Predictors of Value for Money in Jamaican All-Inclusive Hotels

Dr. Trevor Smith
Lecturer
Department of Management Studies, University of the West Indies
Mona, Kingston 7, Jamaica, West Indies
E-mail: trevor.smith@uwimona.edu.jm, Phone: (876)276 - 6677

Andrew J. Spencer
Department of Management Studies, University of the West Indies

Abstract

This study is motivated by the value percept disparity theory for relating perception to value within the context of customer satisfaction; and utilizes multiple regression modeling to determine the attributes of the all-inclusive package that are predictors of 'value for money'. Despite the obvious importance of value in a tight economic climate, the tourism literature has not discussed key antecedents of service quality or customer satisfaction from the perspective of value. This study has addressed this gap and have found that entertainment package, exposure to culture, quality of food and variation in restaurant are significant determinants of 'value for money'; while easy access to shop and service at hotel bars are attributes of satisfaction but not predictors of 'value for money'. It is expected that the model posited will assist management of the all-inclusive hotels with the targeting of satisfaction attributes that are most impactful on value - an issue that has become exceedingly important with the prevailing financial and economic crisis.

Introduction

The global financial and economic crisis has lead to a decline in an already poor performing Jamaican economy. This poor performance is evidenced by Jamaica's record of the second highest inflation rate and the sixth lowest growth rate among 33 regional nations in 2009 (Statistical Year Book of Latin America and the Caribbean 2009). While the Jamaican economy continues to underperform, tourism remains a leading industry and a major source of foreign exchange earnings. On performance, Jamaica was recognized at the Annual World Travel Awards as the leading Caribbean destination, world's leading cruise destination and the Caribbean leading cruise destination in 2009 (Jamaica Tourist Board, 2009). In effect, Jamaica's tourism provides a multiplier to the social economy as "it comprises natural resources, cultural assets, traffic transportation, hotels, restaurants, shopping centers, shops, leisure and recreation facilities" (Wong et al. 2009, p. 254).

In the management of tourism, it is important for industry players to understand what is necessary to sustain the business and be armed with insights of what is truly required for the tourist to continue to visit Jamaica in large numbers. Moreover, the intangibility that characterizes the hospitality product makes it particularly challenging to meet guests' needs and wants (Holloway, 2006). Meeting needs and wants have even become more challenging with the global conditions that are leading to greater price-sensitivity among travelers. In the all-inclusive offering, for instance, guests are not only concerned about the cost of the experience but also with the quality (Paris & Zona-Paris, 1999); with the mix between cost and quality amounting to a perception of value. The task to meet the needs and desires of the tourist of today has been somewhat of a stretch for service providers with the client being more quality conscious, making more and more demand of hoteliers (Poon, 1993). All-inclusive hotels are therefore faced with a difficult situation as they simultaneously try to provide consistent quality while extending themselves in offering rates that typically include all food, land and water activities, equipment with instruction, drinks and tips; along with continuous entertainment for all ages (Issa & Jayawardena, 2003).

Researchers are now trying, more than ever, to understand how customers perceive service quality, and even more so how these perceptions translate into customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Olorunniwo, Hsu & Udo, 2006); and despite the obvious importance of value in a tight economic climate, "very few authors seem to have factored value for money as a dimension of service quality/ customer satisfaction in the tourism literature" (Narayan et al., 2009, p. 80). From the perspective of all-inclusive resort therefore, there needs to be an identification of the satisfaction attributes that drive value for money so that hoteliers can be more targeted in their approach to satisfying the tourist. This study has addressed this gap and proposes a model for linking satisfaction attributes to value for money. In the final analysis, it is crucial that research identifies the key drivers of guest delight (Crotts, Pan & Raschid, 2008) as global competition intensifies, economic conditions worsen and consumers become more focused on value for money (Woodruff, 1997).

Literature Review

Some researchers (Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman et. al, 1985; Reisinger, 2001) have suggested that hospitality services require a more service-oriented approach to management than many other business types because of the people-base and personality-intensive features that are endemic in this line of business. Managers of people and personalities therefore need to have a fulsome understanding of customer satisfaction and value related issues towards an end-game of repeat business and customer loyalty. The following sections will examine the broad concept of satisfaction and will develop the theoretical foundation for linking satisfaction attributes to 'value'. In addition, the main constructs for study will be brought into sharp focus within the context of the all-inclusive hotel.

Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction is arguably the best indicator, and is surely better than service quality, for measuring consumers' overall attitude to service firms (Ekinci et al, 2008); and with increasing competition and customer sophistication, customer satisfaction has emerged as one of the key constructs within the marketing literature (Grace, 2005). "Satisfaction is [therefore] considered a crucial element to sustain the competitive business in the tourism industry" (Meng, Tepanon & Uysal, 2008, p. 44). Most models of satisfaction have suggested that "feelings of satisfaction arise when consumers compare their perceptions of a product's performance to their expectations" (Spreng, MacKenzie & Olshavsky, 1996, p. 16). However, there are some models which suggest that the feeling of satisfaction will arise when the consumers' perception of performance attributes is compared with the consumers' desires (Spreng et al, 1996). Despite the preponderance of the expectancy model of satisfaction, Wirtz and Mattila (2001) found that "value derived from needs and wants [and desires] may be superior to expectations as a comparison standard across many product categories" (p. 190). This study will therefore address consumer satisfaction from the end-state of 'desires' - a desire to obtain 'value for money'; and will utilize the conceptualization of desire presented by Spreng et al. (1996) where desire is seen as "the levels of attributes and benefits that a consumer believes will lead to or are associated with higher-level values" (p. 17).

Theoretical Foundation
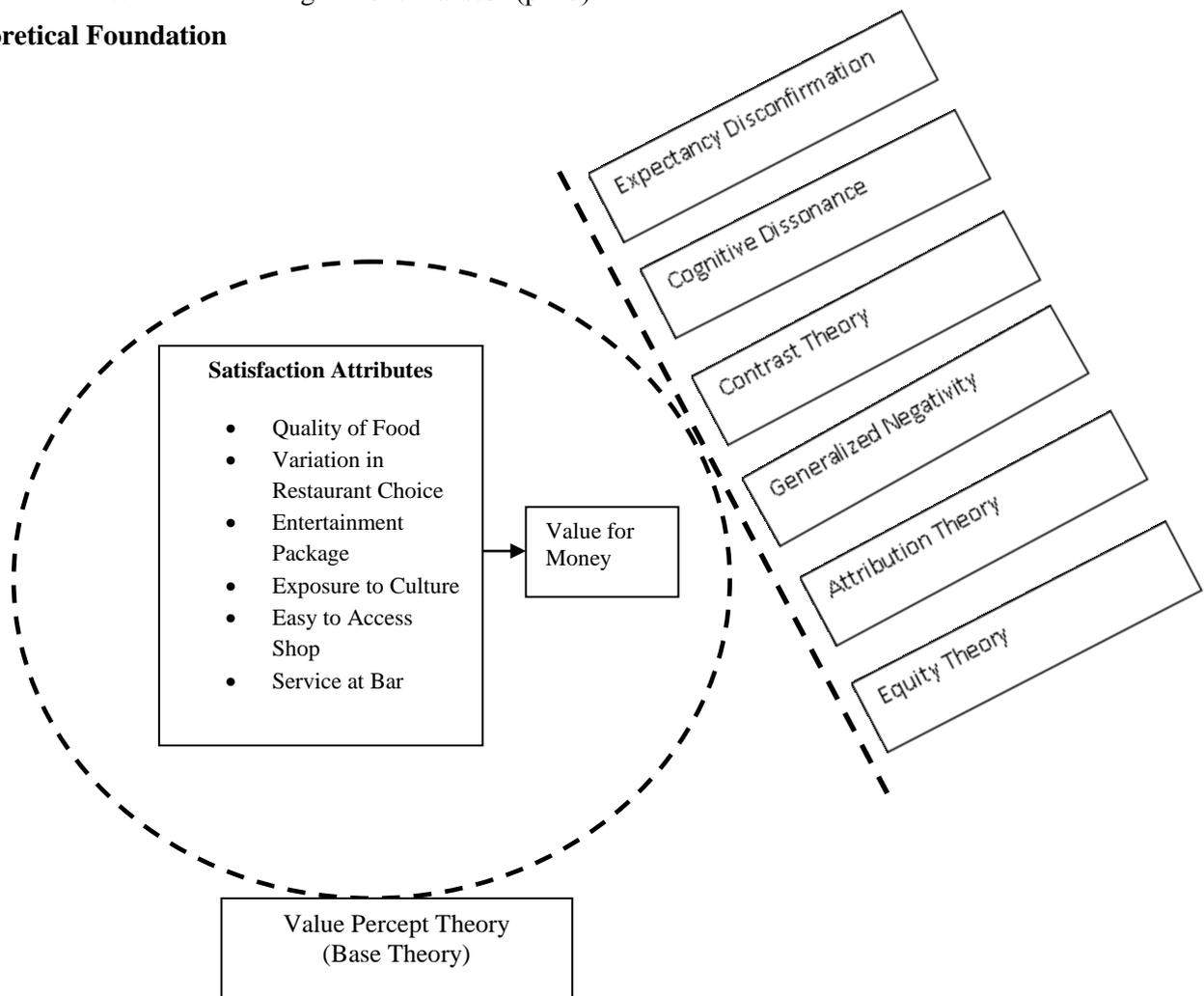
Figure 1. Research Model and Supporting Theories

The value-percept disparity theory is one of the popular theories in management literature used to explain the phenomenon of customer satisfaction within various contexts. Meng, Tepanon and Uysal (2008) suggested that, in addition to this theory, expectancy disconfirmation, cognitive dissonance, contrast, generalized negativity, attribution and equity theories are other popularly used theories for explaining satisfaction. This section on theoretical foundation will present a discussion on the value-percept theory (base theory for this study) and provides a synopsis of the other satisfaction theories that are tangential to the study. See figure 1 for research model and supporting theories.

Value percept theory

Many researchers have recognized the importance of value as a means of explaining satisfaction (Bloemer & Dekker, 2007) and the value-percept disparity model is one of these models that is popularly used in this regard (Bloemer & Dekker, 2007; Sinclair, Fleming, Radwinsky, Clupper & Clupper, 2002; Westbrook & Reilly, 1983). From the lens of the value-percept theory, satisfaction is viewed as an emotional response that is cognitively evaluative in nature and provides the comparison of the 'object' or attribute to one's value rather than to his or her expectation (Parker & Mathews, 2001). The value-percept model purports that the customer's perception of satisfaction with "aspects of a product or institution or marketplace behavior" (p. 258) is associated with the value he or she ascribes to these 'objects'; and smaller disparity between perception and value will trend towards satisfaction while larger disparity will result in dissatisfaction (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983). "Satisfaction may thus be determined as a function of the amount of discrepancy between a perception and a value as well as a function of the importance of the value to an individual" (Wilcock & Wright, 1991, p.458).

Value can be operationalized as an outcome of service or alternatively as a moderating variable between service and outcome (Sinclair et al, 2002). In the attainment of satisfaction, the customer will seeks value and not necessarily the confirmation of expectations, and so in many studies "it is posited that perceptions of products, institutions, or marketplace actions are simply tested against the extent to which they meet the consumer's values" (Westbrook & Reilly, 1983, p. 258). Thus, the value-percept approach requires three elements: "1. one or more perceptions of the aspects of a product or institution or marketplace behavior; 2. one or more value standards held by the consumer; and 3. a conscious or subconscious judgment of the relationship between one's perception(s) and one's value(s)" (p.258).

Other satisfaction theories

The value percept conceptualization provides the lens or base theory for explaining the research model in the context of satisfaction. The other satisfaction theories highlighted below are merely tangential to the model, and while not explaining the model, they nonetheless provide a fulsome explanation, perhaps other lenses even, of explaining   certain aspects of the model

1. *Expectancy disconfirmation* postulates that "customer's attitudes and purchase intentions decrease when product experience fails to meet prior expectations" (Bates et al, 2009, p. 252)
2. *Cognitive dissonance* suggests that a psychologically uncomfortable state is produced when various cognitions (such as the pleasure of smoking and knowing that smoking is injurious to health) are inconsistent (Bawa & Kansal, 2008)
3. *Contrast theory* "predicts that when expectations are not matched by actual product performance, the contrast between expectations and actuality will cause a consumer to exaggerate or magnify the incongruity" (Ross, Frommelt, Hazelwood & Chang, 1987, p. 18)
4. *Generalized negativity theory* stipulates that "a customer whose expectations are disconfirmed will judge a product to be less pleasant than he or she would in the absence of previous expectancy" (Ross, Frommelt, Hazelwood & Chang, 1987, p. 18)
5. *Attribution theory* posits that the "customers attributions of causes for success or failure result in increased positive and negative affect respectively" … and assures that the "customer will attempt to identify who [self, firm or situation related] is responsible for service success and failure" (Kashyap, 2001, p. 10)
6. *Equity theory* suggests that "individuals compare their outcomes with their inputs to assess whether they are getting a fair return for the efforts or resources that they bring to the exchange" (Kailash, 1990, p. 788)

Food Quality and Variations in Restaurants

The all-inclusive hotels typically presents its food offering through a buffet aimed at reducing labor cost and allowing for the standardization of food. It has been argued that standardization addresses the food quantity issue but fails to properly deal with quality. As the shift takes place in all-inclusive properties from 'mcdonaldization' to 'customization', greater emphasis is being placed on dining options through the use of specialty restaurants to combat the standardized offerings of the buffet line (Crick & Campbell, 2007).

Guests can now choose, though to a limited extent, to eat at specialty restaurants rather than only being able to eat from standardized buffets and grills. In an unexpected finding, Yuksel and Rimmington (1998) reported that "customers may be reasonably satisfied even if the restaurant does not totally meet their expectations" (p. 69); however, "regardless of how satisfied customers might be, they are very unlikely to eat every meal at the same restaurant [within the hotel]" (McQuitty, Finn & Wiley, 2000, p. 2); unless there is quality and lots of options in the food offering. There are some tourists who travel to a destination largely to understand and experience the local food while others may want to be served the kind of food they are accustomed to at home. Either way, food quality is paramount in the tourism offering (Narayan, et al, 2009); and quality and variety of food along with beverage and entertainment will continue to improve with the maturity of the all-inclusive product (Issa & Jayawardena, 2003).

Entertainment and Cultural Exposure

Entertainment is fast becoming a very important element of the all-inclusive package (Issa & Jayawardena, 2003); and happily, this is one area in which the all-inclusive offering is improving (Crick & Campbell, 2007). Brown (2009) highlighted the importance of capitalizing on entertainment and culture in the marketing of island tourism. He argues that the living culture of the people embedded in the tourism product allows for innovation and diversity and lengthened the reach to more varied market segments. Moreover, tourists are usually interested in culture for its educational or entertainment value (Page & Connell, 2006). Cultural exposure must therefore be focal in the all-inclusive offering, giving the tourist the opportunity to interact with local people not only in the hotels but in the surrounding communities (Smith, 2007).

Service at Hotel Bars

The tourism business have long been associated with alcohol consumption; and as Bell (2008) noted, many tourist are in the habit of travelling to drink, drinking on holidays, drinking to travel and drinking while travelling. The finding of Smith (2007) therefore could be very instructive as 'service at hotel bars' was only superseded by 'friendly staff 'in the tourists' rating of satisfaction attributes within Jamaican all-inclusive hotels.

Access to Shop

Research interest in tourist shopping "has been slow to develop, and although it is on the increase" (Westwood, 2006, p. 283), "most of the research on tourism shopping involves purchasing souvenirs" (Fairhurst et al., 2007, p. 312). Despite the paucity of research, the matter of tourist shopping has taken on new significance as it is not restricted to the purchase of souvenirs and local crafts, but has become a very integral part of the overall tourism experience (Westwood, 2006). Fairhurst (2007) concluded that "the development of shopping opportunities is critical to tourism promotion" adding that "the [shopping] assortment should include locally made items" which should be enhanced "by including additional information on product's significance and its cultural heritage" (p. 318).
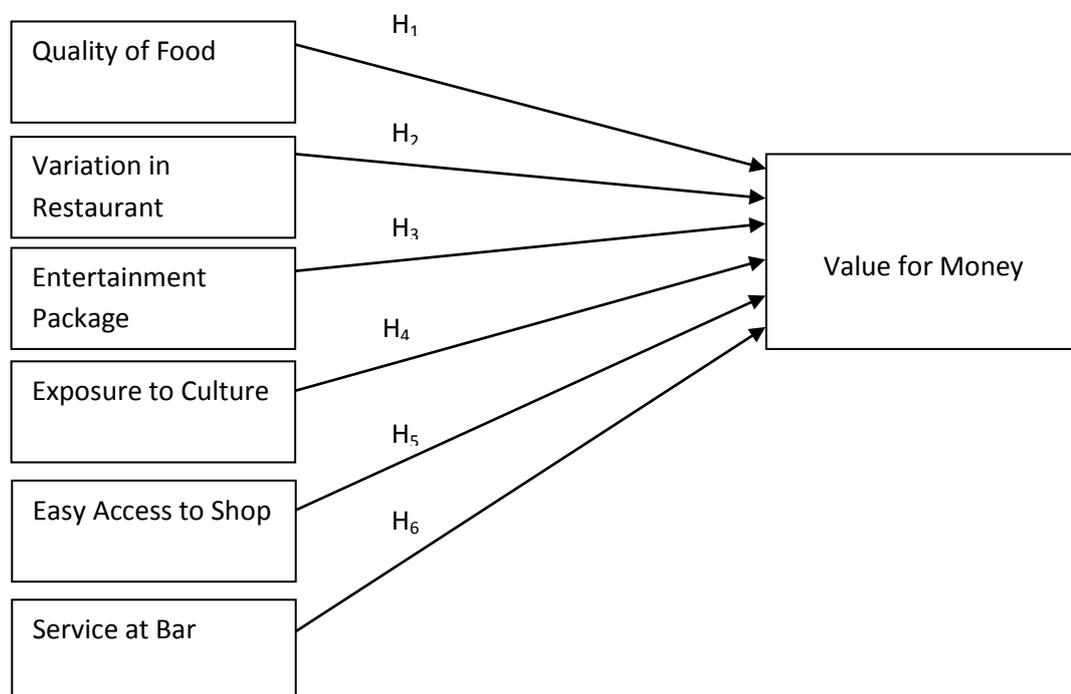
Value for Money

Value for money, in a tourism context, is a concept that captures both price and quality in one construct; and includes such measures as 'price worthiness of tour package', 'price worthiness of accommodation', 'price worthiness of food and restaurant' and 'price worthiness of goods in shops' (Narayan et al., 2009); and despite the obvious importance of value in a tight economic climate, "very few authors seem to have factored value for money as a dimension of service quality/ customer satisfaction in the tourism literature" (p. 80). In the European package (EP) and other similar alternatives, after guests have paid for the room they must then consider other costs they will incur on property or surrounding communities. The largest of these additional costs would typically be food and beverage (Walker, 2009). It is not surprising therefore that the all-inclusive package is viewed as a better value for money than other accommodation types (Turner & Troiano, 1987); and one major selling point of the concept revolves around the idea of "unlimited food and drinks" at a fixed cost.

The all-inclusive hotels have however come under tremendous pressure in providing value for money due to the price-sensitivity of travelers and demand placed by guests for quality service (Issa & Jayawardena, 2003). The issue of optimal pricing may therefore be pertinent at this time, especially for countries with slow growth economies (Woodruff, 1997). Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) suggested that competition in the marketplace has led to the desire for greater value for money. They however noted that focus should not necessarily be on price and pricing strategies but rather on providing unique benefits as a means of creating greater perceived value and customer satisfaction. They further argued that a mere reduction in price does not yield value for money but that benefits must outweigh costs. Value-based pricing strategies are therefore recommended as price is relative in nature and does not mean anything in-and-of itself unless it is associated with value. Value for money in this study is defined as "the customers' overall assessment of the utility of a product [or attribute] based on perceptions of what is received and what is given"

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(Caruana & Fenech, 2005, p. 246); and should be perceived as "a benefit provided by a product or service [or attribute] and may be the net of cost versus benefit" (Pitta & Laric, 2004, p. 452). The next section will examine the theoretical relationships among satisfaction attributes and value for money and presents the hypotheses for the testing of the research model.

Research Model and Hypotheses

A number of studies have demonstrated that "attribute factors such as attractiveness of facilities and quality of service have proven to influence the tourist ['s] contentment" (Meng et al., 2008, p. 45); and the rationale for relating satisfaction attributes to value has well been established with the value-percept theory (Bloemer & Dekker, 2007; Sinclair, Fleming, Radwinsky, Clupper & Clupper, 2002; Westbrook & Reilly, 1983; and others). However, despite the strong theoretical footing on which this study lies, "without a clear and broadly accepted conceptual and operational definition, the development of satisfaction measurement instrument is somewhat arbitrary and any conclusion about interactions with other constructs are problematic" (Caruana & Fenech, 2005, p. 247). Thus, this study will operationalize satisfaction with seven measures adopted from Smith (2007) with six of the measures (quality of food, variation in restaurant, entertainment package, exposure to culture, easy access to shop and service at hotel bars) modeled as independent variables and one (value for money) modeled as a dependent variable. See Figure 2.

Figure 2. Hypothesized Research Model

Food Quality, Variation in Restaurant and Value for Money

The all-inclusive hotels provide the tourist with large quantities of food; however, Lockyer (2004) argues that the quality of food and beverage is the important factor that drives occupancy within these hotels. Chu and Choi (2000) noted that travelers routinely evaluate food and beverage based on their perception of value. Value for money is therefore impacted by the quality of food available (Nield, Kozak & LeGrys, 2000). Also, the variety of food and beverage offerings (Nield et al., 2000) as well as the diversity of food and beverage outlets in hotels (Crotts, Pan & Raschid, 2008) appeals to wider taste and differences in perceptions of value. Moreover, it has been highlighted that one of the ways to address guest satisfaction with food and beverage is through greater choice (Clark & Wood, 1998; Crick & Campbell, 2007; Smith, 2007). The implication therefore is that: "when customers encounter a very satisfying restaurant experience they are likely to believe they have received extremely good value and consequently are likely to return to the same restaurant" (McQuitty, Finn & Wiley, 2000, p. 2). However, if the restaurant does not offer quality food with variety of recipes, then the customer may not attribute the restaurant's offering with good value for money (Sureshchandar et al., 2002). Thus, it is being proposed that:

> H1: Food quality is positively associated with value for money
> H2: Variation in restaurant is positively associated with value for money

Entertainment Package, Cultural Exposure and Value for Money

Tourism destinations could gain competitive advantage from utilizing the authentic culture of the people as an ingredient in the entertainment package of the all-inclusive hotel (Brown, 2009); and culture is seen as having an "edutainment" value - a prerequisite for success of the tourism product (Page & Connell, 2006). A critical component of the all-inclusive package involves providing continuous entertainment for all ages at reasonable prices (Issa & Jayawardena, 2003). In their comparison of Asian and Western travelers' levels of satisfaction with Malaysian hotels, Poon and Low (2005) found that recreation and entertainment were significant contributors to satisfaction with both sets of travelers. Additionally, recreation and entertainment are considered central to the guests' assessment of value for money as it moves the experience beyond the basic needs for food and shelter (Chu & Choi, 2000; Heung, 2000). Taken together therefore, it is being proposed that:

> H3: Entertainment package is positively associated with value for money
> H4: Cultural exposure is positively associated with value for money

Service at Bars, Access to Shop and Value for Money

In a study conducted by Tribe & Snaith (1998) in Varadero Cuba, where respondents were asked to rate the resort on the "variety of bars" (p. 30) and "variety of shops" (p.30), it was determined that expectations on both attributes were significantly less than performance. This finding has however run counter to Smith (2007) where tourists visiting Jamaican all-inclusive hotels reported high levels of satisfaction on similar attributes. In the case of wintersport resorts in   Austria and Northern Italy, shopping activities contributed meaningfully to quality and value of the vacation experience (Weiermair & Fuchs, 1999). While the tourist may or may not be satisfied on the attributes in question; the hospitality literature is not instructive on whether satisfaction on these attributes will drive value for money. In this case therefore, the value percept literature which positively associates satisfaction attribute with value was used as the basis for hypothesizing. Thus, it is being proposed that:

> H5: Service at bars is positively associated with value for money
> H6: Access to shop is positively associated with value for money

Methodology
Sample

The survey was administered in three Jamaican all-inclusive hotels representing a 3 star, 4 star and 5 star respectively. These hotels were selected based on their record of catering to a   large representation of tourist from various nationalities. The participants of the study were voluntary and were assured of confidentiality and anonymity; and the final sample for hypotheses testing was 102 guests with 27% from United States, 30% from United Kingdom, 29% from Canada and the remaining 13% from other countries. Fifty six percent of respondents were guests at the 4 star hotel, over 27% from the 3 star and the other 16% from the 5 star. The large majority of respondents (63.5%) were visiting an all-inclusive hotel in Jamaica for the first time, 15.4% were on their second visit, 14.5% visiting between 3 and 5 times and the remaining 7% visiting over 5 times. Ninety three percent of respondents were staying at the all-inclusive hotel between 4 and 14 days (i.e. 14%: 4-6 days; 54%: 7 days; 25%: 8-14 days), 5%: 3 days or less and the other 2% for over 14 days.

Measures

The variables used in this study were extracted from Smith (2007) who identified the main satisfiers of the all-inclusive hotel package among visiting tourists. The satisfaction items examined in this paper are: food quality, variation in restaurant, entertainment package, exposure to culture, service at hotel bars, access to shop and value for money. All seven items were measured with response options ranging from 1, "strongly disagree" to 5, "strongly agree"; and the first six were modeled as independent variables while the seventh (value for money) as dependent based on the value-percept disparity theory for relating satisfaction perception attributes to value.

Data Analysis and Results

SPSS version 16 was used for descriptive analysis and for testing the theorized relationships between the six satisfaction attributes and value for money. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables in the model. All correlations above .187 were statistically significant at $p<.05$; however, the issue of multicollinearity was not material. Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis. H1, which proposes that the greater the food quality, the greater the perceived value for money was supported $(p<.01)$. H2, which proposes that more restaurant choices will result in greater perceived value for money was supported $(p<.05)$. H3, which proposes that the better the entertainment package, the greater perceived value for money was supported $(p<.05)$. H4, which proposes that more exposure to culture will result in greater perceived value for money was supported $(p<.05)$.

Contrary to expectations, H5, which proposes that easier access to shop will result in greater perceived value for money was not supported. Similarly, H6, which proposes that better services at bars will result in greater perceived value for money was not supported. The detailed discussion on these results will be presented in the section below.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Means	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. **Value for money**	4.25	.670						
2. **Service at bar**	4.45	.669	.205*					
3. **Easy access to shop**	3.77	1.052	.209*	.230*				
4. **Entertainment package**	3.56	.960	.407*	.143	.048			
5. **Exposure to culture**	3.48	1.002	.450*	.117	.188*	.418*		
6. **Quality of food**	4.27	.733	.521*	.451*	.107	.258*	.304*	
7. **Variation in restaurant**	3.79	1.056	.425*	.287*	.296*	.261*	.244*	.393*

[a]All correlations above .187 are statistically significant at $*p = .05$, two-tailed test, $n = 102$

Table 2: Results of Regression Analysis of Satisfaction Attributes and Value for Money

Independent Variables	Beta	S.E.	p-value
Constant	1.601	.415	.000
Service at bar	-.084	.089	.349
Easy access to shop	.056	.053	.294
Entertainment package	.130	.061	.035*
Exposure to culture	.141	.059	.019*
Quality of food	.336	.086	.000**
Variation in restaurant	.113	.056	.048*
R^2	.438		
Adjusted R^2	.403		
$F(6, 95)$	12.362**		

$n = 102$, $*p<.05$, $**p<.01$

Discussion and Implications

Interest in the interplay between satisfaction attributes and value for money in the context of Jamaican all-inclusive hotels has heightened with the current financial crisis. This situation has resulted in the tourist who is faced with diminishing disposable income and consequently has become more frugal, now emphasizing value for money as a number one priority. On this basis, the study investigated the relationship between six satisfaction attributes (quality of food, variation in restaurant, entertainment package, exposure to culture, access to shop and service at bars) and value for money from the perspective of the value-percept disparity theory; with the value-percept literature suggesting a positive relationship between attributes of satisfaction and value. Consistent with expectation, the results suggest that the attributes of quality of food, variation in restaurant, entertainment package and exposure to culture are the most important determinant of value for money in the all-inclusive experience. In contrast, easy access to shop and service at bars were not impactful on perception of value for money. Importantly, the literature, facilitated by the value-percept theory, provides strong theoretical support for linking satisfaction attributes to value. However, there has been little or no application of the satisfaction-value thesis to the hospitality industry.

Moreover, the literature does not explore the specific satisfaction attributes of the all inclusive package that will influence value for money. This study has addressed this gap and has empirically identified four satisfaction attributes that, if effectively harnessed, will improve the quality of the all-inclusive experience. Given the intangibility that characterizes the hospitality product for which hoteliers are not quite sure of the antecedents of value or what is truly required to satisfy the needs, wants and desires of the tourists (Holloway, 2006), this study has further contributed to the literature by positing a model, with application to accommodation-type providers, that seeks to explain the link between attributes of satisfaction and value. Food quality of all-inclusive hotels was found to be impactful on perceived value of the product. This was not surprising as the findings accords with the literature in cases such as Nield et al. (2000) where a relationship was noted between food quality and value for money. Similarly, support was offered by Lockyer (2004) who suggested that quality of food and beverage are drivers of occupancy levels within hotels. While food quality is undoubtedly a significant contributor to value for money from the perspective of the tourist, budgetary constraints faced by hoteliers are threatening the high quality standards and so innovative ways (such as better cost on inputs and efficiencies) must be found by hoteliers in order to maintain quality while keeping prices within striking distance.

Alongside food quality, restaurant choice was shown to have a positive impact on value for money. This is also an expected finding as variety in food offering (Nield et al., 2000) as well as the widening of restaurant options (Crotts, Pan & Raschid, 2008) are likely to influence tastes and perceptions of value. In the case of Jamaica, many all-inclusive providers are offering restaurant choices that are representative of the nationalities of visitors. Some of the popular restaurant choice are Japanese, Italian, Spanish and, of course, native Jamaican. With myriad dining options therefore, visitors tend to view restaurant choice in all inclusive hotels with a notion of sophistication where they get to dress up with their partners, visiting their restaurant of choice and treating each night's visit as a special occasion. Again, there are no surprises as the utility offered through restaurant options tantamount to good value for money. The results also showed that both entertainment package and cultural exposure offered to visitors of all-inclusive hotels are indicative of good value for money. While each of these attributes will singularly influence value; most all-inclusive hotels, Jamaica and elsewhere, have included the authentic culture of the people as an ingredient in the entertainment package (Brown, 2009). In combination therefore, entertainment and culture is not only expected to influence value for money in all-inclusive hotels but should be earmarked as a driver of success in the wider tourism product.

In Jamaican hotels, top entertainers would gravitate towards the hotel circuit because of a consistent income and good compensation packages that are received even in these hard times. Playmakers are also a very attractive feature of the entertainment package; whose role it is to engage the tourists in dancing reggae, playing water sports, quizzes for prizes and all types of fun and frolic. All-inclusive hotels will also bring special craft vendors on premises for the tourist to have that chance of purchasing Jamaican souvenirs and will introduce these visitors to local cuisines for richening the cultural exposure. Thus, this study accords with expectation where entertainment and culture are considered central to the tourists' assessment of good value for money (Chu & Choi, 2000; Heung, 2000). The theorized relationships linking access to shop and value for money and service at hotel bars and value for money were not supported by the findings as neither attribute had an impact on value for money. Despite these findings, all-inclusive hotel providers cannot disregard these attributes as the tourists in a previous study, namely Smith (2007), rated both access to shop and service at hotel bars at high levels of satisfaction among visitors of Jamaican all-inclusive hotels.

It stands to reason therefore that these attributes are important and must at least be considered in the slate of offering. A possible explanation for the nonsupport of the theorized relations in this instance is that service at all-inclusive hotel bars, though satisfactorily rated, is not seen with a sense of value or anything special on the part of the guest, in that, the guest is typically provided with a counter-top service where drink is served in a disposable cup, with the guest sitting on a stool, more often than not at the poolside or on the beach. Also, it can be observed that premium products are not carried at all-inclusive hotel bars largely due to cost and the large quantities with which beverage is consumed. And so, while this is not an area of many complaints from guests, the notion of value does not come to mind with the service at hotel bars. Similarly, access to shop may not be considered a significant value in the minds of the value-driven tourists. In this case, the guest would typically be shuttled off to designated shops, on or off premises, where variety and choice on the shopping experience may not be afforded because of time constraint and confinement that are associated with the shuttle service. The average traveler would like to visit local craft markets, for example, spending time to meet and mingle with locals where shopping experience can contribute meaningfully to the quality of the vacation experience.

Conclusion

The results have shown that quality of food, variation in restaurant options, entertainment package and exposure to culture are strong predictors of value for money in the all-inclusive hotel experience. While there may be bits and pieces of a discussion in the hospitality literature on issues concerning value for money, the literature has not effectively addressed the satisfaction drivers of value for money in this context - an issue that has become more topical with the prevailing financial and economic crisis. This study has therefore addressed this gap and posited a model for predicting value for money on the basis of six identified satisfiers. Further studies should extend this model by incorporating other satisfiers of all-inclusive package (such as friendliness of staff, quality of beaches, opportunity to see the country, etc.) identified by Smith (2007). Three implications of this study are elaborated next. First, the results have significant implications for marketers of the all-inclusive product where advertising and promotional campaigns can be more focally targeted at the satisfiers identified in this study for driving the sought-after value for money. Hoteliers could therefore segment their markets on the value for money indicator and craft strategies surrounding food quality, dining options, entertainment and cultural exposure for penetration the market segment. Second, hotel management must be guided by the finding of this study which suggests that satisfaction with an attribute, albeit sufficiently rated, may not necessarily be considered a driver of good value for money.

This therefore calls for more astute management underpinned by market research to ensure that value is exacted where it is most counted. Finally, further studies should address the satisfaction – value thesis using country specific information and comparisons. This was not done as the small sample utilized in this study only allowed for pooled data analysis. In addition, further studies should relate satisfaction attributes of the all-inclusive package to other crucial outcomes such as repeat business, guest loyalty and length of stay. It is felt that understanding and achievement on these performance outcomes are essential for sustaining the hospitality product currently under threat.

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