

Article

# Assessing the influence of college reputation on student expectations, perceived value, and satisfaction in higher education institutions of Pathum Thani Province, Thailand

Sipnarong Kanchanawongpaisan<sup>1</sup>, Fei Zhou<sup>2,3,\*</sup>, Betty Wan Niu Voon<sup>4</sup>, Liangyan Lu<sup>5</sup>, Rachel Sing-Ee Tan<sup>6</sup><sup>1</sup> College of Politics and Government, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok 10300, Thailand<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Management, Shinawatra University, Samkhok, Pathum Thani 12160, Thailand<sup>3</sup> Faculty of Business, Communication, INTI International University, Nilai 71800, Malaysia<sup>4</sup> College of Engineering, University Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN), Putrajaya Campus, 43000 Kajang, Malaysia<sup>5</sup> Accounting and Finance Department, Yunnan College of Business Management, Kunming 650000, China<sup>6</sup> Faculty of Education and Liberal Arts, INTI International University, Nilai 71800, Malaysia\* **Corresponding author:** Fei Zhou, [pricechow@siu.ac.th](mailto:pricechow@siu.ac.th)

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the factors influencing student satisfaction at higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. The research uses structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the connections among College Reputation, Student Expectation, Perception Value, and Student Satisfaction based on a sample of 660 students. The results indicate that the student population is diverse, with most students enrolled in the Faculty of Business Administration in their first year. The Pearson's correlation matrix and structural equation modeling (SEM) findings indicate significant positive correlations between the dimensions, emphasizing the crucial influence of College Reputation on both Student Expectation and Student Satisfaction. The goodness-of-fit indices validate the model's strength, indicating a significant correspondence between the theoretical components and the observed data. This study enhances the comprehension of how student satisfaction changes in Thai higher education and offers practical suggestions for institutional policies to improve student's educational experiences and achievements. Higher education institutions may create a more fulfilling and effective learning environment by prioritizing reputation improvement, ensuring student expectations match reality, and providing perceived value to improve education quality and equality for Thailand.

**Keywords:** student satisfaction; higher education; college reputation; education quality

## 1. Introduction

Located in Thailand, Pathum Thani Province is a geographical region. It has been making significant attempts to align its educational system with the growing needs of its economy, which aligns with the national educational trends in Thailand. Pathum Thani has developed a comprehensive and adaptable education system that reflects global trends. It has made progress in improving accessibility, integrating technology, and engaging with international education. The focus is also on expanding higher education opportunities (Kalyanamitra, 2018; Ministry of Education, 2022; Vicente et al., 2024). The expansion of educational opportunities has been carefully planned, with an increase in enrollment from primary to tertiary levels, indicating a shift towards inclusive education that prioritizes literacy and access, even in economically disadvantaged areas (Ministry of Education, 2022). The impact of technology on education has been revolutionary as e-learning platforms have become more common,

promoting lifelong learning and ongoing professional development (Shahzad et al., 2023).

The educational sector in Pathum Thani has embraced global integration by conforming to international standards, leading to significant expansion in international academic collaboration. Adopting a worldwide approach has fostered an education system enhanced by cultural variety and foreign perspectives (Vanderbilt University, 2023). The higher education industry in Pathum Thani Province has seen substantial development, marked by an increase in higher education institutions, particularly those focused on science and technology. The area has become a prominent center for education and technology, with many industrial parks and research institutes, including the acclaimed Thailand Science Park. Thammasat University, The Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok University (Rangsit Campus), and Rangsit University are esteemed educational institutions in the province (USnews, 2023). They are known for their exceptional contributions to disciplines crucial for technical progress and innovation (University Guru, 2023).

The emphasis on STEM disciplines, which consist of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, signifies a worldwide recognition of the significance of these fields in propelling innovation and fostering economic advancement (Mediana, 2023). Pathum Thani's higher education institutions are strategically positioned to satisfy the needs of developing a competent workforce, making them crucial for the local economy and potentially influencing worldwide technological advancement (Iamtrakul and Klaylee, 2023).

During tremendous educational growth, it is crucial to maintain and improve academic standards and ensure student satisfaction to continue developing the education system Yap et al. (2023). The possible ramifications of assessing student satisfaction within Pathum Thani's schools are manifold:

**Educational Quality:** Institutions that use student satisfaction as a quality metric can pinpoint areas of strength and weakness, affecting their reputation and the degree of student involvement (Razinkina et al., 2018).

**Student Retention:** Understanding satisfaction is essential to promoting student persistence and success since it significantly impacts retention and accomplishment in educational institutions (Mathews, 2023).

According to the National Education Act (NEA) of 1999, satisfaction measurements may inform the development of student-centered policies to improve education. (Office of the National Education Commission, 2002). Higher satisfaction rates may enhance institutional attractiveness, raising an institution's appeal in the competitive educational environment and attracting potential students, as Higher Education Strategy Associates stated in 2023. Given these viewpoints, the research "Evaluation of Student Satisfaction in Higher Education Institutions in Pathum Thani Province" is a significant undertaking. This initiative guarantees to provide valuable knowledge that may improve educational benchmarks, promote student achievement, and strengthen the competitive advantage of the region's higher education institutions.

This study has a significance that goes beyond the local academic community. This component is crucial for maintaining a competitive advantage in global education standards. It helps in making well-informed policy and strategic decisions,

comprehending the intricacies of student retention, enhancing institutional reputation, allocating resources efficiently, and aligning educational offerings with market and industry demands (Chan et al., 2023). Furthermore, in a world that is becoming more globalized, educational institutions must accommodate a wide range of students and provide an inclusive and culturally competent atmosphere. Therefore, this research is not only an investigation; it has the potential to act as a catalyst for systematic expansion and enhancement, ensuring that the education system in Pathum Thani continues to progress and excel in line with both local and worldwide educational achievements.

### **1.1. Research objectives**

This research aims to comprehensively assess and explore the impact of college reputation, student expectations, and perceived value on student satisfaction within higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. It seeks to elucidate how these factors contribute to student satisfaction and develop a robust model that encapsulates the relationships among these variables better to understand the dynamics in the region's educational environment.

### **1.2. Research questions**

This research investigates the key elements contributing to undergraduate students' satisfaction in higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. It examines how these identified factors influence overall student satisfaction and explores strategies that higher education institutions in the region can implement to enhance student satisfaction based on these influential factors.

### **1.3. Hypothesis**

- H1: College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Student expectations.
- H2: College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Perceived Value.
- H3: College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction.
- H4: Student Expectation has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction.
- H5: Perceived Value has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction.
- H6: College Reputation has a positively indirect influence on Student expectations.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Concept of student satisfaction**

Student satisfaction in higher education is a complex concept that measures the degree to which students' educational experience fulfills their expectations and requirements. Satisfaction influences student retention, academic achievement, and institutional efficacy. (Elliott and Shin, 2002). Contentment has been thoroughly examined in several disciplines, such as marketing, psychology, and education. In higher education, contentment is often associated with the caliber of academic services, campus facilities' state, social integration level, and perceived worth (Douglas et al., 2008; Klemenčič, 2014).

The expectancy-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980) is a fundamental framework for comprehending satisfaction. According to this view, contentment arises from the difference between students' expectations and actual experiences. Positive disconfirmation happens when the experience surpasses expectations, resulting in pleasure. In contrast, negative disconfirmation results in discontent when expectations are not fulfilled (Goode et al., 2024). Within the setting of higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand, the theory may be used to comprehend how college reputation, student expectations, and perceived value influence student satisfaction. A college's reputation is a preliminary factor that shapes students' expectations, impacting their early perceptions of the curriculum and services offered (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2001). Student expectations influence their perceived value, which relates to the perceived advantages relative to education expenses (Elliott & Shin, 2002). Ultimately, the interaction among these components dictates the total extent of student contentment. Studies have also emphasized the significance of service quality in determining satisfaction in higher education. The SERVQUAL model, established by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), delineates five aspects of service quality: tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Huynh-Cam et al., 2023). The parameters mentioned may be modified to suit the context of higher education to evaluate the quality of academic and administrative services, which impacts student satisfaction (Sultan and Wong, 2010).

Ultimately, comprehending the concept and theory of pleasure in higher education is crucial for institutions seeking to improve the student experience. Higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province may devise measures to enhance student satisfaction and overall educational results by prioritizing college reputation, student expectations, and perceived value and maintaining excellent service quality.

## **2.2. Concept of college reputation**

A college's reputation is a multifaceted concept that significantly impacts the decision-making process of potential students, educators, and other stakeholders in the higher education sector (Li, 2024). The factors included in this evaluation are the perception of an institution's academic prowess, productivity in research, expertise and abilities of the staff, quality of campus facilities, support services for students, and overall reputation. The status of a college or university may significantly impact its ability to attract and retain highly talented students and faculty, get funding, and form partnerships with other educational institutions and businesses. The theoretical perspectives of college reputation:

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory suggests that an organization's reputation is a valuable and intangible asset that may provide a competitive edge (Neuza et al., 2024). An institution's excellent reputation may draw invaluable resources. For instance, the school might enhance its performance by focusing on outstanding students, faculty personnel, and financial resources (Barney, 1991).

**Signal Theory:** In higher education, signal theory posits that a college's reputation acts as a signal to prospective students and other interested parties, indicating the caliber and worth of the education and overall experience the school offers. A favorable reputation suggests a significant degree of excellence, which

decreases ambiguity for those making decisions (Spence, 1978).

Social Identity Theory asserts that people strive to improve their self-concept by aligning themselves with organizations with favorable social identities. Students often choose prestigious universities to enhance their social standing and self-worth (Tajfel and Turner, 1979).

The Stakeholder Theory highlights that an institution's reputation is influenced by its interactions with stakeholders, including students, professors, alums, employers, and the community. An institution may improve its reputation by meeting or surpassing these stakeholders' expectations (Freeman, 1984). According to the Institutional Theory perspective, a college's reputation is shaped by the established standards, principles, and behaviors within the higher education sector. Institutions may implement specific procedures or norms to enhance their credibility and standing (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

In conclusion, comprehending the dynamics of higher education institutions requires a thorough comprehension of the notion and philosophy of college reputation. An exemplary reputation may provide a distinct advantage, allure valuable assets, and influence the decisions of students and professors. Therefore, schools and universities consider controlling and improving their reputation a crucial strategic objective.

### **2.3. Perceived value in higher education**

Perceived value in the context of higher education pertains to the assessment made by students about the advantages they get from their educational experience compared to the expenses they bear (Zeithaml, 1988). It is a crucial factor influencing student satisfaction, loyalty, and overall educational outcomes. (Irizarry and Meléndez, 2024). Perceived value in higher education may be analyzed based on many dimensions:

**Functional values:** This term pertains to the tangible and practical advantages students feel from their education, such as gaining information, abilities, and competencies that apply to their future professions (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001).

**The emotional value of education:** This refers to the range of emotions and affective states that students experience along their educational journey, including feelings of accomplishment, personal development, and contentment (Chen and Chen, 2010).

**Social Value:** This aspect includes the social advantages that students perceive, such as possibilities for networking, social recognition, and the cultivation of interpersonal connections (Sánchez-Fernández et al., 2009).

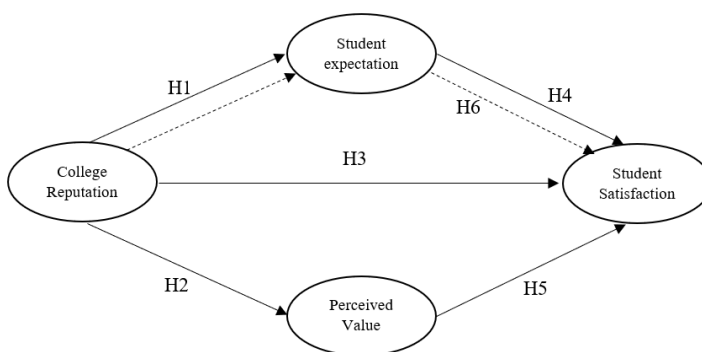
**Monetary value** pertains to the economic components of perceived worth, including tuition costs, living expenditures, and the anticipated return on investment regarding future earning potential (Lovelock and Wirtz, 2011). To improve student satisfaction and loyalty, it is crucial to comprehend the perceived value from students' viewpoints in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand's higher education institution. Institutions may increase the perceived value of their offerings by delivering academic programs of superior quality, cultivating a supportive and stimulating learning atmosphere, giving chances for professional advancement, and ensuring that education expenses are commensurate with the advantages gained. By prioritizing the many

aspects of perceived value, higher education institutions may develop strategies that address their students' varied requirements and anticipations, eventually resulting in a more gratifying and worthwhile educational experience.

### 2.4. Students' expectations in higher education

Student expectations significantly impact the educational experience and results in higher education. Expectations refer to students' preexisting ideas or views about their academic experience, including factors like the quality of instruction, educational materials, campus amenities, and the general academic and social atmosphere. For higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand, comprehending student expectations is essential to guaranteeing a fulfilling and productive educational experience (Gong and Toutkoushian, 2024). The congruence between student expectations and educational offers impacts student satisfaction, engagement, and academic success. Multiple studies have emphasized the significance of effectively handling student expectations in higher education. Kuo et al. (2013) stress the need for effective communication and establishing practical expectations to improve student satisfaction and learning achievements. Similarly, Brown and Mazzarol (2009) propose that institutions should actively interact with students to comprehend and handle their expectations, enhancing student retention and academic achievement. Plungpongpan et al. (2016) researched Thailand to examine student satisfaction at Thai institutions. They discovered that students' overall satisfaction is highly influenced by their expectations about teaching quality, curriculum relevance, and support services. This discovery emphasizes the need for Thai higher education institutions to consistently evaluate and adjust to student expectations to sustain a competitive advantage and provide a superior educational experience.

In conclusion, the researchers have developed a conceptual framework (see **Figure 1**) grounded in comprehensive concepts and theories. Understanding and addressing student expectations is crucial within the higher education landscape in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. By focusing on these expectations, institutions can cultivate a learning environment that aligns with student's needs and aspirations, leading to enhanced educational outcomes and increased student satisfaction.



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework.

### 3. Conceptual framework

According to the conceptual framework and literature reviewed, the researcher

determined the latent and observed variables as follows (**Table 1**):

**Table 1.** Detail of research instrument.

Variable	Latent variables	Observed Variables
Independent Variables (Exogenous Variable)	College Reputation (Barney, 1991), (Spence, 1978), and (Tajfel and Turner, 1979)	ranking (CR1) Alumni Success (CR2) Faculty Credentials (CR3) Accreditation (CR4)
Independent Variables (Endogenous Variable)	Student Expectation (Kuo et al., 2014), (Brown and Mazzarol, 2009)	Academic Rigor (SE1) Campus Facilities (SE2) Extra-curricular Activities (SE3) Career Service (SE4)
Independent Variables (Endogenous Variable)	Perceived Value (Zeithaml, 1988), (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001)	Cost of Tuition (PV4) Quality of Teaching (PV2) Learning Resource (PV3)
Dependent variable (Endogenous Variable)	Student Satisfaction (Elliott and Shin, 2002) (Douglas et al., 2006), and (Klemenčič, 2014)	Course Satisfaction (SF1) Faculty Interaction (SF2) Campus Environment (SF3) Peer Interaction (SF4)

## 4. Research methodology

The researchers performed a study at 12 Pathum Thani Province, Thailand institutions. The population comprises 35,671 Students (Office of Secretary, 2023) Enrolled in years 1–4. A sample size was determined for the population using the G\*Power software tool, resulting in 600 persons. The effect size is 0.3, the statistical power is 0.95, and the degrees of freedom (df) may be calculated using the formula  $[NI(NI + 1)/2 - NP]$ , where NI represents 15 and NP represents 32. Plugging these values, the calculation becomes  $15(15 + 1)/2 - 32$ , resulting in  $df = 88$  (Schumaker and Lomax, 2010). The research used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using AMOS licensing software version 24 to demonstrate the substantial impact of College reputation, Student expectation, and Perceived value on Student satisfaction in higher education.

### 4.1. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire consisted of multiple sections to capture aspects of college reputation, student expectations, perceived value, and student satisfaction (see **Table 1**).

**College Reputation:** This section contained items (CR1-CR4) designed to evaluate the students’ perceptions of their institution’s status and quality. Questions might include statements like “My institution has a strong reputation for academic excellence” or “The public perceives my college as a top choice for higher education.”

**Student Expectations:** This segment (SE1-SE4) measured students’ expectations regarding their educational experience, including academic and social aspects. Examples could be “I expect to receive high-quality instruction” and “I expect engaging and enriching social activities.”

**Perceived Value:** Questions in this section (PV1-PV3) assessed how students perceived the value of their education relative to the monetary and otherwise costs. Items might include “The education I am receiving is worth the cost” and “I believe I

am getting a good return on my educational investment.”

Student Satisfaction: This final section (SF1-SF4) measured overall student satisfaction with their educational experience. Questions could range from “I am satisfied with my decision to attend this institution” to “My educational needs are being met here.” (Figure 2).

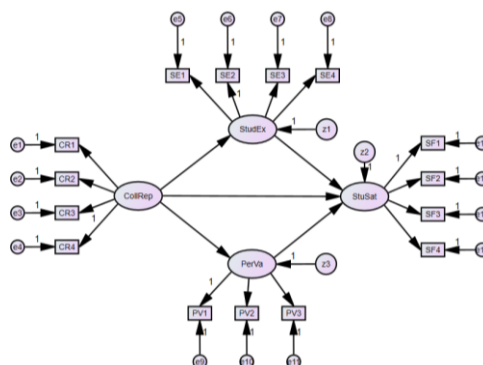


Figure 2. The structural equation model of the research.

#### 4.2. Measurement scale

This study employed stratified random sampling to ascertain the student distribution across 12 universities in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. The stratified random sampling method ensured that the sample represented the student body across different years and programs (Ghosh, 1958). Each question was measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), allowing for a detailed quantification of students’ attitudes and perceptions.

#### 4.3. Pilot study and reliability testing

A pilot study used 30 questionnaires to test the instrument’s reliability. The high Cronbach’s alpha (0.997) indicated excellent internal consistency among the questionnaire items, confirming the measure’s reliability before the primary survey was distributed.

#### 4.4. Data collection

Data was collected using Google Forms, which facilitated a broad distribution across the 12 institutions and ensured a manageable process for collecting responses.

### 5. Research result

The demographic analysis of this study revealed that most participants were females, accounting for 423 individuals or 64% of the total sample. Males included 225 individuals, representing 34% of the sample, while those identifying as LGBTQI+ comprised a smaller proportion, with 12 individuals or 1%. The enrollment mainly shall consist of 335 students in the first year, accounting for 50.7%. The second year has 185 students, representing 28% of the total. The third year has 115 students, making up 17.4%. Lastly, the fourth year has 25 students, accounting for 3.7%. Most students are enrolled in the Faculty of Business Administration, accounting for 48.6%. The Faculty of Education follows with 28%, while 18.9% are in other faculties. The



Faculty of Arts has the lowest enrollment, with just 4.3% of students.

Firstly, the researcher examines the associations between the observed variables and presents the findings in **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** Correlation matrix of observed variables.

Pearson's Correlation	CR1	CR2	CR3	CR4	SE1	SE2	SE3	SE4	PV1	PV2	PV3	SF1	SF2	SF3
CR1	1													
CR2	0.394**	1												
CR3	0.263**	0.280**	1											
CR4	0.510**	0.461**	0.365**	1										
SE1	0.305**	0.463**	0.349**	0.343**	1									
SE2	0.408**	0.310**	0.213**	0.448**	0.262**	1								
SE3	0.346**	0.260**	0.234**	0.404**	0.320**	0.361**	1							
SE4	0.347**	0.468**	0.384**	0.418**	0.639**	0.236**	0.296**	1						
PV1	0.301**	0.214**	0.209**	0.309**	0.201**	0.265**	0.179**	0.220**	1					
PV2	0.272**	0.362**	0.248**	0.309**	0.319**	0.200**	0.268**	0.330**	0.220**	1				
PV3	-0.076	-0.025	-0.106	0.003	-0.070	-0.008	-0.064	-0.121	-0.069	-0.042	1			
SF1	0.399**	0.513**	0.302**	0.553**	0.371**	0.384**	0.410**	0.405**	0.310**	0.351**	-0.088	1		
SF2	0.349**	0.420**	0.170**	0.466**	0.337**	0.241**	0.363**	0.285**	0.270**	0.226**	-0.041	0.517**	1	
SF3	0.341**	0.317**	0.155**	0.462**	0.266**	0.305**	0.278**	0.219**	0.184**	0.188**	-0.038	0.491**	0.382**	1
SF4	0.412**	0.441**	0.209**	0.518**	0.339**	0.297**	0.403**	0.360**	0.339**	0.272**	-0.073	0.646**	0.584**	0.562

N = 660, \*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level.

**Table 2** shows Pearson's correlation matrix, which exhibits the estimated correlation coefficients across different variables. These variables include CR1 through CR4, SE1 through SE4, PV1 through PV3, and SF1 through SF3. The reported correlations, shown by coefficients and asterisks denoting significance, vary from a minimum of -0.025 to a maximum of 0.639. Double asterisks (\*\*) imply statistical significance at the 0.01 level. The matrix reveals substantial correlations, such as positive relationships between CR1 and CR2, CR1 and SE1, SE4 and PV1, and SF1 and SF3. Additionally, PV3 and CR2 exhibit a negligible negative correlation. The researchers calculated and converted each observed variable into four latent variables to analyze the relationship between latent variables, as shown in **Table 3**. The components are represented by the following latent variables: College Reputation (CR1-CR4), Student Expectation (SE1-SE4), Perceived Value (PV1-PV3), and Student Satisfaction (SF1-SF4). The researcher used Pearson's correlation coefficient to analyze the association between variables. The following correlation is defined as:

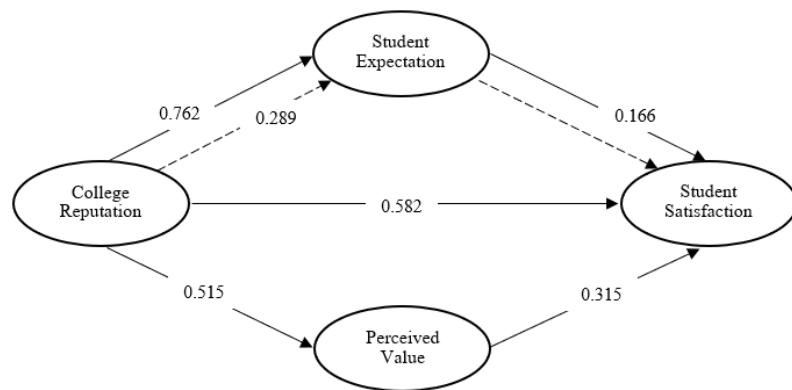
**Table 3.** Correlation matrix of latent variables.

Pearson's correlation	College Reputation	Student Expectation	Perceived Value	Student Satisfaction	$\bar{x}$ (S.D)
College Reputation	1				4.32(0.381)
Student Expectation	0.696**	1			4.37(0.342)
Perceived Value	0.405**	0.348**	1		4.34(0.324)
Student Satisfaction	0.620**	0.572**	0.352**	1	4.30(0.268)

N = 660, \*\* Correlation significant at the 0.01 level.

**Table 3** shows Pearson's correlation table, which shows the relationships

between college reputation, student expectation, perceived value, and student satisfaction, along with their mean scores and standard deviations. College Reputation is strongly correlated with Student Expectation (0.696) and moderately with Student Satisfaction (0.620) and Perceived Value (0.405). Student Expectation also correlates moderately with Student Satisfaction (0.572) and Perceived Value (0.348). Perceived Value and Student Satisfaction show a moderate correlation of 0.352. The mean scores (with standard deviations in parentheses) are College Reputation at 4.32 (0.381), Student Expectation at 4.37 (0.342), Perceived Value at 4.34 (0.324), and Student Satisfaction at 4.30 (0.268). Correlations marked with double asterisks are significant at the 0.01 level, and the sample size for the study is  $N = 660$ .



**Figure 3.** Structural equation modeling of the influence of university reputation on student expectations, perceived value, and satisfaction.

**Table 4** illustrates the interconnections among four constructs: College Reputation, Student Expectation, Perceived Value, and Student Satisfaction. The influence of College Reputation on Student Expectation is strongly positive (path coefficient = 0.762). College Reputation also positively impacts Student Satisfaction (path coefficient = 0.582) and Perceived Value (path coefficient = 0.515). Although relatively weaker than other paths, Student Expectation positively affects Student Satisfaction (path coefficient = 0.166). Additionally, Perceived Value moderately contributes to Student Satisfaction with a positive effect (path coefficient = 0.315) (also illustrated in **Figure 3** and **Table 5**).

**Table 4.** Model summary.

Dependent Variables	Student Expectation			Perceived value			Student Satisfaction		
	TE	DE	IE	TE	DE	IE	TE	DE	IE
College Reputation	0.762 (0.087)	0.762 (0.087)	-	0.515 (0.077)	0.515 (0.077)	-	0.872 (0.103)	0.582 (0.103)	0.289 (0.103)
Student Expectation	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.166 (0.151)	0.166 (0.151)	-
Perceived value	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.315 (0.714)	0.315 (0.714)	-
R-Square	1.062			0.819			0.761		

$\chi^2 = 71.987$ ,  $df = 69$ , Relative  $\chi^2 = 1.043$ ,  $p = 0.379$ , GFI = 970, CFI = 0.998, TLI = 0.997, NFI = 0.953, RMSEA = 0.012, RMR = 0.007.

**Table 5.** Summarizes the hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Description	Summarizes
H1	College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Student Expectations.	Accepted
H2	College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Perceived Value	Accepted
H3	College Reputation has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction.	Accepted
H4	Student Expectation has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction.	Accepted
H5	Perceived Value has a positively direct influence on Student Satisfaction	Accepted
H6	College Reputation has a positively indirect influence on Student Expectations.	Accepted

The goodness-of-fit indices indicate that the Chi-square value is 71.987 with 69 degrees of freedom, resulting in a Chi-square/df ratio of 1.043. This ratio, being near to 1, suggests a good fit. The *p*-value of 0.379 indicates that the model does not significantly deviate from the observed data, as a *p*-value greater than 0.05 is generally considered a good fit. The Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) of 0.970 indicates a perfect fit of the model to the data. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is exceptionally high at 0.998, indicating an excellent fit. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is also very high at 0.997, demonstrating a fantastic fit. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is very low at 0.012, indicating a close fit between the model and the observed data. The RMR value is 0.007, indicating a deficient residual variance model. The NFI value 0.953 indicates an intense match (Hair et al., 2010).

Structural equation modeling (SEM) generally indicates robust associations between the constructs, particularly College Reputation and other factors. The goodness-of-fit indices indicate that the model fits the observed data well, suggesting that the predicted connections between the constructs are congruent with the student’s answers in the data set (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Finding summary.

Finding topic	Result
Key Elements Contributing to Student Satisfaction	This research identifies college reputation, student expectations, and perceived value as the key elements contributing to student satisfaction in higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. The Pearson correlation coefficients demonstrate strong positive relationships between college reputation and student expectations (0.696), college reputation and student satisfaction (0.620), and college reputation and perceived value (0.405). The structural equation modeling further supports these findings, showing the significant influence of college reputation on student expectations, perceived value, and student satisfaction.
Influence of Identified Factors on Student Satisfaction	The impact of the identified factors on overall student satisfaction is evident through the path coefficients in the structural model. College reputation significantly influences student satisfaction both directly (path coefficient = 0.582) and indirectly through its impact on student expectations (path coefficient = 0.166) and perceived value (path coefficient = 0.315). This indicates that improvements in college reputation not only enhance student expectations and perceived value but also contribute directly to higher levels of student satisfaction.
Strategies for Enhancing Student Satisfaction	Based on the influential factors identified, higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province can implement several strategies to enhance student satisfaction. Firstly, improving the college’s reputation through quality education, facilities, and faculty can elevate students’ expectations and perceived value, increasing satisfaction. Additionally, institutions should focus on aligning their offerings to meet student expectations and enhancing the perceived value of their educational services. These strategies, supported by the data, can improve student satisfaction.

## 6. Conclusion

This research reveals significant knowledge of the determinants that impact student contentment in higher education establishments in Pathum Thani Province,

Thailand. The demographic study reveals a heterogeneous student body, consisting primarily of first-year students and a substantial presence in the Faculty of Business Administration. Pearson's correlation matrix and structural equation modeling (SEM) findings indicate robust positive associations among College Reputation, Student Expectation, Perceived Value, and Student Satisfaction (see **Table 6**). The significance of establishing a favorable institutional image is shown by the fact that College Reputation plays a crucial role in affecting both Student Expectation and Student Satisfaction. The goodness-of-fit indices demonstrate a strong alignment between the model and the observed data, affirming the durability of the connections between the components. These results indicate that higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province should focus on improving their reputation, ensuring student expectations align with reality, and providing perceived value to increase student satisfaction.

## **7. Discussion**

In summary, this research enhances our comprehension of how student satisfaction changes in Thai higher education and offers practical suggestions for institutional initiatives to improve students' educational experiences and results. The research discussion in this study is consistent with the increasing amount of literature that emphasizes the significance of college reputation, student expectations, perceived value, and student satisfaction in higher education (Goode et al., 2024). Research conducted by Brown and Mazzarol (2009) underscores the importance of institutional image in shaping student satisfaction and loyalty. This is consistent with Huynh-Cam et al. (2023) highlight study stresses the need for higher education institutions to manage their reputations proactively.

Moreover, the research demonstrated strong positive correlations between college reputation, student expectations, perceived value, and student satisfaction, consistent with Li's (2024) findings indicating that these factors significantly impact student satisfaction. Similarly, the results corroborate Sultan and Wong's (2010) study, which established a robust correlation between service quality features and student satisfaction. These correlations suggest that the reputation of an institution, along with its ability to meet or exceed student expectations and provide perceived value, play critical roles in shaping student satisfaction. This relationship is perhaps due to the increasing emphasis on educational quality and student-centric approaches in higher education, which emphasize the academic offerings and the comprehensive support and experience provided to students. The goodness-of-fit indices from this study further substantiate the model's robustness, indicating a substantial agreement between the theoretical components and the observed data. This robust fit may be attributed to the specific educational landscape of Pathum Thani Province, where competitive pressures and a diverse student body might amplify the influence of college reputation and perceived value on student satisfaction. Institutions in this region possibly benefit from a heightened awareness among students about the quality and value of the education they receive, which is directly linked to their overall satisfaction. Thus, the context of a competitive educational environment in Pathum Thani Province enriches the understanding of how institutional characteristics

influence student perceptions and satisfaction.

Perceived value is a crucial factor in determining student satisfaction. Elliott and Shin (2002) argue that perceived value, defined as students' assessment of the advantages they obtain relative to the expenditures they bear, significantly influences their overall satisfaction. The outcomes of this research support the notion that perceived value plays a crucial role in determining student satisfaction in Pathum Thani Province.

The research revealed strong positive correlations between college reputation, student expectations, perceived value, and student contentment, which aligns with Li's (2024) findings that these factors impact student satisfaction. The results also align with the study undertaken by Sultan and Wong (2010), which established a robust correlation between service quality features and student satisfaction. The goodness-of-fit indices in this study provide further evidence for the model's robustness, indicating a substantial agreement between the theoretical components and the observed data.

This study adds to the current body of literature by offering empirical proof of the connections between crucial factors influencing student satisfaction at higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. The findings provide valuable insights for institutional policies to improve student satisfaction and educational results.

## **8. Research novelty and contribution**

This study is unique and valuable because it thoroughly investigates the factors influencing student satisfaction in higher education institutions in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. It offers a detailed comprehension of these variables in Thai by utilizing structural equation modeling (SEM) to examine the complex connections among college reputation, student expectation, perception value, and student satisfaction. An essential addition to this study is its focus on the pivotal function of College Reputation in impacting student satisfaction. This research highlights the significance of effectively managing and improving institutional reputation to enhance student experiences and results. It demonstrates the substantial beneficial influence of College Reputation on Student Expectation and Student Satisfaction. This observation contributes to the current body of knowledge by emphasizing the importance of reputation in the context of Thai higher education. Moreover, the study offers concrete data on the interaction of Student Expectation, Perception Value, and Student pleasure, thus enhancing our holistic comprehension of the elements that influence student pleasure. This research provides significant insights for higher education institutions in Thailand and comparable settings. Connecting student expectations with reality and supplying perceived value is essential to cultivating a gratifying educational atmosphere. This research study makes a valuable contribution to the field of higher education by conducting a thorough analysis of the factors that influence student satisfaction in Pathum Thani Province, Thailand. It also provides practical suggestions for educational institutions to improve student satisfaction and the overall quality of education.

### **8.1. Practical applications for policymakers and other stakeholders**

**Policy Development and Review:** Policymakers should consider developing and revising educational policies to encourage institutions to enhance their reputations through quality improvements in teaching, research, and community engagement. Policies should also ensure transparency in how institutions report success and satisfaction metrics to prospective students.

**Resource Allocation:** Government bodies and educational regulators can use the insights from this study to allocate resources better, focusing on areas that significantly impact student satisfaction, such as faculty development, student support services, and infrastructure improvements.

**Quality Assurance Programs:** Establish or enhance existing quality assurance programs to regularly evaluate and monitor the quality of education and facilities provided by higher education institutions. These programs should include metrics related to student satisfaction and perceptions of value.

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Encourage higher education institutions to actively engage with students, alumni, employers, and other stakeholders to understand and address their expectations and perceptions. This engagement can provide direct feedback that helps institutions align their offerings more closely with stakeholder needs.

**Marketing and Communication Strategies:** Institutions should refine their marketing and communication strategies to reflect the quality and value they provide accurately. This includes showcasing successful alumni, notable faculty, and unique program offerings that enhance institutional reputation and attract potential students.

### **8.2. Suggestions for future research**

This research has some limitations, such as constraints in terms of time, particular scope, and areas of study. To address these limitations, researchers propose the following recommendations for future research:

- (1) Conducting longitudinal studies to monitor changes in student satisfaction over time may provide valuable insights into the evolution of satisfaction across the student's lifetime.
- (2) A comparative analysis may compare student satisfaction levels across various faculties or institutions in Pathum Thani Province or different locations in Thailand. This analysis can help identify best practices and areas that need development.
- (3) Examining the influence of technology, particularly in online and blended learning, on student satisfaction is of utmost importance due to the growing dependence on digital platforms for education.
- (4) Examining the effects of cultural characteristics on student satisfaction may provide a more nuanced understanding of how cultural diversity shapes the educational experience.
- (5) Examining the correlation between student satisfaction and employability or career success might give universities valuable insights into matching their courses with market demands.

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