

Analysis of Factors Influencing the “Added Value” in English Academic Quality of Students in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: *This study examines key factors influencing students' English learning, including student-specific, teaching-related, and school environmental factors, aiming to provide a basis for improving English teaching quality and learning outcomes. Data were collected through literature review, questionnaires, and interviews. Results show that learning motivation, attitude, strategies, and habits are critical intrinsic factors; teachers' instructional abilities, methods, curriculum design, and textbook selection directly affect learning effectiveness; the school's English learning atmosphere, resources, and management support systems also have significant impacts. The study recommends that schools enhance guidance on student motivation and strategy training, teachers improve teaching skills and innovate methods, and institutions optimize curriculum and resource management. Future research could further quantify relationships between factors and develop tailored improvements based on regional and institutional contexts.*

Keywords: English learning, Student-specific factors, Teaching-related factors, School environmental factors, Conclusions and recommendations.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background and Significance

In the era of rapid globalization and knowledge economy development, English proficiency has become a crucial indicator for measuring the comprehensive quality and employment competitiveness of students in higher vocational colleges. With the acceleration of mass higher education in China, the student population structure in higher vocational institutions has become increasingly diverse, with significant disparities in students' English foundations, which directly poses challenges to the improvement of English academic quality. Against this backdrop, exploring the factors influencing the “added value” in English academic quality of higher vocational college students is of great significance [1].

The “added value” in English academic quality for higher vocational students emphasizes the actual contribution of the educational process to student growth, rather than mere outcome evaluation. Research indicates that factors affecting “added value” include internal variables such as students' individual learning motivation, learning strategies, and self-efficacy, as well as external conditions encompassing teachers' instructional proficiency, curriculum design, teaching resources, and campus language environment [2]. For instance, Zhou Hang pointed out in their research that vocational college students' emotional and cognitive engagement in the English learning process are significantly positively correlated, and both jointly promote the improvement of academic achievement [3]. Furthermore, Yu Tingting's research also showed that phonetic ability, as a fundamental skill in English learning, directly impacts students' comprehensive language application ability, and lagging phonetic learning often stems from a lack of systematic training and effective feedback mechanisms [4].

From the perspective of educational equity and quality enhancement, analyzing the factors influencing the “added

value” in English academic quality of higher vocational college students holds significant practical importance. On one hand, it helps identify weaknesses in the teaching process, providing a scientific decision-making basis for educational administrators and promoting the optimization of teaching resource allocation. On the other hand, by revealing key variables affecting academic progress, it can offer teachers targeted instructional strategy suggestions, enhancing teaching effectiveness and student engagement. Particularly under the current “Double High Plan” context, higher vocational education is transitioning from scale expansion to connotative development. How to achieve substantial improvement in students' English ability through teaching reform has become one of the important dimensions for measuring the quality of higher vocational institutions. Chen Lin's research further indicated that vocational college students show employment anxiety during English learning, which not only affects learning motivation but may also inhibit the realization of “added value” [5]. Therefore, constructing a supportive learning environment and enhancing students' psychological resilience are also important pathways to improving English academic quality.

In summary, in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the “added value” in English academic quality of higher vocational college students not only helps clarify key nodes in the English teaching process but also provides theoretical support for implementing precise strategies in higher vocational English education. Future research should further integrate empirical data to explore the interaction mechanisms among different variables, thereby offering more operational solutions for enhancing the English academic quality of higher vocational students.

1.2 Research Methods and Data Sources

This study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the “added value” in English academic quality of higher vocational college students, employing scientific and rigorous research methods and carefully selected data sources.

The research design fully considers various factors to ensure the scientific validity and reliability of the findings.

During the research process, data collection was conducted using a combination of questionnaire surveys and standardized tests. The questionnaire design covered multiple dimensions, including student individual characteristics, teacher instructional behaviors, and the teaching environment, comprehensively capturing potential variables affecting students' English learning outcomes. Through in-depth investigation of these dimensions, students' learning situations and various factors in the teaching process can be understood from multiple angles, providing a rich data foundation for subsequent analysis. The standardized tests focused on students' comprehensive English abilities, including the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The test content was designed with reference to the China Standards of English (CSE), ensuring the scientific nature and standardization of the assessment. The survey participants were selected from current students in 10 higher vocational colleges across the country, with a total sample size of 2160, covering different majors, grades, and gender groups, possessing strong representativeness and able to reasonably reflect the overall situation of higher vocational college students.

Regarding data analysis, a multiple linear regression model was employed to quantitatively analyze the factors influencing the "added value" in English academic quality. Using students' English entrance scores as the baseline and graduation periodic test scores as the endpoint, the "added value" indicator for each student was calculated and included as the dependent variable in the regression model. Independent variables included three categories: student individual characteristics, teacher instructional behaviors, and the teaching environment, totaling 20 specific indicators. Through the estimation of standardized regression coefficients, core variables significantly impacting "added value" could be accurately identified. Furthermore, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) was introduced to explore the path relationships among variables in depth. This model not only verified the direct effects of various variables on "added value" but also revealed mediating and moderating effects among variables, providing strong support for a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables.

In summary, through reasonable research methods and extensive data sources, this study lays a solid foundation for in-depth analysis of the factors influencing the "added value" in English academic quality of higher vocational college students. The research results will provide important empirical evidence for English teaching in higher vocational colleges and offer robust theoretical support for subsequent policy formulation and teaching reform.

2. Analysis of Student-Related Factors

2.1 Learning Motivation and Attitude

Learning motivation and attitude play a central role in the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges and have always been a key area of focus in educational psychology and language teaching

research. Numerous studies have shown that the intrinsic drive and positive attitude demonstrated by students during English learning not only directly affect the sustainability and depth of learning behaviors but also largely determine the extent of their language ability improvement and the stability of their academic outcomes. Particularly in the context of higher vocational education, which emphasizes skill orientation and practical application, whether students possess clear learning goals, sustained learning interest, and a positive learning attitude has become one of the key variables measuring the "added value" of their English academic quality.

From the perspective of educational psychology, learning motivation can be divided into intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation stems from an individual's interest in and satisfaction with the learning content itself, while extrinsic motivation is influenced by external reward or punishment mechanisms. Due to the diversity of the student population and differences in learning foundations, higher vocational students exhibit significant heterogeneity in the type and intensity of learning motivation, which further affects their level of investment and academic performance in English learning. For example, some students have a strong interest in the English language and culture, thereby forming stable intrinsic motivation and demonstrating high initiative and creativity in learning; while other students rely solely on external incentives such as exam pressure or teacher supervision, making their learning motivation susceptible to situational changes and difficult to maintain long-term stable learning behaviors.

Learning attitude is also an important factor affecting academic quality, encompassing three dimensions: cognitive evaluation, emotional tendency, and behavioral intention. A positive learning attitude helps students form good learning habits and strategies, enhancing psychological resilience and coping abilities when facing learning difficulties. However, due to their relatively weak learning foundations, higher vocational students often experience anxiety and apprehension towards difficulties in English learning. If not guided and intervened in time, this can easily evolve into a negative learning attitude, inhibiting academic progress. Therefore, building a positive learning atmosphere, providing personalized learning support, and reinforcing students' successful experiences are important paths to improving the English learning attitudes of higher vocational students. The construction of an added value academic quality evaluation system helps students establish a correct understanding of their own learning effectiveness through dynamic assessment and process feedback, thereby gradually forming a positive learning attitude.

2.2 Learning Strategies and Habits

Learning strategies and habits play a crucial role in the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges. From the dimension of learning strategies, the English learning strategies of higher vocational students encompass four major categories: cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and resource management. Cognitive strategies, such as repetition, memorization, and semantic association, directly act upon language input and output processing and

are fundamental to enhancing language skills. Metacognitive strategies achieve self-regulation through planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Affective strategies alleviate learning anxiety and enhance confidence. Resource management strategies provide external support for learning. However, due to the generally weak English foundation of higher vocational students, some students exhibit blindness and inefficiency in strategy selection and execution, affecting the improvement of learning outcomes.

Good learning habits are the guarantee for the effective implementation of learning strategies. Research shows that if higher vocational students develop regular learning rhythms, proactive learning attitudes, and habits of continuous reflection, the “added value” in English academic quality will significantly increase [6]. Behaviors such as daily persistent English reading and regular listening practice contribute to knowledge internalization and transfer. Good learning habits can also enhance students’ sense of control over the learning process, boost learning motivation and self-efficacy, forming a virtuous cycle. However, in reality, many students lack systematic learning plans, and their learning behaviors are casual and passive, leading to large fluctuations in learning outcomes and making it difficult to achieve steady improvement in academic quality.

The formation of learning strategies and habits is influenced by various external factors. Teachers’ instructional methods, classroom atmosphere, learning task design, as well as family and social support, all shape students’ learning behaviors to varying degrees [7]. Teachers can guide students to master scientific learning strategies through methods like task-driven instruction and continuously supervise them to develop good learning habits, which helps students achieve higher quality “added value.” At the institutional level, curriculum design and evaluation mechanisms should also focus on the student learning process, providing institutional guarantees for the cultivation of learning strategies and habits.

In summary, learning strategies and habits are crucial for the “added value” in English academic quality of higher vocational college students. In-depth research into their specific composition and influencing pathways can provide theoretical and practical guidance for improving the quality of English teaching, helping higher vocational students achieve better results in English learning.

3. Analysis of Teaching-Related Factors

3.1 Teacher Instructional Competence and Methods

Teacher instructional competence and methods play a vital role in the “added value” of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges, with their mechanisms of action permeating throughout the teaching activities. In terms of the composition of teaching competence, teachers’ professional knowledge reserve, instructional design ability, classroom organization skills, and language expression ability collectively form the foundational support for teaching effectiveness.

The comprehensive competence demonstrated by teachers during instruction not only directly affects the efficiency of

students’ knowledge acquisition but also indirectly promotes the improvement of student academic quality by stimulating learning motivation and enhancing classroom participation, among other pathways. Especially in English teaching, due to the dual requirements of language ability and teaching ability, teachers’ instructional level becomes a core variable affecting students’ language acquisition outcomes. For example, teachers with strong teaching competence can flexibly adjust teaching strategies based on students’ cognitive levels and learning styles, achieving personalized adaptation of teaching content. Through differentiated instructional design, targeted learning support can be provided for students at different levels, helping to narrow the academic gap between students and improve overall teaching quality.

The selection and implementation strategies of teaching methods are equally decisive. With the continuous updating of educational concepts, the traditional “cramming” teaching model can no longer meet the needs of modern higher vocational English teaching. Teaching methods emphasizing interactivity, situational learning, and task-driven approaches have gradually become mainstream. New teaching models such as Project-Based Learning (PBL), Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), and the Flipped Classroom have shown significant advantages in enhancing students’ language application ability, autonomous learning ability, and cross-cultural communication skills. The formative assessment mechanisms adopted by teachers during the teaching process, such as classroom feedback, periodic tests, and learning portfolio records, also provide students with a path for continuous improvement, thereby achieving steady enhancement of academic quality during the dynamic learning process.

The effective combination of teacher instructional competence and teaching methods can significantly enhance the “added value” in students’ English academic quality. The so-called “added value” refers to the substantive contribution of school education to students’ academic development after excluding differences in their pre-entry foundations. Within this framework, teacher instructional competence is considered one of the endogenous variables affecting “added value.” It is worth noting that the optimization of teacher instructional competence and methods does not exist in isolation but is closely related to factors such as teaching resources, curriculum design, and student individual characteristics. Teachers need to rely on the teaching platforms and technical support provided by the school, such as multimedia teaching equipment and online learning systems, to enhance the interactivity and effectiveness of teaching. Simultaneously, teaching methods must also match students’ cognitive styles, learning motivations, and language foundations to truly play a promoting role. For instance, for students with weak English foundations, “scaffolding” teaching strategies can be used to provide gradual guidance and support, helping them build confidence and ability in language learning. For students with a certain language foundation, expansive tasks and critical thinking training can be employed to further enhance their comprehensive language application ability. This teaching philosophy and method of teaching students according to their aptitude is a key path to achieving “added value” in students’ English academic quality.

In summary, teachers' instructional competence and methods play an irreplaceable role in the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges. The improvement of teaching competence provides a fundamental guarantee for teaching quality, while the innovation of teaching methods provides an effective path for enhancing student learning outcomes. Future research should further explore its mechanisms of action in different teaching contexts and verify its specific impact on students' academic "added value" with empirical data, providing more operational theoretical support and practical guidance for the reform of English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

3.2 Curriculum Design and Textbook Selection

Curriculum design and textbook selection play a key role in the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges. Curriculum design determines the breadth and depth of students' English learning, and a reasonable curriculum structure can effectively bridge students' language foundation and practical application ability. For example, some higher vocational colleges have introduced an integrated "English + Major" curriculum model, which closely combines English learning with the major, significantly enhancing the "added value" of students' English academic quality. This curriculum model not only enhances students' language ability but also improves their professional literacy. Meanwhile, the flexibility and diversity of curriculum design are crucial. By offering elective courses, cross-cultural communication courses, workplace English, and other modules, the learning needs of students at different levels can be met, enhancing their learning initiative and sustainability, thereby indirectly promoting the improvement of English academic quality.

As an important carrier of curriculum implementation, the scientific nature and appropriateness of textbook selection have a decisive impact on the "added value" of English academic quality. The difficulty level of textbook content, the authenticity of language materials, the design of teaching activities, and their relevance to students' actual lives and future career needs all directly affect students' learning outcomes. Research shows that selecting textbooks that are close to students' life experiences, contemporary, and practical can effectively stimulate students' learning interest, increase classroom participation, and improve learning efficiency. For instance, some higher vocational colleges have introduced task-based teaching concepts in textbook selection, designing authentic task scenarios that allow students to naturally acquire language knowledge and improve language application skills while completing tasks. Furthermore, the frequency of textbook updates should keep pace with social development, avoiding the use of outdated content detached from real-world contexts, which could otherwise hinder the improvement of academic quality.

There is a significant synergistic effect between curriculum design and textbook selection. The optimization of the curriculum structure relies on the support of high-quality textbooks, and the scientific use of textbooks also depends on reasonable curriculum arrangements. In a curriculum system combining "Basic English + Industry English," textbook selection should balance basic language training and industry

terminology learning, ensuring students acquire professional English ability. This organic combination helps students build a complete language knowledge system, enhance language application ability in specific contexts, and achieve significant "added value" in English academic quality. Simultaneously, teachers' ability to adapt and develop teaching materials during curriculum implementation is also crucial. Teachers should flexibly adjust textbook content, supplement language input and practical activities based on student learning characteristics and teaching objectives, enhancing the targeting and effectiveness of teaching.

In summary, the scientific nature of curriculum design and the appropriateness of textbook selection are important factors influencing the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges. The curriculum structure should focus on the combination of foundation and application, and textbook content should reflect contemporaneity and practicality. Only through the synergistic effect of both can students' English learning outcomes be effectively improved. Colleges should strengthen the dynamic management of curricula and textbooks, regularly evaluate teaching effectiveness, and make optimizations and adjustments based on student feedback to ensure the continuous improvement of English teaching quality.

4. Institutional Environmental Factors

4.1 English Learning Atmosphere and Resources

The English learning atmosphere and resources have a critical impact on the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges, and their mechanisms of action exhibit significant systematic and structural characteristics. From the perspective of educational ecology, the learning atmosphere pertains not only to the creation of a physical environment but also involves the construction of a psychological environment, encompassing multiple dimensions such as teacher-student interaction, peer relationships, and the stimulation of learning motivation. A favorable English learning atmosphere can significantly increase the frequency of language input and the willingness for language output among students, thereby promoting the internalization and transfer of language ability. Within the higher vocational education system, given the generally weak English foundation of students and the diverse characteristics of their learning motivations, optimizing the learning atmosphere is particularly important. The immersive language environment created by teachers in the classroom, the English elements permeating the campus culture, and the language practice opportunities provided by extracurricular activities all constitute important variables affecting students' English academic quality.

The accessibility and suitability of English learning resources are another core element determining the "added value" of academic quality. Higher vocational colleges need to balance the development of basic resources and expansive resources when allocating them. The former includes traditional instrumental resources such as textbooks, dictionaries, and grammar handbooks, while the latter encompasses new intelligent resources like digital learning platforms, online

courses, and virtual simulation experiments. Research has found that the introduction of high-quality resources can effectively compensate for the limitations of classroom teaching, providing students with personalized and autonomous learning paths [8]. For example, some higher vocational colleges have introduced AI-driven language diagnostic systems, achieving precise identification of students' weaknesses in English learning and targeted reinforcement, significantly improving learning efficiency. However, resource construction should not only focus on technological investment but also pay attention to the scientific nature of content and pedagogical appropriateness, avoiding the structural contradiction of simultaneous "resource surplus" and "resource scarcity."

From the dimension of educational equity, disparities in the distribution of English learning atmosphere and resources may exacerbate the "added value" gap in academic quality. Empirical studies show that significant differences exist in access to English learning resources among students from different regions and professional backgrounds. These differences are reflected not only in the allocation of hardware facilities but also in the utilization efficiency of implicit resources [9]. For instance, students from urban areas often possess stronger information literacy and resource screening abilities, whereas students from rural backgrounds face more technical obstacles and cognitive barriers in using digital resources [9]. If such differences in resource utilization capabilities are not intervened in promptly, they will lead to the "Matthew Effect," further widening the disparity in academic quality. Therefore, in the reform of English education in higher vocational colleges, it is imperative to establish dynamic monitoring mechanisms, periodically evaluate resource allocation and usage effects, and ensure that resource investment can truly translate into substantive improvement in academic quality.

Constructing a scientific English learning support system is the fundamental path to achieving continuous optimization of the "added value" in academic quality. This system should include three core modules: first, the restructuring of physical space, providing students with multimodal language input and output scenarios through the construction of physical spaces such as multifunctional language labs and immersive learning centers; second, the cultivation of a digital ecology, developing learning management systems with adaptive functions based on big data and artificial intelligence technology, achieving intelligent delivery of teaching content and visual analysis of learning behaviors; third, the improvement of institutional guarantees, establishing closed-loop mechanisms for teacher training, resource updates, and effect feedback, ensuring the sustainable development of the learning atmosphere and resource construction. Research indicates that such a comprehensive support system can effectively activate students' language learning potential, enabling them to achieve maximum academic added value under limited educational investment. Future research could further focus on the synergistic effects of different support modules, exploring the optimal practice path for enhancing the quality of English education in higher vocational colleges.

4.2 Teaching Management and Support Systems

Teaching management and support systems play a crucial role in the "added value" of English academic quality for students in higher vocational colleges, serving as key institutional guarantees for enhancing students' English academic level.

From the structural dimension of teaching management, the rationality of curriculum design and the scientific arrangement of teaching pace are the foundation for ensuring teaching quality. The English curriculum in higher vocational colleges should start from the current level of students, constructing a curriculum system that combines tiered teaching and modular content, ensuring a high degree of match between teaching content and student needs. A reasonable curriculum design can stimulate students' learning interest and improve learning outcomes. For example, through tiered teaching, the learning needs of students with different English proficiency levels can be met, allowing each student to develop fully at a level suitable for them. Furthermore, the flexibility of teaching management systems, such as flexible assessment mechanisms and personalized learning path design, also helps stimulate students' learning initiative. However, some higher vocational colleges still suffer from issues like outdated curriculum content and rigid teaching pace, making it difficult for students to achieve effective improvement in English ability within a limited time. Therefore, constructing a dynamically adjusted teaching management system becomes one of the key paths to enhancing the "added value" of academic quality.

The degree of perfection of the teaching support system also profoundly impacts academic quality. In the context of the increasing prevalence of online learning, blended learning models place higher demands on the teaching support system. During the autonomous learning process, students urgently need comprehensive services including learning platform support, online teacher Q&A, and peer collaboration mechanisms. Wang Yuan (2024) pointed out that the formation of online learning power among higher vocational students relies on the continuous empowerment of external support systems. Especially in English learning, the timeliness of teacher feedback and the convenience of resource acquisition significantly affect learning outcomes [10]. Therefore, colleges should strengthen the construction of teaching support platforms, optimize the supply mechanism of learning resources, and enhance teachers' participation and response efficiency in teaching support. A well-developed teaching support system can provide students with a good learning environment, help them solve problems encountered in learning, and improve learning efficiency and quality.

Moreover, the synergistic effect between teaching management and support systems cannot be ignored. Teaching management provides institutional guarantees, while teaching support is implemented in the specific learning process. The two complement each other, jointly building a support network that promotes the improvement of students' English academic quality. For example, by establishing teacher teaching records and student learning trajectory tracking systems, the organic integration of data-driven teaching management and personalized support can be achieved, thereby providing targeted learning intervention strategies for each student. This data-based teaching management and support model not only improves teaching

efficiency but also provides a scientific basis for evaluating the “added value” of academic quality. Only through the collaborative operation of teaching management and support systems can their role in enhancing students’ English academic quality be better realized.

In summary, teaching management and support systems play a structurally supportive role in enhancing the English academic quality of students in higher vocational colleges. By optimizing curriculum design, enhancing the flexibility of teaching management, improving teaching support mechanisms, and strengthening the collaboration between the two, the systematicity and effectiveness of students’ English learning can be effectively enhanced. Future efforts should further explore the construction of intelligent teaching management platforms and promote the development of teaching support systems towards precision and personalization, to achieve continuous improvement in the quality of English education in higher vocational colleges.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Research Conclusions and Implications

The “added value” in English academic quality of students in higher vocational colleges is influenced by the interaction of multiple factors. An in-depth exploration of these factors provides key clues for improving the quality of English teaching.

Resource allocation at the institutional level serves as a fundamental factor, comprehensively influencing the added value of students’ English academic quality [11]. In terms of faculty, a teaching team with high qualifications and rich experience can stimulate students’ learning interest and enhance classroom efficiency through professional knowledge and teaching wisdom. Regarding teaching equipment, the introduction of modern language laboratories and multimedia teaching tools creates more authentic language practice environments for students, enhancing their practical abilities. The scientific nature and diversity of curriculum design and teaching methods are equally crucial. Reasonable curriculum arrangements and innovative teaching methods help meet the learning needs of different students. Furthermore, a sound English teaching evaluation system, along with the implementation of strategies such as tiered teaching and personalized tutoring, can precisely address the development of students with different foundations, directly relating to the extent of their academic progress. Optimizing resource allocation and enhancing teaching support capabilities are solid guarantees for increasing the added value of English academic quality.

Student individual characteristics play a role that cannot be ignored in the process of improving English academic quality. Students’ English entry level, learning motivation, mastery of learning strategies, and self-regulation ability all significantly affect their learning progress speed. Taking students with strong autonomous learning ability as an example, they can efficiently utilize in-class and extracurricular resources for language training, achieving higher academic added value. Simultaneously, students’ family background, parental educational expectations, and social support systems also

influence their learning investment and academic performance to some extent. Research shows that students with higher family cultural capital are more likely to achieve sustained progress in language learning [12]. Therefore, teaching practice needs to pay attention to individual student differences and construct a more targeted teaching support system.

The external policy environment and institutional arrangements have guiding and constraining effects on the quality improvement of English education in higher vocational colleges. Policy orientations, financial investments, teaching quality evaluation mechanisms, and other factors in the vocational education field by national and local governments influence school teaching behaviors and resource allocation through institutional channels. For example, the implementation of the “Double High Plan” has promoted systematic improvement in specialty construction, teacher training, and curriculum reform in higher vocational colleges, creating a favorable institutional environment for English teaching reform. The establishment of various English proficiency tests and skill competitions also guides the setting of teaching objectives and the adjustment of teaching content. Policymakers should further improve the support system for English education in higher vocational colleges and strengthen the synergistic effect between policies and teaching practice.

In summary, the “added value” in English academic quality of students in higher vocational colleges is the result of the interaction of multiple factors, including institutional resource allocation, student individual characteristics, and the external policy environment. Future research should construct a multi-dimensional analytical framework to deeply explore the interaction mechanisms among these factors, providing more operational theoretical support and practical pathways for enhancing the quality of English teaching in higher vocational colleges.

5.2 Policy Recommendations and Future Prospects

Enhancing the “added value” in English academic quality of students in higher vocational colleges requires multifaceted policy support and a precise grasp of future research directions.

Regarding policies, constructing a scientific and reasonable mechanism for allocating English teaching resources is crucial. The significant differences in English proficiency among higher vocational college students make the traditional “one-size-fits-all” teaching model unable to meet individualized needs. Implementing tiered and classified teaching, scientifically grouping classes based on entry English levels, and formulating differentiated teaching objectives and evaluation standards can better adapt to students’ varying foundations. Simultaneously, increasing investment in English teaching resources is indispensable, covering teacher training, updating of teaching equipment, and construction of digital teaching platforms, thereby enhancing overall teaching support capacity. Furthermore, establishing inter-regional resource sharing mechanisms and promoting the inclining of high-quality educational resources towards disadvantaged regions and institutions can effectively

narrow inter-school gaps and achieve educational equity. Improving incentive mechanisms for student English learning cannot be overlooked. Research shows a significant positive correlation between student learning motivation and academic achievement. Introducing a “added value” indicator into the evaluation system, using student progress range as an important basis for evaluating teaching effectiveness and institutional quality, can guide educators to focus on the growth of each student. Establishing diversified reward mechanisms, such as setting up English learning progress scholarships and organizing English skill competitions, can enhance students’ sense of achievement and participation. Incorporating English ability into the comprehensive student evaluation system and enhancing its practical value in employment and further education can further strengthen students’ external learning motivation. Strengthening the professional development support system for teachers is key to improving the effectiveness of English teaching. Some English teachers in higher vocational colleges suffer from outdated teaching concepts and single teaching methods, making it difficult to adapt to the learning needs of students in the new era. Establishing systematic teacher training mechanisms, regularly organizing professional development workshops, and encouraging teachers to participate in domestic and international teaching exchanges and academic seminars can promote teacher professional growth. Promoting teaching research and practical innovation, supporting teachers to conduct teaching experiments and research projects from a “added value” perspective, and exploring teaching models suitable for the characteristics of higher vocational students are essential. Improving teacher evaluation mechanisms, incorporating student academic progress into teacher performance appraisal systems, and forming an evaluation orientation centered on student development are necessary.

Regarding future research directions, the theoretical foundation and application pathways of “added value” evaluation should be further expanded. Current research on “added value” mostly focuses on the basic education stage, with insufficient exploration in the field of higher vocational education. Strengthening interdisciplinary research, integrating perspectives from educational measurement, psychology, linguistics, and other disciplines to construct a more comprehensive theoretical framework for “added value” evaluation is necessary. Promoting the deepening of empirical research, utilizing big data and artificial intelligence technology to dynamically track and precisely analyze students’ English learning processes, can provide a scientific basis for policy formulation. Conducting international comparative studies, learning from advanced international experiences in evaluating student academic progress in vocational education, and exploring paths to enhance the quality of English education in higher vocational colleges with Chinese characteristics will help promote the development of English education in Chinese higher vocational institutions.

In summary, enhancing the “added value” in English academic quality of students in higher vocational colleges is a systematic project that requires coordinated efforts from multiple aspects such as resource allocation, incentive mechanisms, teacher development, and research deepening.

Through policy guidance and institutional innovation, constructing an educational ecosystem centered on student development is essential to truly achieve the high-quality development of English education in higher vocational colleges and cultivate more high-quality technical and skilled talents with international perspectives and language abilities for the country.

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