

Tourist Expectations, Perceived Quality and Destination Image: Effects on Perceived Value and Satisfaction of Tourists Visiting Langkawi Island, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT— *This article provides an overview of a study that identified the effects of tourist expectations, perceived quality, destination image on perceived value and tourist satisfaction. The target population were tourists visiting Langkawi in 2013. Questionnaires were distributed to 500 visitors who were selected using the convenience sampling method. The 482 usable data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results from factor analysis revealed that all items used to measure the five constructs emerged into five factors (F1 = Tourist Satisfaction; F2 = Destination Image; F3 = Perceived Quality; F4 = Tourist Expectations and F5 = Perceived Value). The regression analysis outcomes indicated that all the three predictors (tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image) had positive significant relationships with perceived value and satisfaction. Destination image prevailed as the most important antecedent of perceived value and tourist satisfaction. In addition, perceived value was found to have positive significant relationship with tourist satisfaction. Several implications and managerial actions are also outlined.*

Keywords— Destination image, Expectations, Perceived Quality, Perceived Value, Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of international tourism over the past three decades has attracted the interest of governments, practitioners and researchers from various countries, including Malaysia. Tourism industry development not only benefits the industry itself, but it also generates a strong flow-through effect in other sectors such as retail, transportation, and construction (Hui et al., 2007, Sadeh et al., 2012). In other words, tourism businesses can bring in substantial revenues for a country (Chen & Tsai, 2007) mainly by creating employment opportunities for the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. Acknowledging the great potential of the tourism industry, the Malaysian government has identified it as one of the National Key Economic Areas in the Government Transformation Programme that is expected to spearhead the country's transformation into a high-income nation by 2020 (PEMANDU, 2010).

The empirical research for this study was conducted in the island of Langkawi, a destination known for its stunning beaches and diverse habitats including tropical rainforests, mangrove wetlands, caves and coral reefs. Duty-free shopping is an added attraction for the local visitors but to most of the international tourists, the charm of the island lies in its remoteness and pristine natural beauty. Since the 1980s the Malaysian government has been actively promoting Langkawi as a major tourist destination, resulting in the tremendous infrastructure development to provide improved facilities. The island is also expanding as one of South-East Asia's premier meeting and exhibition destinations. The biennial Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA), which was first held in 1991, continues to attract government officials, trade delegations and visitors from all parts of the world. The Langkawi Development

Authority (2014) reported an increasing number of tourists over the last decade, and up to October 2013, the island welcomed a total of 2.6 million domestic and international tourists.

The antecedents and consequences of tourist satisfaction, loyalty and behavioral intentions have been investigated in previous research. However, there is a dearth of research examining the relationship between tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image on tourist satisfaction and perceived value in the Malaysian context. Thus, the objectives of this paper are:

- i) to examine the direct effects of tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image on tourist satisfaction;
- ii) to explain the direct effects of tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image on perceived value; and
- iii) to identify the positive effects of perceived value on tourist satisfaction.

2. PREVIOUS LITERATURE

Several studies have investigated the relationship between tourist expectations, perceived quality, destination image, perceived value and satisfaction in the tourism industry. Yet, no research has been undertaken to investigate the relationship of those variables specifically on tourists visiting Langkawi Island.

2.1 Tourist expectations in relation to perceived value and satisfaction

Customer expectation is an affective variable in the service sector (Sadeh, et al., 2012). The study of the levels of expectations and satisfaction has paramount significance in so far as sustained development of tourism at the given destination is concerned (Lather, Singh & Singh, 2012). Unfortunately, researchers do not agree on how the term “tourist expectations” should be defined. Akama and Kieti (2003) argue that tourists usually have initial expectations of a service before they consume it. Expectations are formed through information from advertisements and word of mouth perceptions from other consumers during past experience. Bosque et al. (2006) suggest that expectations are formed through past experience, the tourists’ level of previous satisfaction with the service, communication from the service provider such as a promise and the tourists’ perceived image of the service. According to Tribe and Snaith (1998), expectations are what people anticipate regarding their experience. In short, expectations are related to the performance of a product or service as anticipated by the consumers (Ngobo, 1997; Xia et al., 2009).

Expectations are always changing because consumers are aware of alternative service providers in the ever-growing tourism industry. The tourists’ expectations directly influence their satisfaction level with the services received. This positive relationship between expectations and satisfaction has been empirically proven in various contexts (Fornell et al., 1996; Bosque et al., 2006; Xia et al., 2009).

The expectations regarding the destination can be the basis for perceived value, which is the assessment of the money paid and the service delivered. Several authors believe that tourist expectations directly affect the perceived value and satisfaction (Song et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2011; Xia et al., 2009). Xia et al. (2009), however, indicate that there is no significant relationship between expectations and perceived value ($\beta = 0.09$, $t = 0.16$).

2.2 Perceived quality in relation with perceived value and satisfaction

Another antecedent of satisfaction for this study is the perceived quality of service. Perceived quality of service is determined by customer perception. Chen and Tsai (2007) define perceived quality as the “visitor’s assessment of the standard of the service delivery process in association with the trip experience” (p. 1116). Several researchers who have undertaken studies on quality and satisfaction in relation to goods and services suggest that perceived quality and satisfaction are distinct constructs because perceptions about quality are based on long term, cognitive evaluations of a firm’s service delivery, whereas customer satisfaction is a short term emotional reaction to a specific experience (Taylor & Baker, 1994; Oliver, 1997; Rust et al., 1999; Tian-Cole et al., 2002). Saleh and Ryan (1993) further observe that “Satisfaction is determined by the consumers’ perceptions of the service and attention they receive from the representative of the service company with whom they are dealing” (p. 107).

Numerous studies have established a causal relationship between perceived quality and satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Spreng & Mackoy, 1996). In the majority of previous studies, perceptions of service quality and value have been found to affect satisfaction, and satisfaction consequently affects loyalty and post-behaviors (Choi & Chu, 2002, Chen & Tsai, 2007, Chen, 2008; de Rojas & Camarero, 2008). A positive relationship between the two constructs has also been confirmed in prior tourism research (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Murray & Howat, 2002; Um et al., 2006; de Rojas & Camarero, 2008; Ruiz et al., 2009; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010). According to Goodrich (1978), “The more favorable the perception of a given vacation destination, the more preferred that destination will tend to be” (p. 11). Likewise, in their study, Xia et al. (2009) found a significant positive relationship between perceived quality and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.64$, $t = 7.89$), meaning visitors who perceive higher destination quality are more likely to experience greater satisfaction with the destination. This finding is supported by Chen and Chen (2010) – ($\lambda = 0.57$, $t=8.52$). In

addition, Xia et al. (2009) reported a positive relationship between perceived quality and perceived value ($\beta = 0.36$, $t = 5.61$) and again, the findings of Chen and Chen (2010) lend support to the result ($\lambda = 0.70$, $t = 14.59$).

2.3 Destination image in relation to perceived value and satisfaction

Chin and Qu (2008) define destination image as an individual's mental representation of the knowledge, feelings, and overall perception of a particular destination. Tasci, Gartner, and Cavusgi (2007) further suggest that "Destination image is an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualizations, and intentions toward a destination" (p. 200). Thus, an overall image is formed as a result of interactions between cognitive, affective and conative elements (Gartner, 1993; Lin et al., 2007). Echtner and Ritchie (1991) describe destination image as the perception of destination features or attributes that is known as cognitive images. It is also a combination of cognitive and affective images and refers to mental pictures or place imagery such as whether there are elements of safety in place for the family and whether the experience would be an enjoyable one. Choi et al. (1999) concurs with this definition of destination image, explaining it as the people's belief, idea or impression about a place. Extant literature has mostly regarded destination image as important in terms of its effects on tourist behavior such as destination choice, decision making and satisfaction (Chen & Hsu, 2000; Court & Lupton, 1997; Schroeder, 1996; Ross, 1993). Echtner and Ritchie (1991) note that image is a key factor in destination choice for first-timers.

The English Historic Towns Forum (1992) reported that more than 80% of visitors consider the retailing mix and general environment of a town as the most important attraction of the destination. The following factors are deemed as important by tourism and leisure shoppers:

- the cleanliness of the town;
- pedestrian areas/pavements that are well maintained;
- natural features such as rivers and parks;
- the architecture and facades/shop fronts;
- street furniture (seating and floral displays); and
- town center activities (e.g., outdoor markets and live entertainment).

A few destination image studies have investigated destination image as an independent variable influencing several consumer behaviour variables concerning not only before, but also during and after visiting a destination (Chen & Hsu, 2000; Schroeder, 1996; Ross, 1993). Tourists may form a positive or negative image towards a destination; however, Chen and Kerstetter (1999) claim that they will choose one destination over another only when its positive image aspects exceed its negative image aspects. However, other researchers insist that destination image must be not only be positive but also be strong in order to be chosen by travellers (Ross, 1993; Hunt 1975). To measure image perceptions, the majority of studies have relied on lists of attributed measures using the scaling method (Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Prayag, 2009).

Destination image may directly or indirectly affect satisfaction through tourist expectations, perceived quality and perceived value. The positive relationship between destination image and satisfaction is well established in the tourism literature for different types of destinations, including island destinations (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Prayag, 2009; Xia et al., 2009; Chi & Qu, 2008; Cheng & Tsai, 2007; Lee et al., 2005; Bigne et al 2001; Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). Mohamad et al. (2011) indicate that Malaysia is perceived as offering natural scenic beauty supported by good facilities for food and accommodation. In the same vein, Leong et al. (2010) and Mohamad et al. (2012) found that destination image is the antecedent to satisfaction for tourists visiting Malaysia. Additionally, research in Thailand by Yasamon and Phokha (2012) confirms that tourist satisfaction is positively influenced by destination image ($\lambda = 0.62$, $t = 5.75$). Quintal and Polczynski (2010) indicate that perceived attractiveness of the beaches and landscape positively affects satisfaction ($\beta = 0.38$, $p = 0.001$). Similarly, Xia et al. (2009) reported a positive destination image-satisfaction relationship in their research ($\beta = 0.45$, $t = 6.56$). A positive relationship between destination image and perceived value was also established in the same study ($\beta = 0.23$, $t = 4.62$).

2.4 Tourists' perceived value in relation to satisfaction

Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived value as the customer's assessment of the services based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given. Rust and Oliver (1994) adopt a microeconomic view that value is some combination of what is received (utility derived from quality) and what is sacrificed (price and other costs). Lovelock (2000) observes that perceived value acts as a trade-off between perceived benefits and perceived costs. In this study, perceived value is measured by multidimensional items (Petrick & Backman, 2002). Perceived value is regarded as a combination of monetary price and non-monetary price including other factors such as time, search costs and convenience.

According to the equity theory (Oliver & Swan, 1989), consumer satisfaction occurs when consumers receive more value than they spend. Several researchers agree that when the tourists perceive that the quality of services given to them

is greater than the money paid, they will be satisfied with the services received (Chen & Chen, 2010; Huang & Su, 2010; Song et al., 2011). In other words, tourist satisfaction is directly affected by perceived value (Deslandes, 2003; Um, Chon & Ro, 2006; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Lee, Yoon & Lee, 2007; Huang & Su, 2010; Song et al., 2011). Investigations by both Xia et al. (2009) and Chen and Chen (2010) found a significant positive relationship between perceived value and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.46, t = 6.23$; $\beta = 0.30, t = 5.02$). Quintal and Polczynski (2010) suggest a similar finding ($\beta = 0.28, p = 0.001$). In sum, these findings emphasize that visitors who perceive a higher destination value are more likely to experience greater satisfaction with the destination.

3. METHODOLOGY

This is a cross-sectional descriptive research using variables compiled from previous research done in other countries such as USA, Mauritius, Taiwan, Canada, Korea, Thailand and Singapore.

3.1 Research constructs, framework and measurement

Five variables were analysed in this study. Based on prior studies, tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image were expected to have relationships with perceived value and tourist satisfaction. Further, perceived value was expected to influence tourist satisfaction. Figure 1 shows the relationships of the variables.

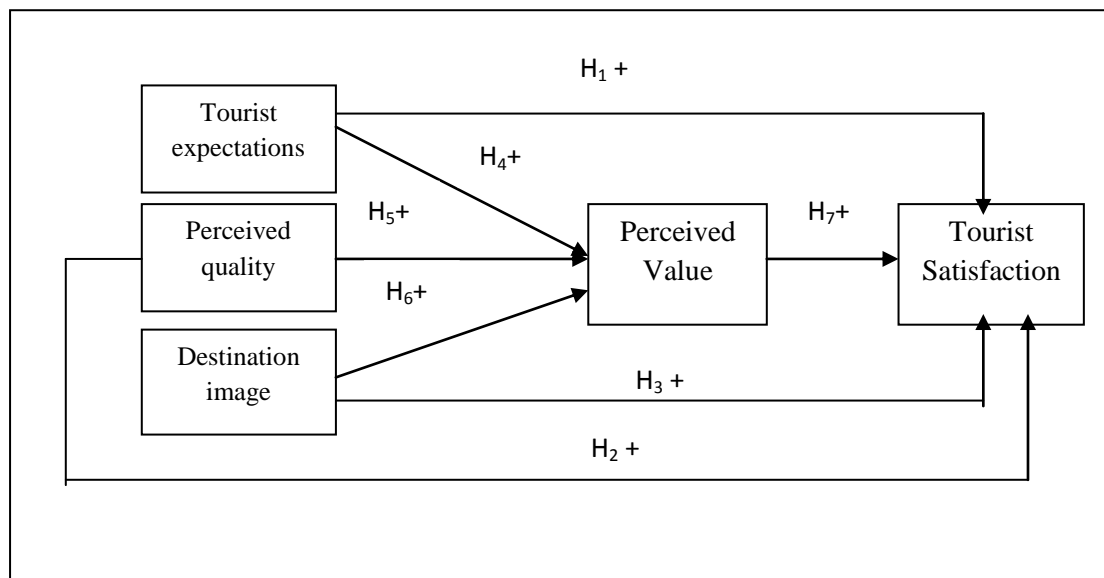


Figure 1 Proposed research framework

Expectations was measured using three dimensions: overall expectations of quality, expectations regarding customization, and expectations regarding reliability (Fornell et al., 1996). To assess perceived quality, the present research used seven items adopted from Wang et al. (2005), Hui et al. (2007), Chen and Tsai (2007), and Xia et al. (2009). Destination image was measured using the six components of tourism destination as proposed by Buhalis (2000) which include attractions, amenities, accessibility, activities, ancillary services and available packages.

Perceived value was measured using three dimensions: price, time and effort. These dimensions were employed by Oliver and Swan (1989), Bolton and Drew (1991), Chen and Tsai (2009) and Xia et al. (2009) in their studies. Tourist satisfaction was measured using 9 items modified from Dmitrovic et al. (2009), Oliver (1980), Taylor and Baker (1994), Grace and O’Cass (2005) and Wu et al. (2008). All items used to measure the constructs employed the 5-point interval scale:

- Satisfaction (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree)
- Expectations (1=Very Low, 5=Very High)
- Perceived quality (1=Very Unsatisfactory, 5=Very Satisfactory)
- Perceived value (1=Definitely not Well Worth it, 5=Definitely Worth it)
- Destination image (1=Very Bad, 5=Very Good)

3.2 Research hypotheses

Using the framework, the researchers proposed seven hypotheses:

- H₁: Tourist expectations of a destination have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction;
 H₂: Perceived quality influences tourist satisfaction;
 H₃: Destination image influences tourist satisfaction;
 H₄: Tourist expectations of a destination have a positive effect on perceived value;
 H₅: Perceived quality influences the perceived value of a tourist destination's offer;
 H₆: Destination image influences perceived value received at the tourist destination; and
 H₇: Perceived value has a positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

3.3 Sample and data collection

The targeted sample size for this study was 500 tourists, consistent with other research conducted in various countries. Chanin (2011) used 251 international tourists in Thailand, Chen and Chen (2010) used 477 tourists in Tainan, Taiwan, while Quintal and Polczynski (2010) surveyed 228 students/visitors in Australia. Hui et al. (2008) included 424 tourists in Singapore, and Joppe et al. (2001) used 359 tourists in Toronto. The 500 survey questionnaires (both Malay and English versions) were distributed to local and foreign visitors at various tourist spots in Langkawi. Convenience sampling method was employed to select the respondents.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data. Frequency analysis was performed on the demographic variables. Factor analysis was run to identify the number of factors. Internal consistency of the items was measured using Cronbach's alpha and the hypotheses were tested using multiple regression.

4.1 The profiles of respondents

The socio-demographic characteristics of the visitors are profiled in Table 1. The majority of the visitors were from Malaysia and the remaining were foreign travellers. The researchers experienced difficulties to get the cooperation from the foreigners because of their travelling time constraint, and many could understand neither Bahasa Melayu nor English. In total, there were 426 (88.4%) Malaysian citizens and 56 (11.6%) non-citizens (e.g. Indonesian, Thai, Canadian, Pakistani and Iranian). The tourists were categorized into two groups: first-time visitors (187/38.8%) and repeat visitors (295/61.2%). There were 261 (54.1%) female and 221 (45.9%) male respondents. About 70% of the respondents were Malay and Bumiputra, and the remaining were either Chinese, Indian or foreign nationals. The study was able to include both the young and older visitors whereby 74.3% of the respondents were aged between 21 to 49 years old. One half (50%) were single visitors. Married couples made up 47.3% of the respondents. One hundred and thirty-two (27.4%) respondents had secondary qualification. About 31.7% possessed a diploma qualification and 30.1% were degree holders. Therefore, the researchers concluded that more than 60% of the respondents were earning monthly incomes that were sufficient to finance their travel expenses.

Table 1: Respondents Profile (n=482)

	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
First visit	187	38.8	Malaysian	426	88.4
Repeat visit	295	61.2	Non-Malaysian	56	11.6
Malay	340	70.5	20 years and below	89	18.5
Chinese	35	7.3	21-29	182	37.8
Indian	32	6.6	30-39	109	22.6
Others	19	3.9	40-49	67	13.9
Non-Malaysian	56	11.6	50-59	29	6.0
			60-69	6	1.2
Single	244	50.6	Primary	3	0.6
Married	228	47.3	Secondary	132	27.4
Divorced	6	1.2	Diploma	153	31.7
Widowed	1	0.2	Bachelor	145	30.1
Separated	3	0.6	Master	44	9.1
			PhD	5	1.0

4.2 Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was used to identify the eigenvalue, KMO and Barlett's Test score. The varimax rotation method was performed and the number of factors was determined based on the eigenvalue criterion ($\lambda > 1$). Barlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant (8132.050, $p = 0.000$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.941. Factor loadings for all items are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Factor Analysis of the Variables (n=482)

Factor	Eigenvalues	Factor Loading	% Variance Explained
Factor 1: Tourist Satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.928$)	11.825		42.230
I really enjoyed the visit to Langkawi		0.713	
I am satisfied with my decision to visit Langkawi		0.718	
I prefer this destination.		0.726	
I have positive feelings regarding Langkawi.		0.700	
This experience is exactly what I need.		0.775	
My choice to purchase this trip was a wise one.		0.749	
This was a pleasant visit.		0.748	
This visit was better than expected.		0.761	
I rate Langkawi as a better destination as compared to to similar touri destinations.		0.737	
Factor 2: Destination Image ($\alpha = 0.857$)	2.404		8.584
Attractions (natural, man-made, artificial, purpose built, heritage, special events)		0.570	
Accessibility (entire transportation system comprising of routes, terminals and vehicles)		0.679	
Amenities (accommodation and catering facilities, retailing, other tourists service)		0.676	
Activities and events (all activities available at the destination and what tourists will do during the visits)		0.596	
Ancillary services (services used by tourists such as banks, telecommunication, post, newsagent, hospital, etc.)		0.744	
Available packages (pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals)		0.683	
Factor 3: Perceived Quality ($\alpha = 0.859$)	1.494		5.335
I perceive the quality of attractions in Langkawi (natural & heritage) is		0.577	
I perceive the quality of accommodation in Langkawi is		0.693	
I perceive the quality of food in Langkawi is		0.738	
I perceive the quality of transportation in Langkawi is		0.726	
I perceive the quality of the local environment Langkawi is....		0.590	
I perceive the quality of the tourist centers in Langkawi is....		0.469	
I perceived the quality of tourist guides is		0.516	
Factor 4: Tourist Expectations ($\alpha = 0.813$)	1.364		4.871
My overall expectation of quality is		0.722	
My expectation towards customization is		0.518	
My expectation toward reliability is		0.736	
Factor 5: Perceived Value ($\alpha = 0.844$)	1.011		3.611
In terms of money, travelling to Langkawi is		0.718	
In terms of time, travelling to Langkawi is		0.819	
In terms of effort, travelling to Langkawi is		0.842	
KMO = 0.941	Sig. = 0.000		
Barlett's Test = 8132.050	T. Variance = 64.63%		

Principal component analysis revealed the presence of five factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 64.6 per cent of the total variance, which exceeds the 60% threshold used in social sciences (Hair et al., 1995). Factor 1 clearly represents tourist satisfaction that comprises nine items, explaining 42.23 percent of the variance with eigenvalues of 11.83. Factor 2 contributes 8.58 percent of the total variance with eigenvalues of 2.40, known as destination image and consisting of six items. Meanwhile, Factor 3 is the perceived quality which comprises seven items. This factor explains the 5.33 percent of variance with eigenvalues of 1.49. Factor 4 represents tourist expectations and consists of three items, explaining the 4.87 percent variance with eigenvalues of 1.36. Factor 5 which contributes 3.61 percent of the total variance with eigenvalues of 1.01 is the perceived value and consists of three items.

The alpha values were calculated (see Table 2) to assess the internal consistency reliabilities of the scales. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013), the closer the Cronbach’s alpha is to 1, the higher its internal consistency reliability. All constructs have alpha scores of above 0.80. These values indicate that the items used to measure the constructs are reliable and satisfactory (Nunnally, 1987; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

All constructs were measured using the Likert five-point scale. As such, multiple regression was employed to test the hypotheses. The multiple regression was run according to the steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The outcomes of the analysis are shown in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

Table 3: Step 1 – Tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image in relation to tourist satisfaction

	B	β	t-value	p-value	R	R ²	F-value	F-sig.
Constant	0.928		5.517	0.000	0.644	0.415	113.075	0.000
Tourist expectations	0.168	0.162	3.250	0.001				
Perceived quality	0.283	0.258	4.652	0.000				
Destination image	0.342	0.311	6.414	0.000				

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level

From Table 3, it can be seen that all the three variables predict tourist satisfaction significantly. Tourist expectations have a positive relationship with satisfaction ($B = 0.168$, $p = 0.001$) and support the findings of studies done by Song et al. (2012), Lee et al. (2011) and Xia et al. (2009). Perceived quality also has a positive relationship with satisfaction ($B = 0.283$; $p = 0.000$) and this is consistent with results of Choi and Chu (2002), Chen and Tsai (2007), de Rojas and Camarero (2008), Chen and Chen (2010) and Chen (2008). Furthermore, the results suggest that the more positive the images are, the higher the satisfaction level ($B = 0.342$; $p = 0.000$). These findings are consistent with prior research done in other countries (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000 – Mallorca, Spain; Lee et al., 2005 – Korea; Xia et al., 2009 – Guilin, China; Prayag & Ryan, 2012 – Mauritius; Mohamed et al., 2012 – Malaysia; Yasamorn & Phokha, 2012 – Thailand). Thus, H_1 , H_2 and H_3 are supported.

Table 4: Step 2 – Tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image in relation to perceived value

	B	β	t-value	p-value	R	R ²	F-value	F-sig.
Constant	0.767		3.933	0.000	0.585	0.343	83.013	0.000
Tourist expectations	0.206	0.182	3.438	0.001				
Perceived quality	0.229	0.192	3.256	0.001				
Destination image	0.354	0.294	5.716	0.000				

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level

When tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image were regressed with perceived value, there were positive significant relationships between the variables. The higher the tourist expectations, the higher the perceived value is ($B = 0.206$, $p = 0.001$). The positive tourist expectations-perceived value relationship supports the Customer Satisfaction Index Model of Fornell et al. (1996). Similarly, when perceived quality is high, tourist will have high perceived value of the travel destination ($B = 0.229$, $p = 0.001$). This result lends support to Duman and Mattila (2005) and Fornell et al. (1996). Finally, when tourists indicate that the destination image is good, the perceived value is high (B

= 0.354, $p = 0.000$). As such, H_4 , H_5 and H_6 are supported. These findings are consistent with outcomes of similar research (Song et al., 2011; Lee et al., 2011; Xia et al., 2009).

Table 5: Step 3 - Regression analysis of perceived value and tourist satisfaction

	B	β	t-value	p-value	R	R²	F-value	F-sig.
<i>Constant</i>	2.345		16.439	0.000	0.472	0.222	137.338	0.000
Perceived value	0.431	0.472	11.719	0.000				

Note: Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 illustrates the relationship between perceived value and tourist satisfaction. It was found that perceived value positively influences satisfaction ($B = 0.431$; $p = 0.000$). This finding supports those of prior studies (Deslandes, 2003; Um, Chon & Ro, 2006; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Lee, Yoon & Lee, 2007; Xia et al., 2009; Huang & Su, 2010; Chen & Chen, 2010; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010; Song et al., 2012).

4.4 Discussion and Recommendations

All the three variables (tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image) positively affect tourist satisfaction. The relationship between the predictors and criterion variables can be considered strong ($R = 0.644$). However, there are other predictors that may explain the variation in satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.415$). Out of the three predictors, destination image ($t = 6.414$) prevails as the most important antecedent of tourist satisfaction, followed by perceived quality ($t = 4.652$) and tourist expectations ($t = 3.250$).

When tourist expectations, perceived quality and destination image were regressed with perceived value, the results reveal a significant positive relationship between the three predictors and perceived value. The strength of the relationship between all variables and perceived value is lower ($R = 0.585$) compared to the strength of the relationships between those variables and satisfaction. The R^2 value of 0.343 means that only 34.3 per cent of the variation of perceived value is explained by the three predictors. Thus, perceived value may be affected by other predictors such as costs and risks. In this model, destination image ($t = 5.716$) again stands out as the most important predictor, followed by tourist expectations ($t = 3.438$) and perceived quality ($t = 3.256$).

As expected, perceived value has a positive influence on satisfaction. The higher the tourist perceived value on tourist destination is, the higher their satisfaction. This implies that the tourists were satisfied with the money, time and effort spent visiting Langkawi. However, changes in satisfaction are only affected by a 22.2 per cent variance in perceived value ($R^2 = 0.222$). Hence, tourist satisfaction is affected by perceived value as well as other variables such as destination image, tourist expectations and perceived quality, costs and risks, personal involvement and place attachment.

Since destination image is the most important predictor for perceived value and tourist satisfaction, tourism managers and operators in Langkawi should devote more efforts to improve the island's image by upgrading the attractions, amenities, accessibility, activities, ancillary services, and available packages. As suggested by a few respondents, the following actions should be taken in the future:

- i) provide lifts or escalators at the Langkawi airport;
- ii) replace the small signages with bigger ones;
- iii) provide more public toilets at the beaches and at the small nearby islands;
- iv) build more affordable chalets for the low and middle income groups of visitors;
- v) offer affordable packages for the young visitors (school children and students); and
- vi) control the prices of food and private car rentals.

5. CONCLUSION

Perceived value and tourist satisfaction are determined by numerous factors. In this study, only three predictors were considered and all three variables predict perceived value and satisfaction significantly. Until recently, no conclusive findings have verified the predictors of perceived value and satisfaction for a destination. As such, future research should include other variables which have a high potential to predict perceived value and satisfaction. Research that focus on foreign visitors' perceived value and satisfaction with Langkawi should also be carried out.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This article is based on a research funded by the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) under the LADA Grant 2012. The authors gratefully acknowledge the opportunity given by LADA to conduct an academic research on the visitors to Langkawi Island.

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