

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SERVICE-ORIENTED CAREER PLANNING FOR MEDICAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: CLOSING THE GAPS

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ABSTRACT - Medical students constitute a small part of the university population and are young people with high level of knowledge and creativity that the state focuses on training. They are important human resources to meet the industrial expectations, typically for national health. The employment of medical college graduates is not only related to the happiness of thousands of families, but also related to the quality of people's life and health, economic development, and social stability in China. In the face of increasingly severe employment situation, how to alleviate the "employment difficulty" of college students has aroused widespread concern in the society. In career planning education, the medical college students should be encouraged to know themselves, improve themselves, and improve their employment competitiveness. At present, the career planning education of college students in China still remains at the level of employment guidance, which needs to be constantly improved. The discussion on the service dimensions that need to be provided for the career planning of medical college students is not thorough and comprehensive. On the basis of the existing research, from the perspective of education, management and other disciplines, guided by relevant theories, this paper discusses the service dimensions of medical university students' career planning in a more in-depth and systematic way by using literature research methods. This paper follows the research idea of "status investigation -- finding problems -- suggestions". First in this paper, the medical college students' career planning service involved in the core concepts and related theories, and then influence the effect of medical college students' career planning services dimension analysis of the status quo to find the main problems and the reasons put forward to further strengthen and improve the service effect of medical college students' career planning. The service quality gap model is discussed and a career planning service quality framework is proposed.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

With the gradual popularization and popularity of higher education in China, the number of college students is increasing, and the competition for employment is becoming increasingly fierce. The number of college graduates in 2020 reached 8.74 million, an increase of nearly 400,000 compared to 2019 and 540,000 compared to 2018. The employment situation of college graduates after graduation is increasingly severe. Due to the impact of COVID-19, it is more difficult for the class of 2020 to find jobs. At present, there is much research done on the influencing factors of college students' employment and the causes of employment difficulties. For example, Professor Wen Dongmao of Peking University believes that there is an obvious structural imbalance between the supply and demand of graduates in China, and career planning education and employment guidance services have become an important issue that college students must face and pay attention to. But the situation is that college students' understanding of career planning is not enough. A lot of junior students do not know career planning or they think it is too early to think more. They also do not know the characteristics of the new era demand, what to do in the future, their own ability, or which aspects of their ability they should consider improving in the university. They are also unable to cope with the competition for jobs upon graduation. Senior students feel anxious about the fierce employment competition when they are about to graduate, and they regret that they have not made reasonable career planning and failed to improve their ability to choose jobs in college, which should be a tough college period (Chang, 2010).

Secondly, career planning education can be more thorough and market-driven to meet industrial expectations more effectively. The course content is too boring, the class form is too simple, and student's understanding of career planning is superficial. Career planning courses are open late, and there is a lack of "high-quality" career planning teachers. The course focuses on the study of theoretical knowledge and lacks some practical links.

At present, the structural contradiction between supply and demand in the medical employment market is still prominent, and the recruitment standards and requirements of medical institutions in the selection of talents are increasingly high, only considering the master's degree or doctor's degree, which makes the undergraduate and college graduates in a very embarrassing situation. In the most critical year of medical education, that is, clinical practice, students often have to go on business trips, on probation, and on examination for postgraduate entrance exams, so it is difficult to concentrate on practice, which seriously interferes with the normal order of clinical practice teaching. This affects the quality of clinical teaching and inevitably leads to the long-term existence of medical education quality and personnel training standards.

In view of the abovementioned problems, the main purpose of this paper is to evaluate and improve the career planning service for medical university students. The aim is to establish correct self-consciousness for medical students, improve professional quality, gather excellent teachers and employment resources, and promote high-quality employment to provide excellent services. The specific research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the perceptions of medical students in career planning service
2. To explore ways to better implement career planning education for medical students
3. To explore how to effectively strengthen synergistic services and close the career planning service quality gaps

The proposed career planning service quality framework aims to close the service quality gaps by the various working departments, schools, education, and health departments to meet the industrial expectations for better quality medical graduates. The better perceived-service quality most probably can train medical students with comprehensive quality and excellent skills to leverage their employability and career path.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Status of Foreign Research*

Foreign career planning research abroad began in the 1890s and has formed a relatively complete education system. As the origin of career guidance, career planning development in the United States is the most representative, and the famous career planning theories are almost all put forward by American scholars. The late 19th century and 1930s were the beginning of career planning, and Boston University professor Frank Parsons is widely regarded as a pioneer of career planning. He first proposed the theory of making career planning the theory of guiding career choice so that people can follow the guidance of career planning to carry out their own activities when choosing jobs. On the basis of this theory, Parsons further proposed the "person-job matching" theory. Starting from this, many experts and scholars began to study the career planning theory and conducted in-depth and expanded research on it.

Career planning abroad has formed the following characteristics: first, full respect for personality: focus on self-awareness according to students' personal conditions, and tailored career development planning. Second, focus on practicality: focusing on students' practical work experience, assessed and guided by an authority, enables students to evaluate and adjust the plan. Third, pay attention to service: the university has established a relatively perfect service system, and freshmen can start to enjoy career planning-related services when they enter the school. Fourth, emphasize continuity: career planning is the continuation of pre-university vocational education in the form of career guidance and employment services throughout the university stage. Fifth, embodies professionalism: usually, there are professional institutions and full-time staff to provide college students with career planning education and services.

2.2 *Status of Research in China*

In terms of the development process, career planning education originated in Western developed countries. In the early 20th century, influenced by the West, China's career guidance began to germinate. In 1916, Mr Zhou Jimei, president of Tsinghua University, first applied the psychological test method to the "career planning" course guidance in college students' career choices. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, China adopted the policy of employment outsourcing and distribution, during which career planning education never appeared in the classroom of college students. Since the 21st century, career planning education has attracted more and more attention in China. In October 2000, the Beijing Federation of Students and other units initiated the activity of "Career planning for college students in 2000" in eight universities in Beijing, which was widely welcomed by college students in the capital. Later, various universities began to add career guidance courses and lectures.

Career planning started late in China. It was not until 2007 that the Ministry of Education issued relevant documents to standardize curriculum construction. Compared to Western developed countries, China started to implement career planning education late, and there is only a little research done on career planning education in academia. It is mainly reflected in the study of advanced experience of developed countries, problem analysis, basic strategy discussion and education system research.

In view of the problems existing in college students' career planning, it can be found that there are numerous challenges for the medical student's career planning. Firstly, the university's medical students' career awareness and competitive consciousness are relatively low, and career planning is unrealistic, which fails to make effective planning from the perspective of career development (Liu, 2013). Secondly, the students have a weak sense of career development and

competition, and they fail to make effective planning from the perspective of career development, college students' career planning is obviously short-sighted, with weak practice links and a lack of understanding of the occupational environment (Liu, 1999). Thirdly, career planning is disconnected from actual actions, and there is a lack of feedback mechanisms for planning and implementation (Cao, 2001).

To sum up the factors of college education: first, the development of career planning education is not good, and the school awareness is weak, not enough to carry out career planning (Du, 2002). The goal and direction of career planning education are unclear, and career planning does not effectively combine ideological and political education (Cao et al., 2012). In the development of course teaching and career counseling services, there is the phenomenon of single teaching form and superficial consulting content (Zhao & Wu, 2022). Fourth, team building is not in place. Teachers' compositions need to be optimized and majors need to be improved (Gong et al., 2004).

As such, medical schools and students are expected to actively change their ideas, to better understand the importance and necessity of career planning, and thereafter participate actively in the process of career planning and educational practices. Secondly, medical schools need to strengthen the construction of the career planning education curriculum system, provide high-quality compulsory courses and elective courses, and further improve the breadth, width and depth of curriculum development to improve students' teaching satisfaction. Thirdly, they need to improve the level of teachers in the career planning education team, recruit high-level talents with related professional backgrounds such as human resource management, and strengthen the training of the existing team. They also need to establish a practical and effective feedback mechanism for career planning operations, and gradually explore and establish a systematic study of career planning education in line with China's national conditions and policies.

2.3 The medical students' career planning

The country, society and people have great expectations for the growth of medical students. Medical students should clearly realize their lofty mission and plan their future responsibly. However, the current situation of medical students' career planning is not optimistic. At present, there are some problems in medical students' career planning, such as a lack of autonomy, lag in education, and lack of practice. According to a 2008 survey by the Student Affairs Office of Chongqing Medical University, less than 10 per cent of medical students have seriously evaluated themselves and developed a career plan that suits them. Less than 40 per cent of medical students understand the medical profession and its speciality. According to the 2012 survey of the nursing School of Shanxi Medical University, 85.98 per cent of nursing students had average or poor career planning. The research of Sampson et al., (2000) shows that the current career planning of medical students has problems such as weak self-awareness, lagging education in career planning, and lack of practicality.

Jackson & Tomlinson (2020) pointed out that teachers and students in some medical colleges and universities had deviations or errors in their understanding of career planning, and there was a general shortage of career planning teachers. This also put forward higher requirements for medical students' career planning guidance. The other is to guide students to use standardized or non-standardized career assessment tools to understand and plan themselves. Thirdly, medical schools need to strengthen the ideological education of medical students, set up the correct concept of career choice, and actively guide medical students to participate in multi-level and multi-channel employment. Fourthly, they need to improve the comprehensive quality and ability of medical students and train medical talents needed by society.

In addition, the establishment of the medical student's career planning education mechanism is very important, should be based on the comprehensive development and lifelong development of students, should focus on guiding medical students to know themselves correctly, and strengthen their interaction. Simple boring theories should be avoided, aiming at the characteristics of different grades and different specialized student planning education. At present, it is necessary to study and strengthen the cultivation of medical students' innovative and entrepreneurial spirit and practical ability from the perspective of improving the service quality.

3.0 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the investigation of the current situation of medical students' career planning and combined with the requirements of medical students' professional characteristics and employment trends, this paper carries out strategic planning in the golden stage of medical students' careers to help them obtain good career planning education. The establishment of scientific and reasonable strategic guidance and service methods to help medical students to arrange their university life and career planning reasonably and effectively and complete the transition from students to qualified medical workers plays a role in promoting the smooth development of medical students. It is divided into three dimensions: one is from the perspective of medical students, another is from the perspective of the school, and the third is from the perspective of the country.

First of all, for college students, career planning is to make an action plan for their future career on the premise of their interests, skills, values, and personality and the basis of careful analysis of personal characteristics, combined with their own majors and knowledge structure. Among the junior medical students, most of them can recognize the importance of career planning for their own development and expressed their willingness to participate in career planning-related activities organized by the school. They need professional career planning from teachers to give their corresponding help. Visible students have a pressing need for career planning education.

Secondly, for medical schools, medical students receive career planning education in the form of face-to-face courses and lectures based on two aspects; the student individual conduct career counseling work has not formed a system, and counseling is only limited to the "student to ask, the teacher give the answer" model. A student is an independent individual with different personalities, interests, values, and growth backgrounds. In the process of career guidance, if students' individual initiative is ignored, their own development will be constrained (Yu et al., 2021).

The development of education has always been the focus of our country. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stated that employment is the biggest concern for people's livelihood, and we should adhere to the strategy of giving priority to employment and the active employment policy. College graduates are the main force of employment in our country.

In recent years, higher education has been developing towards the popularization direction, at the same time, the number of college graduates has increased sharply, and in 2021, the number of college graduates in China exceeded 9 million. The country's development demands more and more vocational skills and professional qualities of students, and the employment mentality of college students has gradually changed from "having a job" to "having a good job". Therefore, it has become an urgent task for colleges and universities to promote higher quality employment of college graduates, and an inevitable requirement for national development and progress.

The main use of the "Service Quality Gap Model", which is one of the most basic methods is to evaluate service quality and is specially used to diagnose and analyze the origin of service quality problems. They believe that "service quality is the gap between customer expectation and customer perception". On the one hand, the model describes the process and principle of service quality. On the other hand, it also illustrates what factors need to be considered when analyzing service quality. The most important thing is that the model shows that there are 5 service quality gaps between different stages in the process of service design and service delivery (Figure 1).

The improvement of service quality is an important part of quality management theory. Effective measures can be taken to improve the process effect of customer perception of service experience, so as to achieve a new level and height of customer perception of service quality. The continuous improvement of service quality depends on the service quality of continuous feedback and scientific practical investigation, after a source of feedback and problems, to dig deep analysis, involves the generation and development of services. As a result, it determines the universality of the scope of the continuous improvement of service quality and the abundance of content throughout the process of the quality management system. With the continuous improvement of service quality, the increasing requirements and expectations of customers can be satisfied in order to ensure the improvement of quality management system dynamic, productivity, and product quality. Therefore, continuous improvement of service quality is beneficial to both service providers and customers and is also an effective way for both sides to communicate and feedback. The framework is shown in Figure 1.

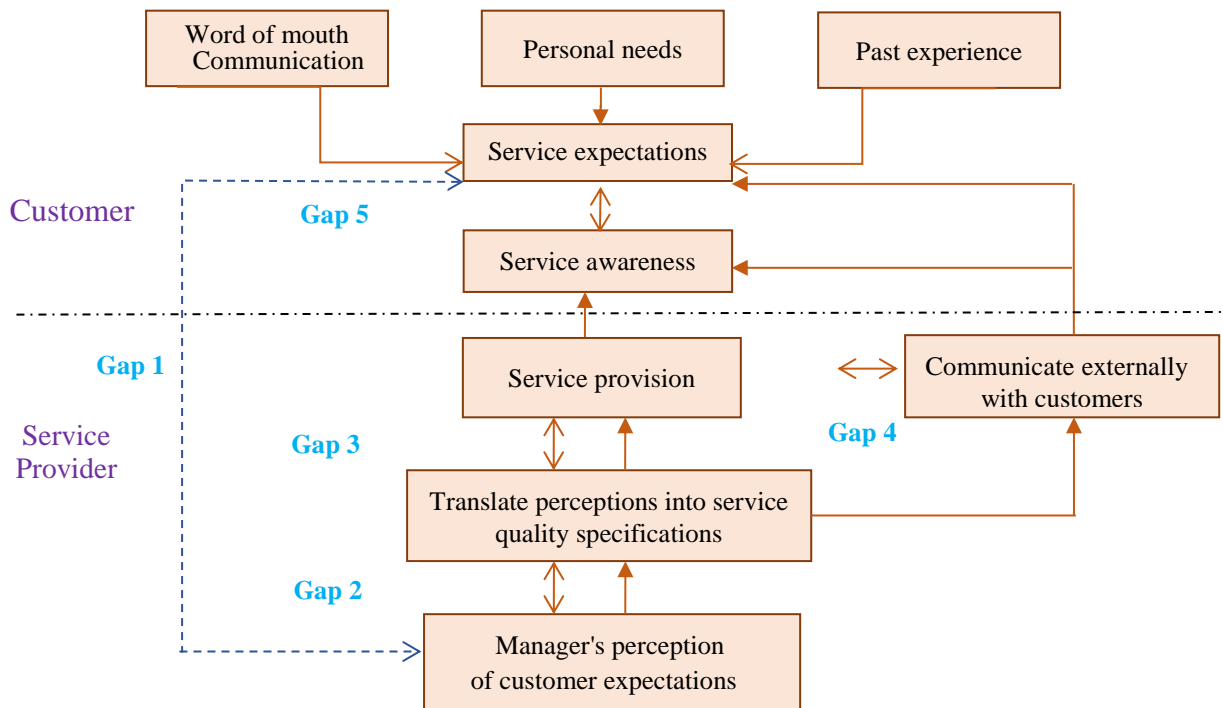


Figure 1. The conceptual framework for the service quality gap model

- Gap 1: The gap between customer expectation and manager perception
 Gap 2: The gap between managers' perception of customer expectations and the Establishment of service quality standards
 Gap 3: The gap between service quality standards and service delivery
 Gap 4: The gap between actual perceived service and external communication
 Gap 5: The gap between customer expected service and perceived service

Service quality gap theory explains how service quality is formed. It can help managers find the root causes of quality problems in time and find a series of appropriate measures to eliminate the gap so that customers can give positive evaluations of the service provided, and then improve customer satisfaction. College students' career planning as a special kind of service work, also has the quality of service. Thus, based on the service quality gap model, a students' career planning service quality gap model is proposed (Figure 2) to find the gaps related to college students' career planning service quality evaluations. There are five quality gaps produced by different stages.

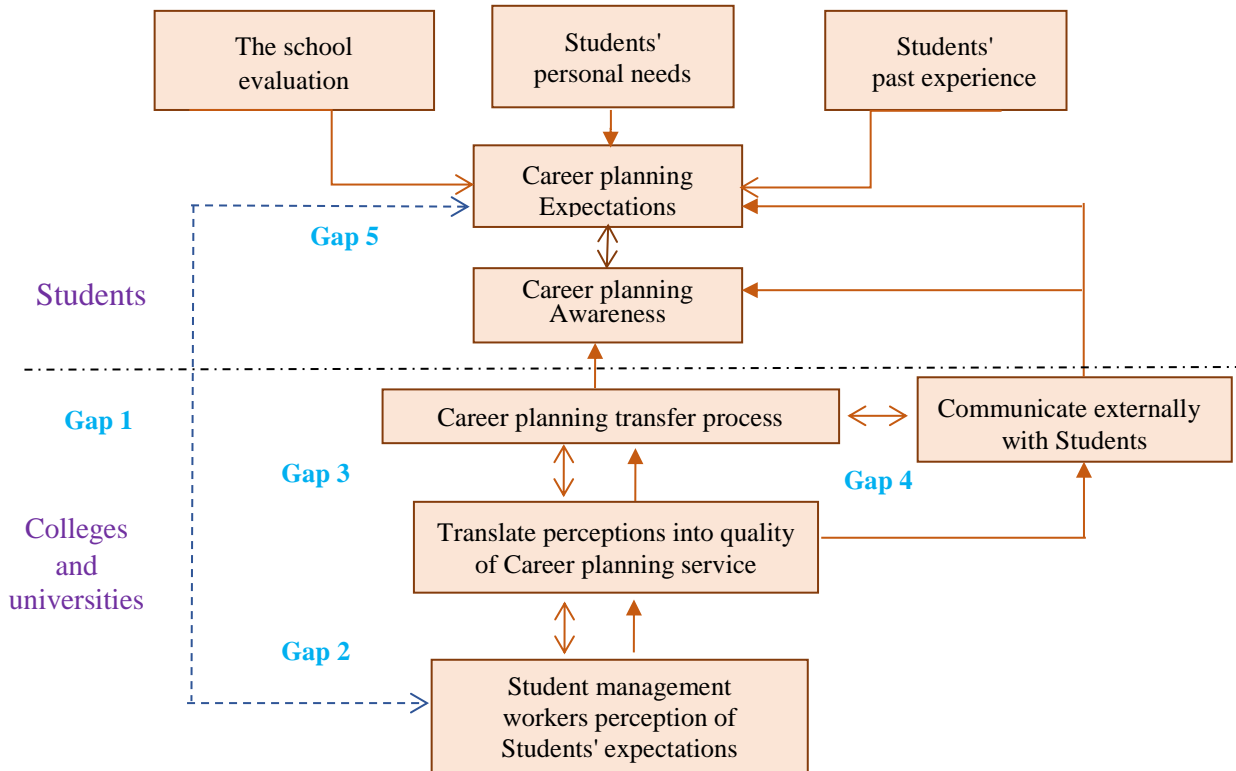


Figure 2. The conceptual framework for the career planning service quality gaps

Gap 1: Perception gap of college students' managers. At present, the actual ability of students trained by colleges and universities does not match the demand structure of professional talents for the current economic and social development. Specifically, it means that college students' managers are not clear about the quality of employment guidance service expected by college students, while the employment guidance service expected by college students is tested by the employment market. The reasons for this gap may include a lack of accurate analysis of the job requirements of college students and employers and inaccurate interpretation of information in college education leads to distortion or loss of information in the process of transmission to students. Wei et al., (2008) analyzed the disconnection between planning and social needs of personnel training and conducted further analysis of the current college students' employment ability and the gap between the social demand. He thought that schools need to change the existing education training mode to be better aligned with social needs.

Gap 2: The quality standard of career planning service provided by colleges and universities. It means that the quality standard of career planning services provided by colleges and universities is different from the expectation of college students' managers. The reasons for the existence of this gap may be as follows: the planning and implementation process of career planning education provided by colleges and universities is not sufficient and clear; the systematic resources (human, material and financial resources, etc.) of career planning education service in colleges and universities have not been rationally allocated, nor can they meet the reasonable expectations of students.

Gap 3: The gap in the delivery process of career planning education services mainly refers to the fact that the services provided by the staff in the process of career planning of college students do not meet the quality standards. The main reasons for this gap are the service standard and evaluation standard of career planning service are not perfect, and the information feedback mechanism is lacking. The career planning education team lacks specialization and professionalism, and professional ability is limited. At present, the employment guidance of medical colleges and universities is not well

combined with the characteristics of medical education and the particularity of the doctor's profession and has a misorientation (Liu, 2010).

Gap 4: The communication gap between the career planning courses and students in colleges and universities refers to the gap caused by the inconsistency between the career planning course services undertaken by colleges and universities and those actually provided. The main reasons for this gap are as follows: career planning education managers and students lack the media and platform for information communication, making the content and curriculum of career planning out of line with market demand. The content of single career planning education courses, mostly self-cognition and self-evaluation, short duration of the course, and lack of personalization and adaptation of policy guidance, therefore, give the guidance to the students with a lack of accuracy and pertinence (He et al., 2020).

Gap 5: Perceived career planning service quality gap refers to the gap between college students' expectation of career planning services provided by the university and the actual perceived content. The service quality perception gap is the result of the first four gap combinations. College students' career planning service quality perception gap will cause the student to have a negative perception of the career planning of a quality evaluation. Bad influence on the effect of career planning, which is not conducive to the improvement of college students' employment rate, will also cause problems for the long-term development of colleges and universities. The vocational assessment system adopted by most colleges and universities in our country is introduced from abroad, so it cannot be designed rationally according to the actual development of colleges and universities. College students do not have adaptability in the application process, resulting in the blindness of students in the use of assessment tools, thus reducing the efficiency of assessment, and bringing a negative impact on career planning (Yang, 2021). This is greatly affecting the satisfaction of career planning assessment.

The first four gaps reveal the main links of the gap in service quality of college students' career planning. The fifth gap is the conceptual basis of service quality evaluation. The way to improve the service quality of college students' career planning is to narrow the gap between their expectation of career planning and their actual perception of career planning service, that is, to reduce or eliminate the gap pointed out in the service quality gap model 5.

It is found that employers' value general skills such as communication and coordination, teamwork, and time management more than specialized knowledge and skills acquired in college education (Harvey et al., 2001). Freeman's over-education theory points out that the employment problem of college students mainly stems from the fact that the number of educated people far exceeds the overall number of social needs, which makes the situation of unemployment faced by students just out of college extremely serious. Therefore, colleges and universities should fundamentally solve the problem of high employment expectations of college students (Liu, 2010). Therefore, there are numerous propositions for quality improvement purposes.

Firstly, colleges and universities need to strengthen medical students' professional quality education, improve the construction of related department and school cooperation, guide medical students to establish the correct concept of professional, scientific planning career, properly planning stage of university study life, and help medical students to complete the role transition from students to qualified medical workers (Lu & Guo, 2021).

Secondly, colleges and universities should strengthen the specialized teachers to carry out systematic theoretical and practical training and improve the daily guidance level. In order to create a team of "double-qualified" teachers with mature medical work experience, an understanding of the development trend and industry needs of the medical industry, with the knowledge and skills of career planning is crucial (Lu & Guo, 2021).

Thirdly, the curriculum system should cover the whole university development stage of students and be implemented step by step according to the curriculum situation of different grades based on the development stage and professional characteristics, highlighting the key points. According to the specialty of medical students, the curriculum system of career planning guidance should be established according to the special characteristics and career development path of medical students.

Next, college students must define their own positioning, set up correct career expectations, break through the shackles of traditional employment concepts, and unify their career dreams with national policies, social needs and personal advantages and interests. Only by starting from their own actual conditions can they finally choose their own suitable jobs.

Based on the gap theory analysis of service quality evaluation, the service quality of college students' career planning is determined by the expected quality and perceived quality of students. When the expected quality is higher than the perceived quality, we may think that the service quality of career planning is better. On the contrary, the service quality of college students' career planning is poor. It can be seen that the service quality of college students' career planning is the result of the comprehensive effect of students' education managers and students. College students are in the formation period of outlook on life, world outlook, and values. College career planning and employment guidance should also promote college students to form reasonable expectations, which is also an important evaluation standard to continuously improve the service quality of college students' career planning.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In career planning education, medical college students are encouraged to know themselves, improve themselves, and improve their employment competitiveness. In the context of medical universities, it is proposed that the service providers for career planning to be constantly improved to provide student-oriented service. The service quality gaps for medical university students' career planning need to be closed. Based on the service quality gap model, a career planning service quality framework is proposed.

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