

This file has been cleaned of potential threats.

If you confirm that the file is coming from a trusted source, you can send the following SHA-256 hash value to your admin for the original file.

9171e0929a55b618f3ca9f9a65a5a9de11ed911cc84bfab7b34af77d5b0fb90c

To view the reconstructed contents, please SCROLL DOWN to next page.

Motivation Through Perceived Benefits Leading To The Decision To Study In Thai University: A Synthesis Of Variable Extraction And Conceptual Framework Development

Wisuthtinath Wipakkitanan¹ and Wilailak Rakbumrung^{2*}

^{1,2} College of Innovation and Management, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

E-Mail: ¹S66563829005@ssru.ac.th, ²Wilailak.ra@ssru.ac.th

*Corresponding author

Abstract

This research article examines the factors that influence Chinese students' decisions to study in Thailand, specifically at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, by developing a conceptual framework. The main focus of this paper is the "Variable Extraction Process," which used a two-part approach: a meta-analysis of 25 recent international research papers and interviews with students to validate the findings. The study identified three main areas: Motivation (including Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation), Perceived Benefits (including Academic Benefits and Personal Growth), and the Decision to Study (based on the SERVQUAL dimensions of Tangibles, Assurance, and Responsiveness). The results of this process provide a theoretical model that connects internal psychological drivers with external service quality. This framework can be used as a guide for Thai universities to improve their international recruitment and student support policies.

Keywords: Variable Extraction, Chinese Students, Thai Higher Education, Motivation, Perceived Benefits, SERVQUAL.

1. Introduction

Thailand has positioned itself as an ambitious regional education hub in Southeast Asia. Since the launch of the "Education Hub Policy" in 2013, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI) has prioritized the internationalization of Thai universities. Among the diverse pool of international students, Chinese nationals represent the most significant and rapidly growing segment. However, the international education market is increasingly competitive, with neighboring countries like Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam also vying for the Chinese student market.

To remain competitive, Thai universities must move beyond generic marketing and understand the deep-seated psychological and service-oriented factors that drive a student to cross borders for education. Existing literature often focuses on "Push-Pull" factors, yet these models frequently fail to capture the mediating role of perceived value and internal self-regulation.

The objective of this research is to present a refined conceptual framework developed through a rigorous extraction of variables. By combining theoretical insights from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Self-Regulation Theory, and the SERVQUAL model with local qualitative insights, this study establishes a comprehensive model that explains how internal motivation is translated into an enrollment decision through the lens of perceived academic and personal gains.

1.1 Objective

1. To present a conceptual framework developed through extraction of variables.

2. Literature Review And Variable Extraction Methodology

The development of the conceptual framework for this study followed a multi-stage extraction process. Unlike standard research that relies solely on pre-existing models, this study integrated **Content Analysis** of 25 key documents with **Preliminary Informant Validation**.

2.1 The Analysis of Global Research

The researcher performed a systematic review of contemporary studies (ranging from 2017 to 2024) focusing on Chinese student mobility. The analysis revealed that while Motivation is a consistent predictor, its dimensions vary significantly across study destinations US, UK, Australia, Thailand and China.

Table 1: Synthesis of Variable Frequency in Content Analysis

Variable	Key Research Sources	Selection Criteria
Motivation	Gao & Hu (2023), Wang & Yu (2023), Zhao & Yuan (2021), etc. (17/25)	Frequency > 60%
Perceived Benefits	Li & Chen (2023), Wang & Li (2023), Zhang & Li (2023), etc. (21/25)	Frequency > 80%
Decision Factors	Kline (2022), Barker & Anderson (2023), Nguyen & Kim (2022) (16/25)	Frequency > 60%
Cultural Factors	Wu & Liu (2023), Chai & Smith (2023) (4/25)	Secondary Priority

2.2 Qualitative Extraction and Refinement

To ensure the local relevance of the variables to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University (SSRU), the researcher conducted preliminary interviews with 5 currently enrolled Chinese students and 2 academic experts. This stage was crucial for refining the dimensions of the **Decision to Study**. The extraction results from this phase are summarized below

1. Content Validity Results (IOC): The research instrument was evaluated by experts to ensure alignment with the extracted variables. The results showed high consistency:

Motivation items: IOC range 0.67 - 1.00 (All accepted).

Perceived Benefits items: IOC range 0.67 - 1.00 (All accepted).

Decision to Study items: IOC range 0.67 – 1.00 (All accepted).

2. Key Themes from Preliminary Interviews

While the literature suggested Financial Cost as a primary factor, the interviewees emphasized that for SSRU, the following factors were more critical "triggers" for their final decision:

Institutional Credibility as Assurance Informants prioritized degree recognition and faculty expertise over low costs.

Service Efficiency as Responsiveness The speed of visa processing and administrative support was identified as a major satisfaction driver.

Personal Transformation Students viewed studying in Thailand as a benefit for personal growth and independence beyond just the academic degree.

These qualitative confirmed that the framework must prioritize **Assurance** and **Responsiveness** as the key components of the decision construct in the Thai context.

3. Theoretical Constructs And Dimension

3.1 Construct 1: Motivation (Independent Variable)

Based on the extraction from **Zimmerman (2000)** and **Ryan & Deci (2020)**, and validated by current students, motivation was defined through two psychological lenses:

Self-Efficacy The belief in one's ability to succeed in a foreign academic environment. Preliminary interviews indicated that students with high confidence in language adaptation were more likely to move forward with the enrollment process.

Self-Regulation The ability to set goals and resist distractions. This was identified as the "Sustainability Factor" that keeps students motivated throughout the complex visa and application process.

3.2 Construct 2: Perceived Benefits (Mediating Variable)

The extraction process categorized benefits into two primary domains based on **Hamid et al. (2023)** and **Azram et al. (2024)**:

Academic Benefits: Improvement in professional resume, global market skills, and specialized knowledge.

Personal Growth: Development of global citizenship, independence, and international networking. Informants noted that "living in Thailand" was seen as a benefit for personal maturity beyond just the degree itself.

3.3 Construct 3: Decision to Study (Dependent Variable)

Utilizing the **SERVQUAL Model (Parasuraman et al., 1988)**, the research extracted three dimensions that act as the physical and service-based evidence of quality:

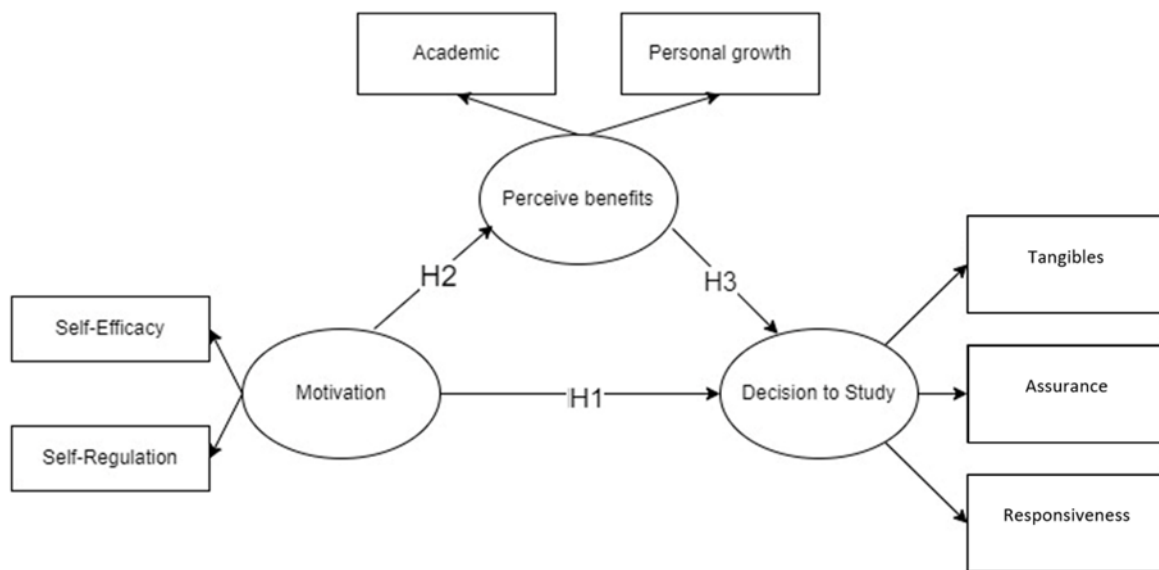
1. **Tangibles** Modern classrooms, campus aesthetics, and digital platforms.

2. **Assurance** Trust in faculty expertise and campus safety.
3. **Responsiveness** Efficiency in handling visa documentation and staff willingness to help.

4. Conceptual Framework Development

The synthesis of the aforementioned literature and the qualitative extraction led to the development of the Model.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



From Figure 1 The hypothesis formulation for the Model

- H1:** Motivation has a direct effect on the decision to study.
- H2:** Motivation has an impact on perceive benefits.
- H3:** Perceive benefits mediated the relationship between Motivation and decision to Study.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

This study employs a **Quantitative Research Approach**, specifically utilizing **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)** to analyze the complex path relationships between the extracted variables. The methodology focuses on confirming the theoretical framework developed during the extraction phase.

5.2 Population and Sampling

The population consists of 1,352 Chinese students at Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Using the Multi-stage sampling technique, a sample size of **330 respondents** was determined

to ensure statistical power for SEM analysis (G*Power calculation and Hair et al., 2019 guidelines).

Stage 1 Selection of Chinese students at SSRU.

Stage 2 Stratification by degree level (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctoral).

Stage 3 Random selection within the strata.

5.3 Instrumentation and Quality Check

The primary tool is a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire derived from the extraction process.

Content Validity Verified by 3 experts using the **Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC)**. All items scored between 0.67 and 1.00.

Reliability: A pilot test (n=30) showed a **Cronbach's Alpha of 0.925**, indicating excellent internal consistency across all dimensions.

6. Discussion On Framework Significance

The framework in this study moves beyond the traditional Push-Pull theory by introducing **Perceived Benefits** as a psychological mediator.

The extraction process highlighted that **Motivation (Self-Regulation)** is the Engine of the decision, but **Perceived Benefits (Personal Growth)** is the Fuel. Without a clear perception of personal gain, internal motivation often fails to lead to actual enrollment. Furthermore, the inclusion of **Assurance** within the decision construct underscores the Risk Management behavior of Chinese students. As Rational Consumers (Wang & Yu, 2023), these students seek institutional credibility to justify their investment in Thai higher education.

This model provides a theoretical breakthrough by proving that international education marketing must address both the *internal drive* by encouraging student confidence and the *external value perception* by career and growth outcomes.

7. Conclusion And Future Work

This paper has detailed the systematic extraction of variables and the construction of a conceptual framework for Chinese students' educational decisions in Thailand. By synthesizing 25 years of research trends with preliminary qualitative insights, we have established a robust model that integrates psychology with service quality.

The critical contribution of this study is the identification of **Self-Regulation** and **Personal Growth** as dominant dimensions, signaling a shift in the Chinese student mindset from purely academic achievement to holistic transformation.

Future Work Future researchers should apply this framework to a broader context, comparing public and private universities in Thailand. Additionally, longitudinal studies could be conducted to observe how the "Perceived Benefits" identified in this framework translate into "Actual Satisfaction" after the students have completed their first year of study.

References

- Abdalla, A. M. (2024). Perceived benefits as determinants of intention to use AI in higher education. *Journal of Technology in Education*, 15(2), 45-60.
- Azram, M., Hong, Y. Y., Ahmad, N., & Sohail, M. S. (2024). Impact of studying abroad on personal growth: A study of international students in China. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, 1010189.
- Barker, R., & Anderson, J. (2023). Factors affecting international students' decision to study in Australia: A structural equation modeling approach. *Journal of International Students*, 13(14), 1-18.
- Chai, S., & Smith, J. (2023). The influence of cultural distance on international students' academic adjustment. *Comparative Education Review*, 67(1), 89-110.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Gao, Y., & Hu, Y. (2023). Factors influencing Chinese students' decision to study in Thailand: A structural equation modeling approach. *Journal of International Students*, 13(1), 1-18.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Hamid, S. B., Khatibi, A., & Azam, F. (2023). The impact of perceived benefits on student enrollment intentions in transnational higher education. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 37(1), 120-135.
- Kline, R. B. (2022). Understanding the factors influencing international students' decision-making processes: A systematic review. *Journal of International Students*, 12(3), 1-18.
- Li, Y., & Chen, J. (2023). The impact of motivation and perceived benefits on Chinese students' decision to study in Australia. *Journal of International Students*, 13(3), 1-18.
- Nguyen, T. T., & Kim, S. H. (2022). Perceived benefits of international education and their influence on students' decision-making: Evidence from Southeast Asia. *Journal of International Students*, 12(4), 1-18.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, sheds, and applications. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 61, 101860.
- Wang, L., & Yu, Y. (2023). The role of motivation and perceived benefits in Chinese students' decision to study in the United States. *Journal of International Students*, 13(2), 1-18.
- Wang, Y., & Li, M. (2023). Navigating the benefits of study abroad: A study of Chinese students' motivations and perceptions. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 98, 102745.
- Wu, H., & Liu, S. (2023). Cultural factors influencing international student mobility: A study of Chinese students in Thailand. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 24(2), 245-258.
- Zhang, X., & Li, Q. (2023). Understanding international students' decision-making: The role of service quality and perceived value. *Higher Education*, 86(4), 815-834.

- Zhao, X., & Yuan, Y. (2021). Exploring the relationship between motivation, perceived benefits, and study abroad intentions among Chinese university students. *Journal of International Students*, 11(4), 1-18.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of Self-Regulation* (pp. 13-39). Academic Press.