 0.36 (corresponding roughly to a correlation coefficient of 0.6) commonly used as a reference point

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for moderate validity.

Based on the analytical logic outlined above, standardized coefficients and construct reliability/validity were evaluated for the five core dimensions of the questionnaire. The results are as follows:

Self-Awareness Competence

The standardized coefficient for A1 was 0.520, indicating a moderate contribution to the dimension. Items A2, A3, A5, and A6 had relatively high coefficients (0.727, 0.652, 0.721, and 0.771, respectively), suggesting strong explanatory power for the self-awareness dimension. In contrast, A4 had a low coefficient of 0.179, contributing minimally to the construct. The overall construct reliability was 0.778, indicating good internal consistency, and the construct validity was 0.395, reflecting a moderate level of explanatory power.

Career Information Acquisition & Analysis

Item B1 showed a very low standardized coefficient (0.106), indicating minimal contribution, while B2 had a negative coefficient (-0.698), suggesting that its measurement direction contradicted expectations and possibly indicated a reverse relationship. The construct reliability of this dimension was only 0.206, indicating poor internal consistency. The construct validity was 0.250, reflecting weak explanatory power. Revision or replacement of B2 is recommended for future improvements.

Goal Setting & Decision-Making

C1 had the highest standardized coefficient (0.836), demonstrating the greatest contribution to the dimension. C2 and C4 also had strong coefficients (0.732 and 0.646, respectively), while C3 was relatively lower at 0.486. The construct reliability for this dimension was 0.741, indicating good internal consistency. The construct validity was 0.49, reflecting an above-average level of explanatory power.

Course Duration

Items D1 and D2 had very high standardized coefficients (0.901 and 0.830, respectively), showing that both items strongly reflected the characteristics of the course duration dimension. The construct reliability was 0.934, indicating excellent internal consistency, while the construct validity reached 0.76, suggesting strong explanatory power.

Curriculum-Business Integration

For this dimension, items E1 through E4 had relatively high standardized coefficients (0.666, 0.768, 0.715, and 0.797, respectively), indicating strong contributions. However, E5 had a low coefficient of 0.124, suggesting that it contributed minimally and may require redesign or optimization. The construct reliability for this dimension was 1.13, which exceeds the conventional threshold (values >1 are usually considered overestimated and should be interpreted with caution), though it indicates strong internal consistency. The construct validity was 0.47, reflecting a moderate level, with potential for further improvement. (Data as shown in Table 4.1.2)

Table 4.1 Analysis of Standardized Coefficients

Dimensions	Title	Standardized coefficient	Structural reliability	Structural validity
SCC	A1	0.520	0.778	0.395
	A2	0.727		
	A3	0.652		
	A4	0.179		
	A5	0.721		
	A6	0.771		
CI-AA	B1	0.106	0.206	0.25
	B2	-0.698		
GS-DM	C1	0.836	0.741	0.49
	C2	0.732		
	C3	0.486		
	C4	0.646		
CD	D1	0.901	0.934	0.76
	D2	0.830		
CBI	E1	0.666	1.13	0.47
	E2	0.768		

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	E3	0.715		
	E4	0.797		
	E5	0.124		

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the overall evaluation of career planning courses by English major students in application-oriented universities—as well as their current status in career goal awareness, planning habits, and career-related competencies—this study employed descriptive statistical methods to conduct a preliminary analysis of the questionnaire data. By calculating the mean and standard deviation, the analysis reveals the general performance of respondents on each measurement item and the degree of individual variability. Specifically, the mean reflects the central tendency of the sample on a given variable, while the standard deviation indicates the extent of dispersion among individual responses, i.e., the magnitude of inter-individual differences.

4.2.1 Students' Overall Perception of Career Planning Courses

Table 4.2.1 Descriptive Analysis of Career Planning Courses

Item	N	min	max	average	standard deviation
7. How important is the career planning course to your career development?	404	1	5	2.15	0.884
8. Do you find the content of career planning courses practical?	404	1	5	2.24	0.879
9. What skills have you gained from the career planning course?	404	1	4	1.99	1.064
13. How do you evaluate the teaching methods of the career planning course?	404	1	5	2.31	0.786
16. Is the duration of the career planning course reasonable?" and "Is the number of class hours per semester reasonable?	404	1	5	2.20	0.764
17. Is the number of class hours per semester reasonable?	404	1	5	2.16	0.747
19. Is the proportion of enterprise content in the course appropriate?	404	1	4	2.25	0.688
20. Are the case studies aligned with your major and career interests?	404	1	4	2.03	0.578
21. Are guest lectures or experience sharing by professionals offered?	404	1	4	2.08	0.812
22. How helpful is the enterprise content in clarifying your career goals?	404	1	4	1.98	0.664
23. What enterprise-related content do you hope to see added to the course?	404	1	5	2.78	1.526
29. To what extent has the course helped your career planning?	404	1	5	2.54	0.886
30. What is the greatest gain you've obtained from the career planning course?	404	2	7	4.01	1.090
32. What additional content do you hope to be included in the course?	404	1	4	2.13	1.165

Based on the data presented in Table 4.2.1, it can be observed that the overall evaluation of the career planning course by the surveyed students is relatively low. In response to the item "How important is the career planning course to your career development?", the average score was 2.15, indicating that most students lack a strong recognition of the course's importance. The standard deviation was 0.884, suggesting a certain degree of variation among individuals.

In terms of course content practicality, the average score was 2.24, still indicating a relatively low level of perceived usefulness, with a standard deviation of 0.879, suggesting relatively minor individual differences. For the item "What skills have you gained from the career planning course?", the average score was even lower at 1.99, reflecting a general perception among students of insufficient skill acquisition. The standard deviation of 1.064 indicates considerable variability in responses. Regarding course delivery methods, the item "How do you evaluate the teaching methods of the career planning

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course?" received an average score of 2.31, which is slightly below average, with a standard deviation of 0.786, indicating limited variation among students. As for course duration, both "Is the duration of the career planning course reasonable?" and "Is the number of class hours per semester reasonable?" scored 2.20 and 2.16 respectively, showing a general consensus that the time allocation requires improvement. Their standard deviations (0.764 and 0.747) suggest small individual differences. Concerning the integration of enterprise-related content, several items received notably low scores: "Is the proportion of enterprise content in the course appropriate?" (2.25), "Are the case studies aligned with your major and career interests?" (2.03), "Are guest lectures or experience sharing by professionals offered?" (2.08), and "How helpful is the enterprise content in clarifying your career goals?" (1.98). These scores reveal that the current enterprise integration in the course is insufficient to meet students' career development needs, with generally low approval and little variation across respondents. In terms of course improvement needs, the item "What enterprise-related content do you hope to see added to the course?" received an average score of 2.78, which, while still below the midpoint, was relatively higher. The standard deviation of 1.526 indicates a wide range of opinions, reflecting diverse expectations. Regarding actual learning outcomes, "To what extent has the course helped your career planning?" scored 2.54, suggesting a moderately low impact. However, the item "What is the greatest gain you've obtained from the career planning course?" received a significantly higher average score of 4.01, indicating that despite general reservations about the course design, some students had positive individual experiences. Finally, the item "What additional content do you hope to be included in the course?" scored 2.13 with a standard deviation of 1.165, implying that there is no consensus among students on specific improvements, and that opinions are quite varied.

In summary, although some students have gained certain benefits from the course, overall evaluations indicate a generally low level of satisfaction regarding the practicality of the content, course structure, and integration of enterprise resources. The effectiveness of the course has not yet met the desired expectations. These findings offer clear guidance for future curriculum design and reform, highlighting the need to enhance practical relevance, strengthen industry alignment, integrate with students' majors, and optimize the course structure in order to better address students' real-world developmental needs.

4.2.2 The Current Situation of Students' Career Planning Ability

Table 4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis of Career Planning Ability

Item	N	min	max	average	standard deviation
4. Are you clear about your career goals?	404	1	5	2.51	0.858
5. Do you have the habit of formulating personal career plans?	404	1	5	2.65	0.848
18. Before encountering career planning courses, what was your level of understanding of various types of enterprises?	404	1	4	2.41	0.742
24. Understanding industry knowledge	404	1	5	2.39	0.733
25. Mastery of vocational skills	404	1	5	2.56	0.735
26. Job hunting tips	404	1	5	2.68	0.796
27. Resume writing skills	404	1	5	2.75	0.829
28. Interview response skills	404	1	5	2.79	0.846

According to Table 4.2.2, the average score for the item "Are you clear about your career goals?" among the 404 respondents is 2.51, indicating that students' overall awareness of their career goals is at a moderately low level. The standard deviation is 0.858, suggesting a certain degree of individual variation. For the item "Do you have the habit of formulating personal career plans?", the average score is 2.65, also at a moderately low level, with a standard deviation of 0.848, showing relatively small differences among students. The average score for "Understanding of different types of enterprises before taking the career planning course" is 2.41, which reflects a low level of awareness, with a standard deviation of 0.742, indicating limited variation across individuals. Similarly, the understanding of industry-related knowledge is rated at 2.39 on average, further demonstrating that students generally had a weak understanding of the career landscape before participating in the course. Regarding self-evaluation

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of practical career-related abilities, the average score for mastery of professional skills is 2.56, which is moderately low. The average score for job search skills is slightly higher at 2.68 but still below the moderate level. Resume writing skills received an average score of 2.75, which, although still in the lower-middle range, is relatively better among the listed competencies. Interview performance skills scored the highest at 2.79, suggesting a relatively stronger ability in this area, though it remains at a generally low level overall.

In summary, students exhibit varying degrees of inadequacy in clarifying career goals, developing career planning habits, and understanding enterprises and industries. Additionally, they have not yet established systematic preparation in practical job-seeking skills. These findings provide data-based evidence for the necessity and urgency of career planning courses in enhancing students' employment awareness and capabilities.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3.1 Analysis of the Correlation between Career Planning Abilities and Career Planning Courses

dimensions	SCC	CI-AA	GS-DM	CD	CBI
SCC	1	0.184**	0.560**	0.422**	0.469**
CI-AA	0.184**	1	0.253**	0.099*	0.193**
GS-DM	0.560**	0.253**	1	0.473**	0.661**
CD	0.422**	0.099*	0.473**	1	0.641**
CBI	0.469**	0.193**	0.661**	0.641**	1

Notes: **. At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.
*. At the 0.05 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.

Self-awareness ability has a weak positive correlation (0.184**) with the acquisition and analysis of occupational information, indicating that individuals with strong self-awareness may also perform better in obtaining and analyzing career-related data. Self-awareness ability shows a moderate positive correlation (0.560**) with goal setting and decision-making skills, suggesting that self-awareness significantly influences one's ability to set goals and make decisions. Additionally, there is a moderate positive correlation (0.422**) between self-awareness ability and course duration, implying that students with higher self-awareness may be more willing to invest more time in their studies. Furthermore, self-awareness ability exhibits a moderate positive correlation (0.469**) with the integration of courses and enterprises, indicating that students with strong self-awareness may find it easier to understand and apply course content related to business contexts.

The ability to acquire and analyze occupational information has a weak positive correlation (0.253**) with goal setting and decision-making abilities, indicating that this skill has some influence on goal setting and decision-making. The correlation between the ability to acquire and analyze occupational information and course duration is relatively weak (0.099*), being significant only at the 0.05 level, suggesting that the relationship between these two factors is not particularly close. The ability to acquire and analyze occupational information shows a weak positive correlation (0.193**) with the integration of courses and enterprises, implying that this skill aids in understanding the integration of courses with enterprise-related content. Goal-setting and decision-making abilities have a moderate positive correlation (0.473**) with course duration, suggesting that students with stronger goal-setting and decision-making skills may be more willing to invest time in learning. Additionally, goal-setting and decision-making abilities exhibit a strong positive correlation (0.661**) with the integration of courses and enterprises, indicating that these abilities significantly impact the understanding and application of enterprise-related content within the courses.

Table 4.3.2 Regression Analysis of Self-awareness Ability and Career Planning Courses

model		Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	t	Significance
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.502	0.225		11.104	0.000
	CD	0.189	0.052	0.205	3.628	0.000
	CBI	0.198	0.033	0.338	5.973	0.000

Notes: Dependent variable---- Self-cognitive Competence

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The course duration (unstandardized coefficient) is 0.189, with a standard error of 0.052, a Beta (standardized coefficient) of 0.205, a t-value of 3.628, and a significance level of 0.000. An increase of one unit in course duration is expected to result in an increase of 0.189 units in self-awareness ability. With a significance level of 0.000, course duration has a positive impact on self-awareness ability. The integration of courses with enterprises (unstandardized coefficient) is 0.198, with a standard error of 0.033, a Beta (standardized coefficient) of 0.338, a t-value of 5.973, and a significance level of 0.000. An increase of one unit in the integration of courses with enterprises is expected to result in an increase of 0.198 units in self-awareness ability. With a significance level of 0.000, the integration of courses with enterprises has a significant and relatively large positive effect on self-awareness ability.

Table 4.3.3 Regression Analysis of Occupational Information Acquisition and Analytical Skills and Career Planning Courses

model		Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	t	Significance
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.125	0.287		14.388	0.000
	CD	-0.044	0.066	-0.043	-0.670	0.503
	CBI	0.146	0.042	0.220	3.454	0.001

Notes: Dependent variable----Career Information Acquisition & Analysis

The significance of course duration is 0.503, indicating that course duration does not significantly impact the ability to acquire and analyze occupational information. The unstandardized coefficient for the integration of courses with enterprises is 0.146, with a standard error of 0.042, a Beta (standardized coefficient) of 0.220, a t-value of 3.454, and a significance level of 0.001. This suggests that for every one-unit increase in the integration of courses with enterprises, there is an expected increase of 0.146 units in the ability to acquire and analyze occupational information. With a significance level of 0.001, it is evident that the integration of courses with enterprises has a positive effect on the ability to acquire and analyze occupational information.

Table 4.3.4 Regression Analysis of Goal Setting, Decision-Making Ability, and Career Planning Courses

model		Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	t	Significance
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.615	0.222		11.755	0.000
	CD	0.088	0.051	0.083	1.712	0.088
	CBI	0.409	0.033	0.608	12.486	0.000

Notes: Dependent variable----Goal Setting & Decision-making

The significance of course duration is 0.088, indicating that the impact of course duration on goal setting and decision-making ability is nearly significant. The integration of courses with enterprises (unstandardized coefficient) is 0.409, with a standard error of 0.033, a Beta (standardized coefficient) of 0.608, a t-value of 12.486, and a significance level of 0.000. For every unit increase in the integration of courses with enterprises, goal setting and decision-making ability are expected to increase by 0.409 units; at a significance level of 0.000, the integration of courses with enterprises has a very strong positive effect on goal setting and decision-making ability.

To verify whether the aspects of career planning courses are related to the aspects of career planning abilities, a regression model was used for validation, resulting in a model coefficient diagram, as shown in Figure 4.3.

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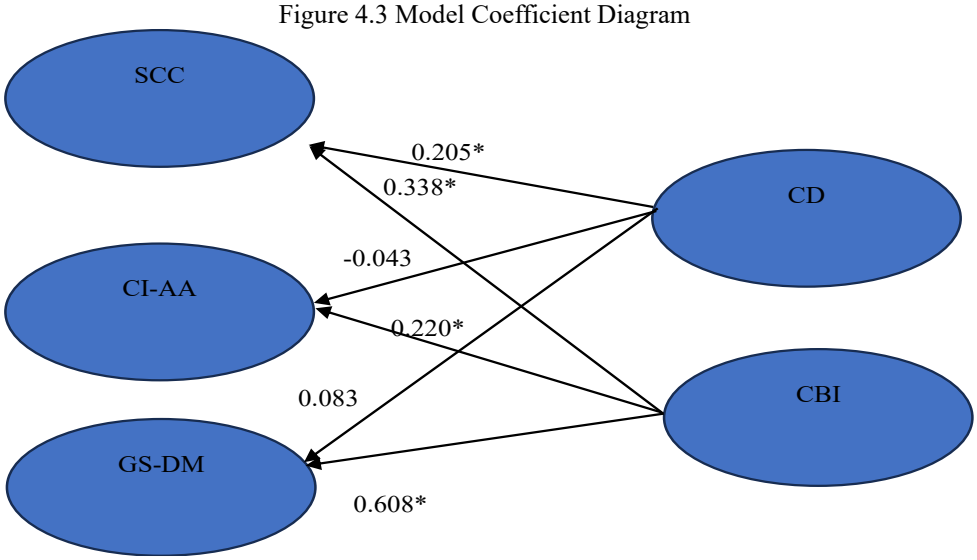
Figure 4.3 Model Coefficient Diagram



V. Results and Discussion

Based on the data analysis presented in the previous chapter, an in-depth discussion is conducted in this chapter regarding the engagement of English-major students in applied universities with career planning courses. The findings obtained from descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis are interpreted to summarize students' overall understanding, participation, and feedback toward the course. Their strengths and weaknesses in career planning competencies are assessed, key influencing factors are identified, and targeted suggestions for course improvement are provided.

5.1 Career Planning Course Requirements

Career planning and guidance must be closely aligned with enterprise development and labor market demands in order to realize their full value[0]. The data analysis indicates that students' understanding of enterprises before taking career planning courses is generally limited—most have only heard of a few well-known companies, and only a small portion are familiar with basic information about them. As universities face growing employment pressure among graduates, it is essential to adapt educational strategies and increase the proportion of practical training to help students explore new employment opportunities. Although China has promoted university–enterprise cooperation for years, in practice, universities often dominate the collaboration, leading to a lack of genuine engagement from enterprises. To improve the effectiveness of such partnerships, universities must take enterprise input seriously—by understanding industry needs and incorporating employer feedback into curriculum reform, institutions can better cultivate high-demand talent, thereby encouraging enterprises to actively participate in collaboration efforts[0]. Integrating enterprise elements into career planning courses provides students with valuable opportunities and platforms to engage with the real-world job market. Measures such as introducing corporate case studies and inviting industry professionals to share experiences help expand students' career perspectives and deepen their understanding of professional development pathways. These efforts are instrumental in enhancing students' self-awareness, career information analysis, goal setting, and decision-making—key components of effective career planning. Ultimately, career planning plays a vital role in shaping students' long-term professional trajectories and has profound implications for their future development[0].

Over 70% of students believe that the current duration and weekly instructional hours of the career planning course are reasonable. Within this timeframe, the course successfully covers key areas such as career prospects, industry knowledge, self-awareness, and future planning, effectively enhancing students' career planning abilities and improving their future employability. However, nearly 30% of students rated the duration and class hours as only moderately reasonable, while a small minority considered them unreasonable. Data analysis reveals that dissatisfaction among this group primarily stems from the lack of practical opportunities in the course design. Most career planning classes are delivered in a traditional lecture format, with limited platforms for hands-on experience. As a result, students primarily acquire theoretical knowledge without developing

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practical skills applicable in real-world settings. Furthermore, the course is densely packed with content—covering topics such as the Holland Career Interest Test, MBTI personality assessment, and value-based career exploration—yet each session lasts only 45 minutes. Given the need to incorporate interactive activities and assessments within the limited time, instructors are often forced to compress the content, which significantly compromises teaching quality and overall learning effectiveness[0].

5.2 Development of Career Planning Competency

Furthermore, through data analysis, it is evident that college students' career planning abilities are generally at a lower intermediate level, which is significantly related to their self-awareness and understanding of enterprises. The key to cultivating career planning skills lies in students' self-exploration; their clear understanding of themselves greatly influences their career planning capabilities. The more clearly students recognize themselves, the more pronounced the promotion effect on their employability[0]. In addition to foundational knowledge taught in classrooms, students' understanding of enterprises also impacts the development of their career planning abilities. Data collected from questionnaires reveal that most students perceive the primary drawback of career planning courses to be the lack of practical opportunities, which indirectly highlights that the cultivation of career planning skills cannot do without practice. The best and most direct method is for students to directly understand and engage with enterprises. Therefore, during the cultivation process, it is essential to involve enterprises comprehensively, starting from the students' enrollment stage, to participate in their career education[0].

VI. Suggestion

Based on the findings and analyses presented in the previous chapters, targeted suggestions for the development and reform of career planning courses for English majors at application-oriented universities are proposed in this chapter. The course structure is intended to be optimized, teaching effectiveness enhanced, and students' career development needs better supported.

6.1 Rational Design of Career Course Duration

A reasonable course duration is a key factor in ensuring both teaching effectiveness and learning efficiency. Excessively long class sessions may lead to decreased student concentration, while overly short sessions may fail to cover essential content. Therefore, in curriculum design, determining appropriate class length and total instructional hours—based on subject characteristics, learner age, and instructional objectives—is a critical prerequisite for improving the overall quality of instruction.

First, regarding the arrangement of instructional hours: currently, students at the university receive only 8 class hours of career planning instruction per academic year. Although most students indicated in the survey that the number of class hours is relatively reasonable, some still felt that the current time allocation is insufficient. In addition to structured classroom-based instruction, the implementation of a "second classroom" approach to career planning can be considered. Career guidance education can be integrated into campus activities. For example, organizing enterprise research competitions can help students gain deeper insight into employers' requirements[0]. Furthermore, collaboration among various departments to hold mock interview competitions can not only enhance students' resume writing skills but also develop their interview performance abilities.

Secondly, the instructional content and learning objectives of career planning courses should vary according to students' academic year. For freshmen who are new to university life, the focus should be on self-assessment, understanding their major, exploring career possibilities, and setting initial goals. At this stage, the aim is to cultivate awareness of career planning, emphasize self-exploration, and build foundational skills. For sophomores, the emphasis should shift toward refining and adjusting their career plans, enhancing their career cognition structure, and evaluating methods for establishing career goals to ensure clearer direction and adaptability. For juniors, the curriculum should prioritize practical application. Activities such as mock interviews, career experience programs, and internships should be integrated to help students learn and apply career planning knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, with a focus on career alignment and the development of professional competencies. For seniors, who must make definitive career decisions, the course should be closely aligned with employment and entrepreneurship guidance. The curriculum should guide students in understanding employment policies and job search techniques, enhancing job-readiness, clarifying career aspirations, staying informed about changes in the job market, and focusing on career path implementation[0].

6.2 Strengthening University-Enterprise Cooperation

University–enterprise cooperation is a crucial means of deeply integrating higher education with industry demands and holds significant

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implications for both student development and institutional progress. For students, such cooperation provides valuable practical opportunities, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, thereby enhancing professional skills and career readiness, and ultimately improving employability. Exposure to authentic work environments and corporate cultures also enables students to plan their career paths with greater clarity. For universities, collaboration with enterprises supports the optimization of talent cultivation models by aligning curricula and instructional content more closely with industry needs, thus improving the quality of education. In addition, institutions can leverage corporate resources and technological strengths to promote research innovation and facilitate the application of research outcomes, thereby enhancing their capacity for social service. Therefore, strengthening university–enterprise cooperation is not only an effective approach to fostering students' all-round development, but also a key strategy for achieving sustainable growth in higher education.

As a transitional space where students shift from academic life to professional roles, universities should provide more opportunities for students to understand and engage with enterprises. Higher education institutions are encouraged to actively participate in university–enterprise partnership forums, conduct on-site visits to companies, and gain insights into current industry needs, thereby aligning curriculum reforms with real-world labor market demands[0].

In addition, faculty composition can be diversified by incorporating corporate recruiters and career development experts into the teaching team alongside university instructors. This would foster a deeper model of university–enterprise cooperation that offers students access to internships and practical training platforms. Furthermore, course delivery should extend beyond traditional classroom instruction. By inviting professionals—such as alumni working in industry—to participate in teaching, a collaborative and diversified instructional system can be developed. Such efforts help build a solid bridge between students and the job market, granting them broader exposure to industry knowledge and more hands-on experience[0].

6.3 Cultivating Students' Learning Awareness

In enhancing the effectiveness of career planning courses, the cultivation of students' learning awareness is regarded as a critical factor. Only when students are encouraged to actively engage, reflect, and take initiative can the knowledge and skills delivered through the course be effectively internalized and translated into practical competence.

To foster students' awareness of autonomous learning, traditional teaching methods should first be modified. Career planning courses should encourage students to learn and engage in practice through diversified instructional approaches, enabling them to actively construct and comprehend career-related experiences, thus facilitating the achievement of teaching objectives. In such courses, cognitive-based teaching methods—such as lectures, demonstrations, and questioning—can be used to deliver fundamental industry knowledge and career planning skills. Discussion-based strategies—such as group discussions, debates, and brainstorming—may be employed to actively involve students in critical classroom thinking. Additionally, operational methods—such as educational games and task-based activities—can be adopted to guide students in completing in-class tasks, allowing them to participate personally in limited-time and space-constrained practical sessions[0].

Secondly, the teaching faculty should be optimized by introducing industry experts to stimulate students' learning interest. These experts may include renowned professionals from outside the university, leaders from hiring organizations, trainers from career development companies, and outstanding alumni—individuals who possess both professional authority and exemplary influence[0]. At the same time, university instructors must keep pace with the times by acquiring new knowledge and skills to better support student development. Teachers should update traditional teaching philosophies while integrating digital technologies into instruction[0]. In doing so, not only can students' interest in learning be enhanced, but real-time and accurate insights into societal talent demands and enterprise-related knowledge can also be more effectively delivered.

VII. Conclusion

In this section, a comprehensive summary of the research is presented. The main findings and their implications are reviewed, and the significance of the study is discussed. Furthermore, several limitations that were encountered during the research process are acknowledged, and suggestions for future research are proposed to provide direction for continued exploration in this area.

7.1 Summary

This study was conducted among 404 English-major students from the School of Foreign Languages at Panzhihua University, aiming to systematically investigate the current state of students' engagement in career planning courses. A combination of research

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methods—including questionnaire surveys, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis—was employed to explore students' awareness of career planning courses, their participation behaviors, satisfaction levels, learning outcomes, and the impact of key course elements on their career planning competence.

The findings are summarized as follows: First, the overall evaluation of career planning courses by students was found to be relatively low. Students generally perceived the course content as lacking in practical relevance and insufficiently integrated with enterprise elements. The instructional methods and course duration were also seen as needing improvement. Second, the overall level of students' career planning competence was revealed to be suboptimal. Most students demonstrated a below-average level in areas such as career goal awareness, career planning habits, access to career information, and job-search skills, indicating a lack of systematic preparation and practical capability. In addition, enterprise integration and course duration were found to significantly influence students' career planning competence. Correlation and regression analyses showed that "enterprise integration" had a positive and significant effect on students' ability to acquire and analyze career information as well as on their goal-setting and decision-making abilities. The variable "course duration" showed a near-significant impact on some competence indicators, suggesting the need for further optimization of course structure and practical components. Lastly, a strong willingness to improve the course was expressed by the students. Data indicated a desire for more practical platforms, inclusion of enterprise case studies, and enhanced vocational skills training, highlighting that the current course structure does not yet fully meet students' real-world development needs.

Based on the above findings, three specific recommendations were proposed in Chapter Six: improving course duration management, deepening university-enterprise cooperation, and fostering students' learning awareness. These suggestions serve as a reference for the optimization of career planning course design in application-oriented universities.

7.2 Research Limitations

Although this study has empirically revealed the current state of career planning course engagement among English-major students in application-oriented universities, certain limitations remain due to research constraints.

First, as the researcher is an undergraduate student, there are inevitable limitations in academic foundation, research methodology, time management, and critical thinking skills. Second, in terms of sampling, the participants were limited to English-major students from the School of Foreign Languages at Panzhihua University. The sample was relatively small, homogeneous in terms of region and academic background, and lacked diversity across institutions and disciplines. As a result, the generalizability of the findings to students from other universities or majors is restricted. Third, the study primarily relied on questionnaires and quantitative analysis. The exploration of students' learning in career planning courses was largely based on surface-level data, without incorporating in-depth interviews or qualitative research. Consequently, the underlying mechanisms and individual differences that influence students' experiences and development could not be thoroughly uncovered. Lastly, the design of the questionnaire may have lacked comprehensiveness, as it did not fully capture all components of career planning competence or critical aspects of course implementation. In addition, variables such as family background and broader social context were not sufficiently accounted for in the data analysis, which may have introduced potential confounding effects and impacted the accuracy of the conclusions.

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