

Research Note

The swift growth of the number of international students in the UK, and provision of higher education for international students has become a fundamental source of income for British institutions. International students tend to explore western culture as their primary objective by visiting diverse destinations as well as by communicating with the local community. Since most of them have ample financial resources, this results in generating a great source of wealth creation not only for the host country – the UK – but it also brings significant contribution to other European countries. This project investigates international students' tourism behaviours whilst located in the UK by identifying current historic demography of the international students in the UK. It reports the initial results gained from an empirical questionnaire. The research was carried out among 81 international university students from 18 nationalities located in 11 different cities of the UK. Results indicated that international students came to the UK for a higher education qualification and the opportunity to develop their English. In order to understand western culture better they chose to travel around the UK and Europe before going back to the home countries. International students often organised trips on their own by researching travel information and booking transportation and accommodation on the internet. They tended to stay with friends and relatives or lodge at budget hotels during travel. The most frequently mentioned attractions and activities were visiting major cities, culture and heritage sites, museums as well as shopping. Most of the international students thought strict visa legislations restricted them to travel in other nearby countries.