

# Factors Influencing SMEs' Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services in Thailand

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**Abstract**— This study examines the factors influencing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to choose and continued outsourced accounting services in Thailand. The objectives were to identify key decision-making factors, assess retention influences, and provide insights to improve outsourced accounting services. Using a quantitative methodology, data was collected from 405 business owners through an online questionnaire. Respondents included members of various business groups, including Business Network International (BNI), national contractors, and users of specific accounting firms throughout Thailand. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: screening questions, general organizational information, and factors influencing the use of outsourced accounting services, measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing, including One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA). Findings revealed that organizational characteristics such as business type and operational duration significantly affect the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services. Medium-and-older businesses prioritize stability and expertise, while Small-and-new businesses focus on cost-effectiveness. Additionally, factors such as reliability (mean = 4.34), value perception (mean = 3.76), and reputation (mean = 3.44) significantly influence SMEs' decisions. Reliability ensures confidence in receiving accurate and timely services, while value perception and reputation contribute to long-term client satisfaction. These insights are essential for enhancing service delivery and fostering competitive advantages in the outsourced accounting industry in Thailand.

**Keywords**— SMEs, Outsourced Accounting Services, Reliability, Value Perception, Reputation, Decision-Making.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, it is essential for organizations to remain agile and adapt to shifting market demands (Linchie et al., 2021). For SMEs, accessing up-to-date and high-quality information, particularly accounting data, is crucial for effective management and decision-making. Accurate financial data provides a clear picture of a business's performance, helping entrepreneurs assess profitability and make informed decisions (Sayaputra & Nimtrakoon, 2023).

Outsourcing has become a common strategy for many SMEs, enabling them to focus on core competencies while delegating non-essential functions, such as accounting, to external specialists (Rafiola et al., 2021). This approach is especially beneficial for businesses that lack the internal expertise to manage complex financial tasks (Everaert et al., 2007). Outsourcing provides access to specialized knowledge, particularly in areas like corporate income tax, where expert insight can significantly impact overall business performance (Bagieńska., 2016). In Thailand, the 2000 Accounting Act mandates that companies maintain accurate financial records and submit statements to government agencies, making outsourcing an effective way to ensure compliance (Accounting Act B.E. 2543, 2000).

For SMEs to succeed, partnering with professional outsourced accounting firms is vital. These firms provide the expertise required to navigate complex financial and legal requirements, enabling businesses to concentrate on their core operations while ensuring sound financial management (Promchai, 2022; Kaewsar & Kongrunghok, 2015).

Despite the benefits, SMEs often face challenges when using outsourced accounting services, including issues with service quality, delays, high costs, and security concerns (Rex, 2024; Smith, 2024). Switching providers can be a time-consuming and complex process, often leading to strained relationships and potential data security risks (Raza, 2015; Suratham, 2022). Understanding and addressing these challenges is key to improving service delivery and maintaining long-term customer relationships, providing a competitive edge for outsourced accounting firms.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

### A. Research Objectives

1. To identify the factors that influence small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in their decision to adopt outsourced accounting services in Thailand.
2. To examine the factors affecting the retention of SMEs in their continued use of outsourced accounting services in Thailand.
3. To gather insights that can contribute to the enhancement of services and management practices within outsourced accounting firms, fostering their development and providing a competitive edge that aligns with the evolving needs of future service users.

### B. Research Objectives

H1: There is a positive relationship between reliability and the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services.

H2: There is a positive relationship between value perception and the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services.

H3: There is a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application and the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services.

H4: There is a positive relationship between reputation and the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The significance of outsourcing accounting services for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) lies in its ability to reduce operational costs and improve efficiency. This is especially relevant in Thailand, where SMEs play a critical role in the national economy (Bank of Thailand, 2021). Understanding the factors that influence SMEs' decisions to adopt and continue using outsourced accounting services is crucial for both service providers and SMEs to stay competitive in an increasingly dynamic market (Ivana Tomašević et al., 2023).

This review focuses on key factors such as service quality, cost and value perception, technology adoption, and reputation, which collectively impact SMEs' decisions to outsource accounting services. These variables have been recognized across numerous studies as essential components of successful outsourcing relationships.

#### A. *Relevant Concepts and Theories of Service Quality: Reliability*

Service quality is a critical concept in service management, particularly in outsourced accounting services, where SMEs rely on timely and accurate financial information to make informed decisions. One of the most essential dimensions of service quality is reliability, which refers to the ability of a service provider to consistently deliver accurate and dependable services. In the context of accounting, this means providing error-free financial reports and ensuring timely submission to meet regulatory requirements.

The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) highlights reliability as a core factor influencing customer satisfaction. For SMEs, reliability in accounting services is crucial because any delays or inaccuracies in financial reporting can lead to significant consequences, including financial risks, missed deadlines, and penalties from tax authorities (Everaert et al., 2010). Reliable accounting services ensure that businesses have the right information at the right time to make strategic decisions, thereby fostering trust and long-term relationships between the service provider and the client (Kamyabi & Devi, 2011).

SMEs typically value reliability as it directly impacts their operational efficiency and financial health. A study by Wongsai et al. (2019) emphasizes the importance of reliability in outsourcing accounting services, noting that firms with consistent, reliable service delivery are more likely to retain customers and build lasting business relationships. In Thailand, top-tier accounting firms like PwC and KPMG prioritize reliability by adhering to international standards,

which further reinforces trust and encourages continued collaboration (PwC, 2021; KPMG, 2024).

In contrast, smaller firms that struggle to maintain consistency in service delivery may face higher customer turnover, as SMEs tend to switch providers when service quality falters (International Federation of Accountants, 2023). This highlights how critical it is for outsourced accounting firms to ensure their services are reliable, as reliability is a key driver of customer loyalty and long-term success.

In conclusion, reliability in outsourced accounting services is essential for meeting SME expectations. By offering dependable and timely services, firms can enhance client satisfaction, reduce operational risks, and secure long-term relationships with SMEs, ultimately achieving business sustainability and growth.

#### B. *Relevant Concepts and Theories of Value Perception*

Value perception refers to how customers evaluate the worth of a service relative to the cost incurred. In the context of outsourced accounting services, SMEs assess the value of the services they receive based on factors such as accuracy, efficiency, compliance with regulations, and the quality of financial advice provided. When SMEs perceive that the service delivers significant value beyond its cost, they are more likely to continue using the service, even if the cost is higher than in-house alternatives.

Value perception is shaped by the quality and consistency of the services provided. When outsourced accounting firms offer high-quality services that lead to tangible benefits, such as improved financial management, regulatory compliance, and access to expert knowledge, SMEs view the service as a worthwhile investment (Homburg et al., 2005). For example, when accounting services help SMEs reduce operational risks, save time, or ensure tax compliance, SMEs are more likely to perceive the service as valuable.

Research shows that SMEs weigh the cost of outsourcing against the perceived long-term benefits, such as better decision-making, improved financial health, and reduced operational risks. In Thailand, SMEs are particularly sensitive to value for money, and they tend to favor service providers who offer transparent, flexible pricing structures (Jinacharn & Penwuttikun, 2016). By offering services that provide significant value relative to their cost, outsourced accounting firms can build long-term relationships with their clients.

In conclusion, value perception is a critical factor in SMEs' decision to continue using outsourced accounting services. When SMEs perceive high value in the services provided—whether through improved efficiency, cost savings, or enhanced financial management—they are more likely to see the service as a strategic investment and continue using it over time.

#### C. *Relevant Concepts and Theories of Technology Adoption and Digitalization: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application*

Technology adoption refers to the process by which businesses accept and integrate new technological tools to improve operations (Everett M. Rogers, 2003). In the context of outsourced accounting services, digitalization—the shift

from traditional methods to digital processes—has become essential for improving operational efficiency and decision-making. AI technologies, such as machine learning, predictive analytics, and natural language processing, are central to this transformation, automating tasks like invoice processing, financial reporting, and tax calculations, all of which traditionally required manual labor (Beryl Odonkor et al., 2024).

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) provide frameworks to understand why businesses adopt technologies like AI application. These models suggest that perceived ease of use and usefulness significantly influence adoption (Everett M. Rogers, 2003). For SMEs, AI adoption is encouraged when the tools are easy to use and contribute to better operational efficiency and decision-making.

AI application holds the potential to reduce operational costs by automating repetitive tasks and improving the accuracy of financial data (Chui, Manyika & Miremadi, 2018). For example, AI application can help identify discrepancies in financial reports, predict trends, and provide personalized advice, allowing SMEs to make faster, data-driven decisions and comply with regulatory requirements (AIKoheji & Al-Sartawi, 2022). While AI application offers clear benefits, challenges such as high initial costs, the need for staff training, and concerns over data security and privacy persist (Bhimani, 2021).

AI application's role in outsourced accounting services, particularly in automating accounting functions like invoicing and tax calculations, highlights its transformative potential. The integration of AI application allows accounting firms to provide more accurate, efficient, and scalable services, benefiting SMEs (Kanaparthi, 2024). Despite the challenges, the continued embrace of AI application in accounting processes is expected to improve decision-making, reduce costs, and enhance service delivery for SMEs (Daoud & Serag, 2022).

In conclusion, AI application plays a crucial role in the digitalization of outsourced accounting services by improving accuracy, operational efficiency, and decision-making. Although challenges exist, the benefits of adopting AI application are substantial, and SMEs that integrate AI application into their accounting functions can gain a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving business landscape.

#### *D. Relevant Concepts and Theories of Reputation*

Reputation is a critical factor in the decision-making process for SMEs when choosing outsourced accounting services. It refers to the general perception of a service provider's reliability, trustworthiness, and professionalism. A positive reputation is built over time through consistent service delivery and customer satisfaction. In the context of accounting services, reputation serves as an indicator of quality, which plays a vital role in building trust and influencing SMEs' decisions to engage with a particular service provider (Hafeez & Andersen, 2014).

For SMEs, especially those with limited resources, reputation is an essential shortcut to identifying reliable and competent service providers. SMEs often rely on the reputation of accounting firms to mitigate the risks associated with outsourcing critical functions like financial management (Trang, 2024). A well-established reputation assures potential clients that the service provider has the expertise to handle complex accounting tasks and comply with legal requirements.

Research has shown that firms with a strong reputation are more likely to attract new clients and retain existing ones. Recommendations from satisfied clients and positive word-of-mouth further enhance a provider's reputation, making it easier to gain the trust of SMEs (Freedman, 2024). In contrast, poor reputation or inconsistent service quality can deter SMEs from engaging with a provider, as they seek out firms with a proven track record of reliability.

In conclusion, reputation plays a pivotal role in SMEs' decisions to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services. A strong reputation not only attracts clients but also helps in maintaining long-term relationships by reducing perceived risks and building trust.

#### *E. Relevant Concepts and Theories of Decision to Use and Continue Using Services*

The decision to use and continue using services is an important process in selecting and maintaining long-term relationships between customers and service providers. Various concepts and theories are related to understanding consumer behavior in this process, which can be explained by the following main theories:

1. **Perceived Value Theory:** This theory explains that the decision to use and continue using services depends on the customer's perceived value. This means that customers compare the benefits they receive from the service with the price they pay. If customers perceive that the service is worth the price, they are more likely to continue using it in the long run. For example, if outsourced accounting services help reduce business operating costs or increase financial management efficiency, customers are more likely to continue using those services (Zeithaml, 1988).
2. **Satisfaction Theory:** Customer satisfaction is a crucial factor that influences the decision to continue using a service. If customers have a positive experience with a service, they are likely to reuse it. Providing services that meet or exceed customer expectations will lead to satisfaction, which in turn increases loyalty (Oliver, 1980). In the case of using outsourced accounting services, reliability is a key factor that impresses and satisfies SMEs. Reliable and timely services help SMEs feel confident in their business operations and reduce financial risks.
3. **Relationship Marketing Theory:** Continuing to use a service is also related to building long-term relationships between customers and service providers. Maintaining long-term relationships with customers is essential for fostering loyalty. By building trust, consistently meeting customer needs, and providing quality services, long-term

relationships between customers and service providers can be strengthened (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

4. **Consumer Decision-Making Process:** The decision-making process, as explained in Philip Kotler's theory, is divided into five stages: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase evaluation. The decision to continue using a service can occur in the post-purchase evaluation stage. If customers evaluate that the service meets their needs and is worthwhile, they will choose to continue using the service.

#### F. Related Research

In various studies on SMEs' decision-making regarding outsourced accounting services, key factors influencing their choices include service quality, cost, reputation, and the adoption of digital technologies. Research by Chalida Linchie et al. (2021) and others highlight the importance of service quality, responsiveness, and personnel expertise, while Kamolvich Wongsai et al. (2019) emphasize ethical responsibility and professionalism. Studies by Ivana Tomašević et al. (2023) and Jae-Nam Lee & Young-Gul Kim (1999) focus on cost-effectiveness and value perception, as SMEs prioritize savings and efficiency. Reputation, discussed by Yahya Kamyabi & Susela Devi (2011) and Trang (2024), is also critical in building trust. The role of technology, especially AI application and automation, in improving service efficiency and reducing errors is emphasized by Alnoor Bhimani (2021). Overall, these factors collectively shape SMEs' long-term relationships with outsourced accounting services. Future research could explore the integration of these elements with digital marketing and technological trends.

#### G. Conceptual framework

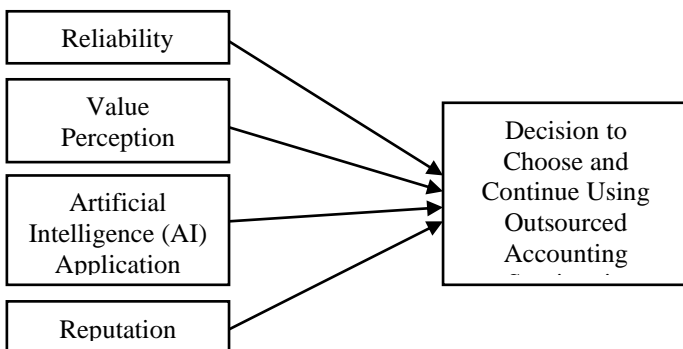


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Research

### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Data Collection

The population for this study consists of business operators registered with the Department of Business Development in Thailand, totaling 874,526 businesses, as retrieved from the Department of Business Development on November 10, 2024. The selected sample for this research includes 405 business operators. This study is a quantitative research study (Quantitative Research) in which the researcher distributed an online questionnaire via Google Forms to: many groups of

relevant respondents, including, members of the BNI group, members of the national contractor group, business operators who use the outsourced accounting services of Hi Professional Services, business operators who use the auditing services of J&W Prosperity Company Limited and Why Audit Company Limited, and many more.

The questionnaire included screening questions to ensure that respondents were part of the target sample. The sample was selected using a convenience sampling method. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula with a 95% confidence level and a  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error. Data collection for this study utilized both primary data and secondary data sources. The primary data was gathered through a questionnaire distributed to the sample group. The secondary data was collected from books, journals, academic articles, and online sources.

#### B. Measurement of Variables and Model

The independent variables in this study include organizational characteristics such as the duration of business operation and business type, as well as influential factors such as Service Quality, Value Perception, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application, and Reputation. The dependent variable is the Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services.

#### C. Data Analysis

The primary data collection tool used in this study is a questionnaire, which is divided into three sections. The first section ensures that the respondents are part of the target sample group. The second section gathers general information about the organization, while the third section examines factors influencing the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services. The questionnaire uses closed-ended questions, with a 5-point Likert scale to assess the level of agreement or disagreement.

The finalized questionnaire was pre-tested with a sample of 30 individuals who closely resemble the target group to test its reliability. The reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which assesses internal consistency of the responses. The results showed a reliability value between 0.89 and 0.90, indicating that the questionnaire is reliable according to the accepted standards. This analysis was conducted using the SPSS software (Cronbach, L. J., 1951).

For data analysis, Descriptive Statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the data. To test the hypotheses, Inferential Statistics were employed, including One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) or F-Test, to examine the general characteristics of organizations that influence the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services among SMEs in Thailand. Additionally, Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was used to test factors influencing SMEs' decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services in Thailand. The statistical significance level was set at 0.05.

In conducting Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), five

key assumptions must be met for accurate and reliable results. These include Linearity, Independence of Errors, Homoscedasticity, Multicollinearity and Normality which are crucial for ensuring the multiple regression model is accurate (Kanya Vanitthayabuncha, 2017).

### V. RESEARCH FINDING

The results of the analysis are presented in four sections as follows:

#### A. Analysis of Frequency and Percentage of Organizational Characteristics

TABLE I. Frequency and Percentage of Organizational Characteristics

Organizational Characteristics	Details	Number	Percentage
<b>Duration of operation</b>	Less than 5 years	215	53.10
	5 – 10 years	126	31.10
	11 – 15 years	43	10.60
	More than 15 years	21	5.20
<b>Business type</b>	Service business	169	41.70
	Industrial business	36	8.90
	Wholesale/retail business	173	42.70
	Other	27	6.70

From Table II, the analysis of the data on the organizational characteristics of SMEs in Thailand from a sample of 405 respondents, it is found that businesses under 5 years old make up the largest proportion at 53.10%, indicating that most SMEs in Thailand are newly established. These businesses are more likely to need outsourced accounting services due to a lack of experience and resources to manage accounting in-house. Using outsourced accounting services helps reduce the burden of financial management and taxes during the early stages. Meanwhile, businesses in the 5–10-year range, accounting for 31.10% still need outsourced accounting services, particularly for business expansion or handling more complex tax matters. For businesses with 11-15 years, accounting for 10.60% and over 15 years, accounting for 5.20% they likely have well-established internal accounting systems and may not rely as heavily on outsourced services as newer businesses do.

Regarding business types, both wholesale/retail businesses, accounting for 42.70% and service businesses, accounting for 41.70% have high proportions. These business types tend to have more complex financial management, requiring accurate tracking of expenses and revenues. Outsourced accounting services are therefore a viable option for managing finances and taxes efficiently. In contrast, industrial businesses, accounting for 8.90% and other types of businesses 6.70% have lower proportions, which suggests that these organizations may be more likely to handle their accounting internally or may not require as much reliance on outsourced accounting services.

#### B. Analysis of Means, Standard Deviations, and Level of Agreement for Factors Influencing SMEs' Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services in Thailand

TABLE II. Means and Standard Deviations for Factors Influencing SMEs' Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services

Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services			
Factors	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Level of Agreement
Reliability	4.34	0.47	Strongly Agree
Value Perception	3.76	0.53	Agree
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application	3.73	0.66	Agree
Reputation	3.44	0.69	Agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>Agree</b>

From Table II, it is found that the level of agreement for the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services are generally at the 'Agree' level, with an average score (3.82). When considering the individual items, Reliability has the highest average score (4.34), followed by Value Perception (3.76) and Artificial Intelligence (3.73). Meanwhile Reputation has the lowest average score (3.44).

It can be analyzed that Reliability is the most important factor for SMEs, as accounting affects financial and tax management, which requires accuracy and correctness. If an outsourced accounting firm cannot provide reliable services, it may lead to future financial or tax issues. Choosing a highly reliable outsourced accounting service helps prevent potential problems in the future. On the other hand, Value Perception is the second most important factor, as SMEs often consider cost-effectiveness due to their limited budgets. Perception of the value of appropriate and efficient outsourced accounting services becomes a key factor in choosing an outsourced accounting firm, helping businesses save costs and increase growth opportunities. Furthermore, Artificial Intelligence (AI) application integration into outsourced accounting services, such as processing financial data, analysis, and tax calculations, makes work faster and more accurate. SMEs that outsource accounting services prioritize this technology to reduce errors from manual work and increase operational speed. The use of AI application helps outsourced accounting services stay modern and efficient. However, Reputation, while important, has a lower average score, indicating that SMEs may place more importance on factors affecting financial operations, such as reliability and value. Choosing an outsourced accounting firm with a good reputation might not be the main factor, as long as the firm can provide quality services and expertise that meet SMEs' needs. Reputation may not be the most crucial factor in the decision-making process.

#### C. Results of One-Way ANOVA (F-test) for Organizational Characteristics

TABLE III. Results of Hypothesis Testing for Differences Between Duration of Business Operation and the Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services in Thailand

Duration of business operation	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	F	Sig.
Less than 5 years	215	3.88	0.35	9.3	0.00
5 – 10 years	126	3.74	0.35		
11 – 15 years	43	4.02	0.32		
More than 15 years	21	3.98	0.26		

From Table III, shows that the duration of operation has statistical significance at the 0.05 level with a Sig. value of 0.00, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that SMEs with different durations of business operation have different decisions regarding the choose and continued use of outsourced accounting services.

TABLE IV. Results of Hypothesis Testing for Differences Between business types and the Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services in Thailand

Business types	n	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	F	Sig.
Service business	169	3.86	0.36	7.29	0.00
Industrial business	36	4.00	0.24		
Wholesale/retail business	173	3.78	0.36		
Other	27	4.05	0.29		

From Table IV, shows that the Business type has statistical significance at the 0.05 level with a Sig. value of 0.00, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that SMEs with different Business type have different decisions regarding the choose and continued use of outsourced accounting services.

TABLE V. Results of hypothesis testing: The general characteristics of organizations with differences impact the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services in Thailand

Hypothesis	Statistic	Sig	Test Result
Duration of operation	F-Test	0.00	Statistically significant
Business type	F-Test	0.00	Statistically significant

From Table V, the results of hypothesis testing presented in this table show that both the duration of operation and business type have statistically significant effects, with Sig. values of 0.00 for both, which are less than the significance level of 0.05.

*D. Results of Testing the Relationship of Factors Influencing SMEs' Decision to Choose and Continue Using Outsourced Accounting Services Using Multiple Regression Analysis*

TABLE VI. Results of hypothesis testing on factors influencing SMEs' decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services in Thailand

Factors	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	t	Sig.
Constant	3.60	0.16			
Reliability	-0.10	0.037	-0.14	22.39	0.00
Value Perception	-0.07	0.041	-0.11	-2.79	0.00
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application	0.09	0.039	0.16	-1.75	0.08
Reputation	0.19	0.038	0.37	2.22	0.03
$R = .45a, R^2 = 0.20, F = 25.65$					

From Table VI, the results of the multiple regression analysis, it was found that Reliability, Value Perception, and Reputation have significant coefficients (Sig. < 0.05), indicating a positive influence on the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services. Reliability has a positive impact on the decision to use the services because it provides SMEs with confidence in the accuracy of the outsourced accounting services. Value Perception highlights

the importance of receiving services that are valuable and meet the business's needs, while Reputation, although having the lowest coefficient, still shows the importance of reputation in choosing an outsourced accounting service.

On the other hand, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application (Sig. = 0.08) was found to have no significant impact, indicating that this factor does not have a clear influence on the decision to choose outsourced accounting services. This could be due to SMEs not yet recognizing the need for advanced technology in managing accounting or lacking an understanding of the benefits of AI application in accounting processes.

From the findings, the R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.20 indicates that the factors analyzed can explain only 20.40% of the variation in the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services. This suggests that other factors, not included in this study, may influence the decision by 79.60%. This indicates that while the factors considered in the study are important, they are not sufficient to fully explain the decision-making of SMEs. Therefore, further research incorporating additional factors such as personal experience or economic conditions could provide a more complete understanding of SME decision-making.

The results of the hypothesis testing indicate that the factors influencing SMEs' decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services in Thailand include Reliability, Value Perception, and Reputation, while Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application does not have a statistically significant effect.

VI. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This study found that different business types and durations of business operation significantly affect the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services in Thailand, which is consistent with the findings of Chalida Linji (2021), who discovered that these factors influence the decision to use outsourced accounting services in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Reliability has a statistically significant effect on the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services, which is consistent with the theory that reliability is crucial in ensuring trust and long-term relationships between clients and service providers. It is also in line with the research of Pakurár et al. (2019), which emphasizes that the reliability of a service provider plays a key role in customer decision-making.

Value Perception has a statistically significant effect on the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services, which is consistent with the theory that Value Perception influences the evaluation of benefits and costs of the service. Customers are more likely to continue using a service when they perceive it to offer good value relative to the cost. This is also in line with the research of Thongmai et al., 2022, which found that cost and value perception significantly influence SMEs' decisions in choosing outsourced accounting services, particularly regarding the appropriateness of service fees and service quality. SMEs

prioritize receiving services that offer high value compared to the cost they have to pay.

While Artificial Intelligence (AI) Application has no statistically significant effect on the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services, which is consistent with the theory that AI Application is a tool that can improve operational efficiency but does not directly influence customer decision-making in the context of service selection. AI Application may help enhance service delivery and data management, but the main factors in deciding to use a service typically rely on other aspects, such as the reliability of the service provider, service quality, and responsiveness to customer needs.

Finally, Reputation has a statistically significant effect on the decision to choose and continue using outsourced accounting services, which is consistent with the theory that Reputation is crucial in building trust and long-term relationships between clients and service providers. It is also in line with the research of Suvituulia Taponen and Katri Kauppi (2020), which found that organizations with a reputation for transparency and reliability are better able to attract customers and retain them. Customers tend to choose services from organizations with a good reputation and positive perceptions.

## VII. BENEFITS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study provide valuable benefits to both SMEs and outsourced accounting service providers. For SMEs, understanding the key factors—such as reliability, value perception, and reputation—enables them to make more informed decisions when selecting accounting services. This ensures they partner with firms that offer dependable, cost-effective, and high-quality services, leading to long-term business success and stability. For service providers, the insights from this research can guide strategic decisions to better meet SMEs' needs. By focusing on improving service reliability, highlighting the long-term value of their offerings, and strengthening their reputation, accounting firms can enhance client satisfaction and foster long-term relationships with SMEs. Although artificial intelligence (AI) application did not emerge as a significant factor in SMEs' decisions, service providers should still explore AI application technologies to enhance service efficiency and accuracy, particularly in automating routine tasks. SMEs, in turn, should continue to prioritize service quality, evaluate the reputation of potential providers, and consider the long-term benefits of outsourcing accounting services. This approach ensures that both parties can develop successful, sustainable partnerships in a competitive market.

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