Perceived Discrimination in the Context of High and Low Interactions – Evidence from Medical and General Tourists

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Abstract

The study explored the antecedents and consequences of perceived discrimination of tourists. Both general and medical tourists, who represent contexts of low and high interaction with service providers, respectively, were interviewed in-depth regarding their travel experiences in Hong Kong. The critical incidence approach was applied to identify unfair treatment and other relevant factors. The findings indicate that some unfair treatments were subsequently attributed to discrimination. Similarities and differences were found between the discriminatory experiences and antecedents of medical tourists and general tourists. Moreover, four groups of factors were identified as antecedents to perceived discrimination: cultural, employee, tourist and situational factors. The results suggest that the relationship between perceived discrimination and post-visit behavioral intentions is moderated by the perceived value of the trip. The practical implications of our findings are discussed in relation to reducing perceived discrimination.

Key words: perceived discrimination, Hong Kong, antecedents, tourists