

**EDUCATION TOUR OF
GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS
UNDER DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL
EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF SCHOOL
EDUCATION TAMIL NADU TO
MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE
REPORT**



5TH MAY 2019 – 14TH MAY 2019

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to cultivate knowledge exchange among the Tamil Nadu's younger generation as well as exposing the students to Malaysian culture, ASTI organized and completed "Know Malaysia Education Exchange Programme" for students from Tamil Nadu to share its Culture and Language knowledge exchange between both counties. As such, a group of youths from India accompanied by their teachers and a representative from the Ministry of Education, Tamil Nadu arrived in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to participate in "Know Malaysia Education Programme" from 5th to 14th May 2019. This programme was conducted with the request from the government of Tamil Nadu.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide an exposure of Malaysian cultural and education system and learning for the younger generation of Tamil Nadu who will be future leaders
- To share leadership perspectives and experiences with Malaysian leaders and also Malaysian youth
- To explore places of interest in Malaysia, particularly those of cultural and education in nature
- To provide a meaningful and positive memories of their "Know Malaysia Cultural & Education Programme" in Malaysia
- To expose the young students on the cultural and educational diversity of Malaysia
- To explore cultural and educational similarities between the 2 nations.

TARGET GROUP

The target group for the pilot programme was students from Tamil Nadu who were selected by the government of Tamil Nadu based on their talent and capabilities. Their age ranged from 16 to 18 years old. There was a total of 7 male and 18 female students accompanied by 2 teachers that took part in the tour.

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Prior to the start of the programme, the tour team developed a booklet of all the places to visit and its cultural and/or educational background. The booklet was given out to the students prior to their arrival during a briefing session in Chennai. The following was the daily summary of the programmes organised for the young participants:

Day 1

- Ice breaking activity by Ms. Umahsankariah Muthunaikar and ASTI team.
- Briefing session by Mr. Paskaran Subramaniam, former Head of School Management Division from Ministry of Education, Malaysia.
- Welcome and introduction remark from Dr. Mohamed Yunus Yasin, the President of ASTI.
- Visit to National Monument, Merdeka Square & Istana Negara.

The students started their education tour with ice breaking activity which was conducted by Ms. Umahsankariah Muthunaikar, Secretary of ASTI and the team. During this session, the students were able to interact with each other and got to know about their background, skills and strengths. After this session, Mr. Paskaran Subramaniam delivered some key information about Tamil education and Tamil schools in Malaysia. This was followed by an introduction of ASTI and its projects by Dr. Mohamed Yunus Yasin. The session ended and the students having lunch at the hotel. After lunch, the students visited Istana Negara and the National Monument.



Day 2

- Visit to Malaysian Tamil School – SJK(T) Taman Sentosa
- Visit to Batu Caves Temple and UNESCO Heritage Site
- Welcoming dinner hosted by ASTI

The second day started with visit to a Malaysian Tamil School – SJK(T) Taman Sentosa. Once the students arrived at the school, the school management welcomed the students and provided breakfast. After that, the school management arranged for a short briefing about the school. Then the students were invited for a tour around the school and met its students. Mr. Ravichandran arranged for some of the students to do some performances at the school in order to show their talents and capabilities. Then the students had lunch with the school management. After the school visit, the students continued their journey to Batu Caves Temple. After that, the students returned to the hotel and attended the welcoming dinner held in KIP Hotel. The dinner was hosted by ASTI.



Day 3

- Official visit to Malaysian Parliament
- Visit to Kuala Lumpur Twin Towers
- Depart to Sungai Petani

Third day started with an official visit to the Malaysian Parliament. The students were excited when they arrived at the Parliament. They were welcomed by Tan Sri Vigneswaran, the speaker of the senate. The students were given a brief explanation of the parliamentary system of Malaysia. Then the students had lunch with Tan Sri Vigneswaran and received souvenir from Tan Sri. The next destination after Parliament was Kuala Lumpur Twin Towers. The students were given an opportunity to go up until Level 86 to view the Kuala Lumpur city and were given a brief history of Kuala Lumpur. After that, the students departed to Sungai Petani, Kedah. Along the journey, the in-charge teacher conducted some activities for the students.



Day 4

- Arrival at Bujang Valley Archaeological Museum & Heritage Culture Centre.
- Lunch at AIMST University
- Visit to AIMST University, Students Engagement with local Tamil school students
- Forum exchange among students
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The students were excited to start their fourth day tour. In Bujang Valley Archaeological Museum, the students were given briefing by Mr. Selvakumaran of its history and its connection with India. After that the students were divided into 5 groups to do some activities which were related to the Museum. They were given 1 hour to complete the activity. After completing the activity, the students were brought to AIMST University. The AIMST University provided lunch for the students. Next the students were briefed about AIMST University and also had a dialogue session with local Tamil school students and teachers from the area. After the dialogue session the students were back at the hotel and had dinner at the hotel.



Day 5

- Visit to heritage sites in Penang
 - Penang Hill
 - Kek Lok Temple
 - Penang Bridge
- Depart to Melaka

The students continued their journey to Penang after having breakfast at the hotel. They visited heritage sites in Penang after breakfast. First they went to Penang Hills to give them some ideas of colonial Malaysia since Penang was one of the first place colonised by the British. The students were disappointed because they could not visit much at the top of the hill as it was raining. However, the students enjoyed travelling by train to the top of the hill. After that, they went to Kek Lok Temple to learn of the Chinese heritage of Malaysia. At this temple the students were excited as they took pictures of the beautiful places at the temple and some of the students prayed at the temple. Before leaving Penang, the students were brought around the Penang Island on the bus to view some interesting places in the island. While crossing the Penang bridge the students were informed of the interesting facts of the bridge by the tour guide. After having lunch at Jaya Restaurant, the students departed to Melaka. Along the journey the in-charge teacher conducted some activities for the students.



Day 6

- Breakfast in Hotel
- Visit to Melaka Heritage Site
 - A Famosa Fort
 - Dutch Square Melaka
 - Jonker Street
 - Dutch Town
- Lunch at Melaka
- Depart to Johor

Day 6 started in Melaka, one of the oldest city in Malaysia. The students had their breakfast at the hotel. After breakfast the students were brought to visit heritage site in Melaka. The students started their visit in Melaka from Dutch Square Melaka. The students wrote down some important historical and cultural points which were explained by the tour guide. After the Dutch Square, the students visited the Portuguese AFamosa Fort. At the fort, the students were given explanation on how the fort was built and the purpose the fort was built. The students asked some questions in order to understand the history of the place better. Finally the students were brought to Jonker Street to experience the Portuguese influence in Melaka. At the Jonker Street the students were given explanation on how and when the street was built. The students also visited the Ganesh Temple which was the first temple built and also the oldest temple in Malaysia. After visiting the temple, the students had lunch at Little India of Melaka. Then the students departed to Johor.



Day 7

- Breakfast at Hotel Granada
- Visit to Sultan's Palace (Johor)
- Visit to some places in Johor State
- Depart to Singapore
- Visit to Indian Heritage Singapore
- Check in Hotel and dinner

In Johor, the students were brought to visit Sultan's Palace in Johor. The students were surprised to learn of the history of the Johor Sultanate and that he has his own Army. They took some pictures of the Palace and had a group picture. After that the students were brought to visit Danga Bay and also some tourist places. Next they had lunch in Johor Bahru and travelled to Singapore. It took almost 2 hours to cross the Malaysia Immigration and the Singapore Immigration to enter Singapore.

Once in Singapore, the students were brought to the Indian Heritage Place which is in Little India, Singapore. They also visited the museum of Indian Culture. The students were fascinated learning the unique culture of Singapore and their rules and regulation. It was totally a new environment and new experience for the students. After that they were brought to Mustafa shopping centre which is known as the biggest shopping mall in Singapore. Mustafa is famous as a one stop shopping centre for the foreign workers community in Singapore. This is where this community buys things to send back to their home countries. This was an eye opening experience for the students. The students also bought some souvenirs to bring back to India. Later they had dinner at an Indian restaurant and went back to hotel.



Day 8

- Breakfast at hotel
- Free and Easy in Singapore
 - Merlion
 - Iconic Places in Sentosa
 - Garden by the Bay
- Depart to Kuala Lumpur

The 8th day of the programme started in Singapore with breakfast in the hotel. After breakfast the students visited some interesting places in Singapore such as the Merlion, iconic places in Sentosa and Garden by the Bay. Along the way the tour guide explained how Singapore was developed. The guide also explained the lifestyle in Singapore. Some students were amazed at how clean Singapore was. The students took some group pictures at these places. After that the students had lunch and travelled to Kuala Lumpur. They reached the KIP hotel (Kuala Lumpur) around 10.00 p.m.



Day 9

- Breakfast at hotel
- Closing Ceremony at hotel ballroom
- Free and easy in Kuala Lumpur
- Visit to Batik factory in Rawang
- Visit to Putrajaya & Bulatan Putrajaya
- A short meet up with Minister of Education
- Depart to KLIA

On the 9th day which was the last day of the education tour, the students had breakfast at the hotel and moved to the ballroom for closing ceremony. The closing ceremony started with a thank you note from Dr. Mohamed Yunus Yasin. Dato P. Kamalanathan also gave appreciation remark to the students. After the speeches, the students were given some souvenirs by ASTI and also the coordinators. The students packed their things and went to the Batik factory in Rawang. At the factory they had some activities and the students enjoyed doing the activities by their own. Next the students went to Putrajaya to visit the Ministry of Education and also visited some interesting places in Putrajaya. The students had an opportunity to meet up with the Minister of Education, Malaysia for a short while and took a group picture with the Minister. After that the students were brought to the airport to depart to Chennai International Airport.



Survey Analysis

STUDENTS' SURVEY ANALYSIS

A survey was conducted after the tour and the survey forms were distributed to the participants of the Education Tour 2019. A total of 25 students and 2 teachers responded to the survey conducted. An analysis of the feedback received through the survey is shown below:

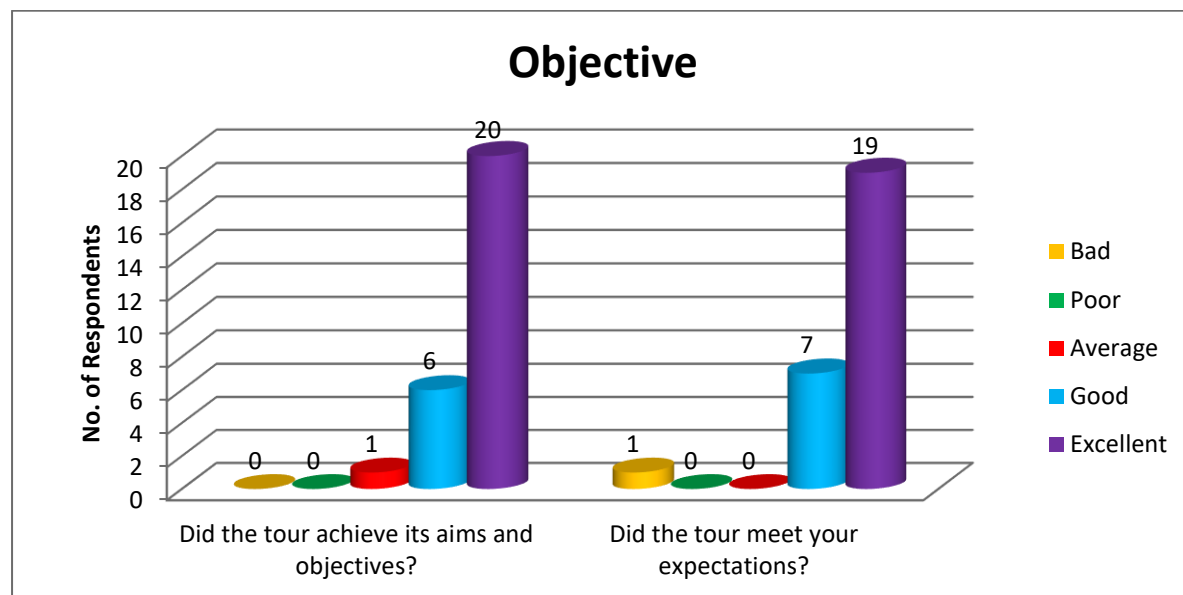


Figure 1: Objective of the Programme

Figure 1 shows whether the objective of the programme has been met. Based on the feedback, it's very clear that the education tour achieved its aims and objectives and also met the participants' expectations. Most of the participants rated 'Good' and 'Excellent' for each of the aspects.

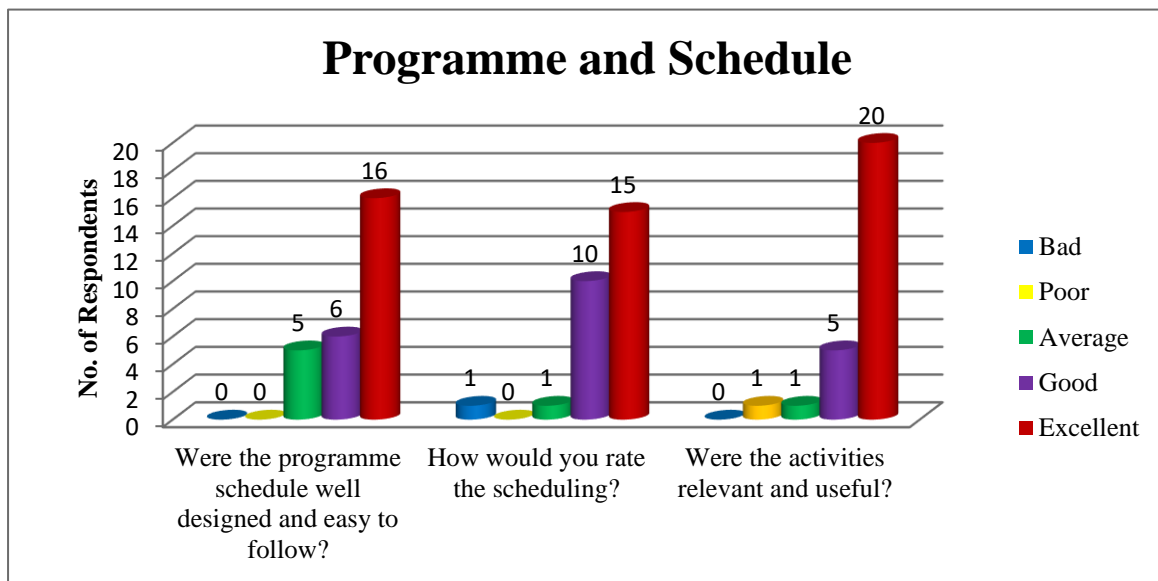


Figure 2: Programme and schedule

Figure 2 shows the participants feedback on programme and schedule that were arranged for the education tour. Most of the participants rated 'Excellent' and also 'Good' for the above subject. It shows that the schedule and the programme were well organised.

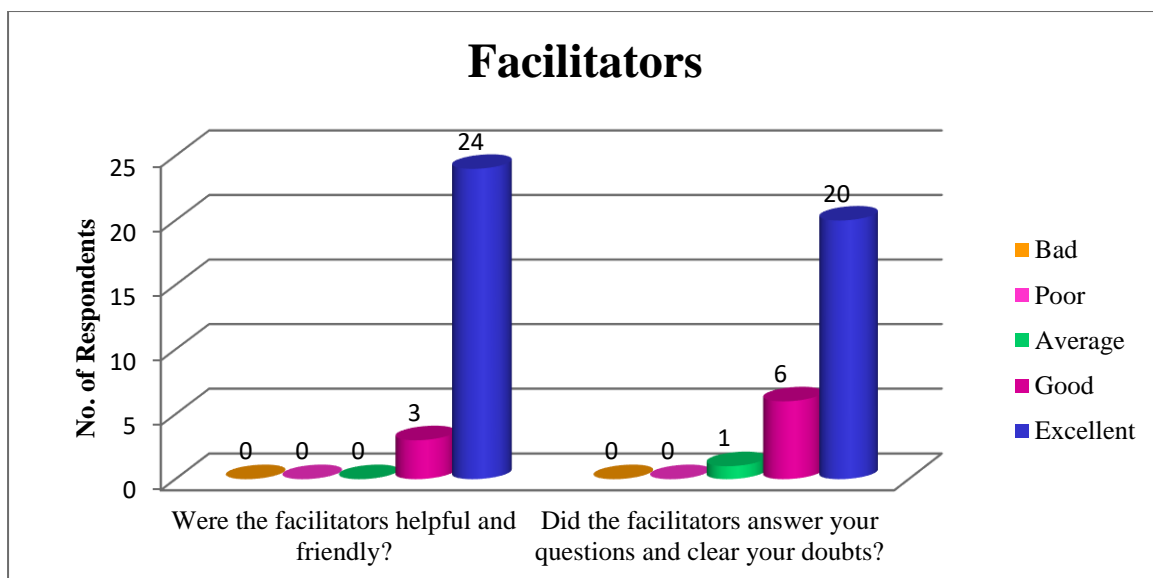


Figure 3: Facilitators of the programme

Figure 3 is about participants' satisfaction on the facilitators. Most of the participants rated 'Excellent' and 'Good'. It showed that the facilitators were very helpful along the journey and also were able to clear the doubts of the participants. The facilitators answered the participants' questions.

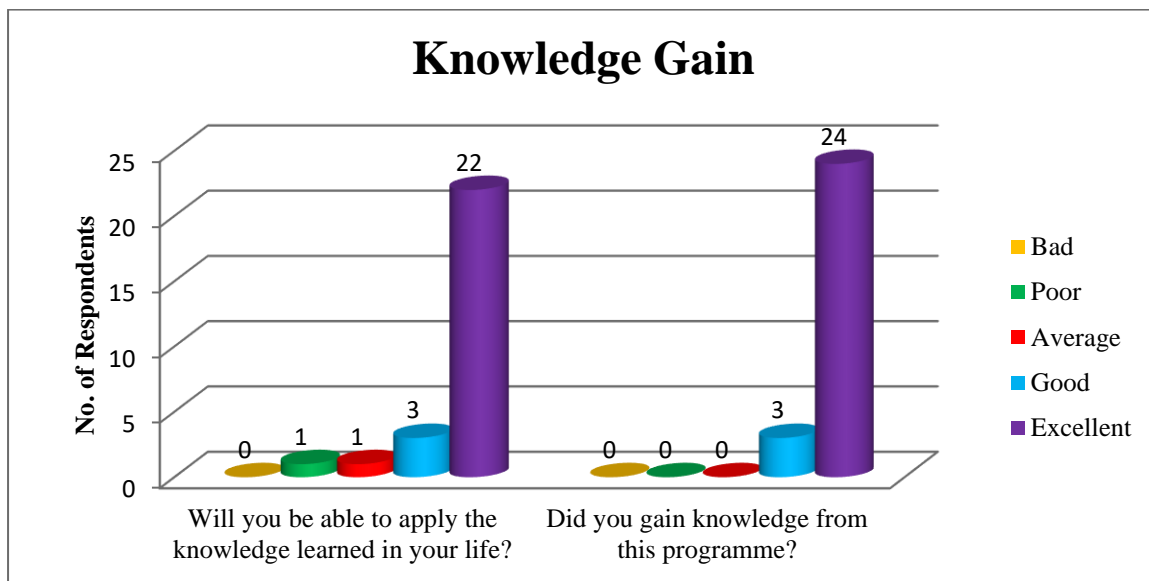


Figure 4: Knowledge gain from the programme

The above figure (Figure 4) shows the level of knowledge gained by the participants throughout the education tour. Almost 80% of them rated 'Excellent' and 'Good' for this part. It shows that the participants were able to gain knowledge throughout the journey. They also said that they are able to apply the knowledge gained in their life.

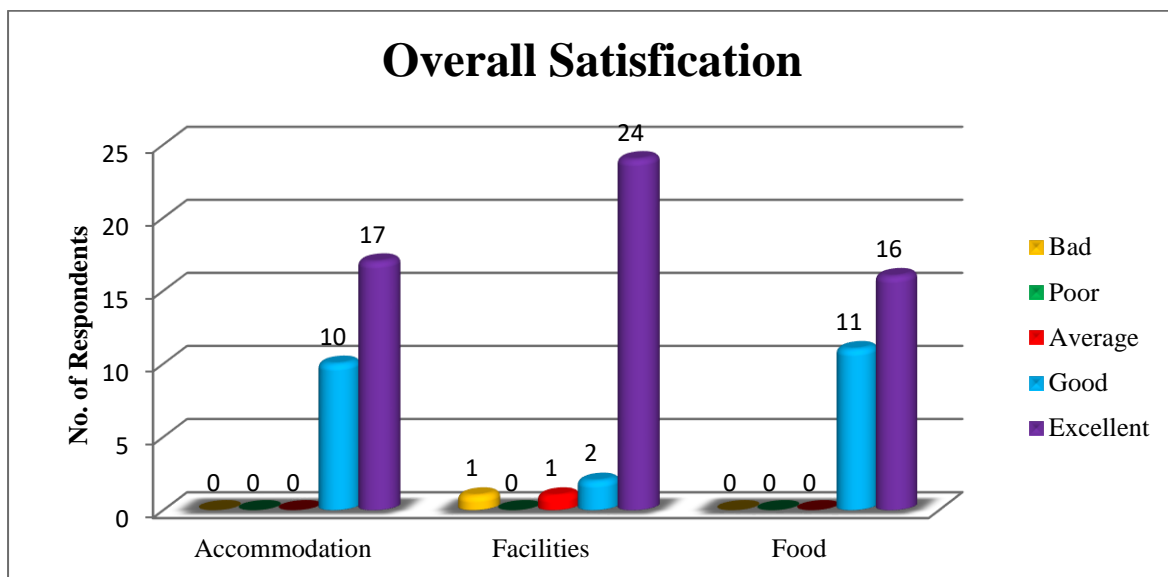


Figure 5: Overall Satisfaction of the programme

Figure 5 shows the satisfaction level of the students on the overall programme. From the total participants, 80% of the participants rated 'Good' and 'Excellent'. It shows that the participants were very satisfied with the programme and they enjoyed the tour in Malaysia.

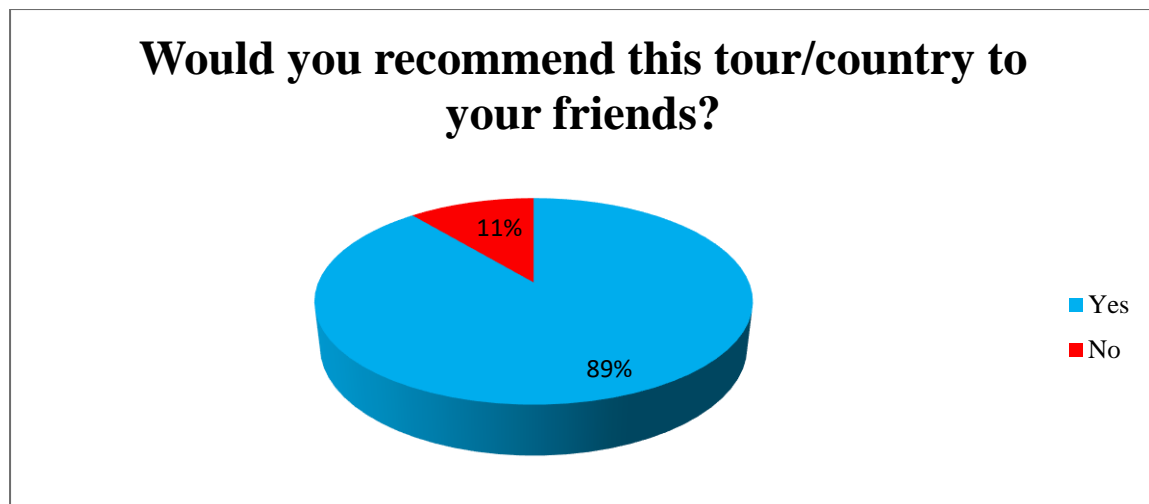


Figure 6: Would you recommend this camp to your friends?

Figure 6 shows that 89% of the participants would recommend this programme to their friends. This shows that the programme was able to create a positive impression among the participants.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strength <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experienced team. • Good place to visit. • Able to multitask at a time. • Strategic and cost effective hotel. • Food was very nice at all the places visited. • Students learnt a lot from various and diverse people. 	Weakness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost incurred due to changing places. • Could not visit some places due to weather (rain). • Time management can be improved. Some participants were late in the morning. • Students did not follow schedule time. • Too many student presentations which were organised by their coordinator. • Poor Communication.
Threat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicity • Traffic issue due to delay to the visiting place. • Bringing the students to the places as planned. 	Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students got to know about Malaysian culture. • Got to know the opportunities that were offered by local university. • Connection between students and local teacher and lecturer. • Introduced Malaysian Culture and education system to other international students.

Recommendation

- Develop the tour and explore participation from more international students.
- Do publicity via social media and live interviews.
- Further improve on places to visit and the narrative.
- Do social activities to know more details about Malaysian culture.
- Visit places that have more Malaysian history and also cultural values.

CONCLUSION

The Education Tour for top Tamil Nadu Government School students was a huge success both in terms of the participants and outcome. It was ASTI's second attempt of such an event and it is hoped that based on the lesson learnt, the project can be further improved for future participants.

Our survey shows a high satisfactory level from all the participants. We believe that this programme shall serve as a platform for international students to know various cultures in Malaysia and the education system in Malaysia. We are working towards achieving our aim of building a bond with International students to participate in our programmes.

We would like to thank Tamil Nadu Government for giving us this opportunity and also other members who helped throughout the education tour.

POST EVENT

ASTI also organised an essay writing competition for the participants who experienced the programme. Some participants submitted their essay about 2 months after the event and prizes were given accordingly.



Association of Science, Technology and Innovation (ASTI)
No.16A, Jalan 21/12, Sea Park, 46300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor D.E, Malaysia.
Tel: 03-78778571/03-78655557
Fax: 03-78729551
Email: asti2510@gmail.com

www.asti.org.my