



ORIGINAL

## Research on the establishment of the Macao sports study tour base using SWOT analysis

### Investigación sobre la creación de la base de viajes de estudios deportivos de Macao mediante el análisis DAFO

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Cite as: leong F. Research on the establishment of the Macao sports study tour base using SWOT analysis. Salud, Ciencia y Tecnología. 2024; 4:1116. <https://doi.org/10.56294/saludcyt20241116>

Submitted: 13-02-2024

Revised: 25-04-2024

Accepted: 02-07-2024

Published: 03-07-2024

Editor: Dr. William Castillo-González 

#### ABSTRACT

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Macao Special Administrative Region, and Guangdong Province will all jointly host the 15th National Games of the People's Republic of China in 2025. For Macao, it will present a chance to expand the cultural and sports sectors while also enhancing the one industry environment dominated by the gambling industry. Macao has the chance to build a study tour center and a sports learning brand by taking advantage of the National Games craze. This study, using Macao as an example, examined the viability of developing sports study tours there and employed the SWOT analysis method to identify the strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T) associated with doing so. According to the survey, when it comes to creating sports study tours, Macao has advantages in terms of facilities, location, culture, brand, and institutions. Traveling without learning is one drawback; study tour evaluation needs to be improved; teaching study tours is not a vocation; and the Macao Sports Study Tour is constrained by tourism goods, visitor abilities, and the surrounding environment. In addition to developing sports study tours, Macao has the chance to grow coastal tourism, which will support the industry's diverse development. Additionally, sports study tours will support government department mergers and reorganizations to redefine their functional orientation as well as industry integration. Sports study tour is threatened by the lack of a framework for policy support, supervision, and evaluation.

**Keywords:** Study Tour Base; Sports Study Tour; Sports Tourism Industry; Sports and Travel Integration; Concept.

#### RESUMEN

La Región Administrativa Especial de Hong Kong, la Región Administrativa Especial de Macao y la provincia de Guangdong organizarán conjuntamente los XV Juegos Nacionales de la República Popular China en 2025. Para Macao, representará una oportunidad de expandir los sectores cultural y deportivo y al mismo tiempo mejorar el entorno industrial dominado por la industria del juego. Macao tiene la oportunidad de construir un centro de viajes de estudio y una marca de aprendizaje deportivo aprovechando la moda de los Juegos Nacionales. Este estudio, utilizando Macao como ejemplo, examinó la viabilidad de desarrollar viajes de estudios deportivos allí y empleó el método de análisis FODA para identificar las fortalezas (S), debilidades (W), oportunidades (O) y amenazas (T) asociadas con hacer entonces. Según la encuesta, cuando se trata de crear viajes de estudios deportivos, Macao tiene ventajas en términos de instalaciones, ubicación, cultura, marca e instituciones. Viajar sin aprender es un inconveniente; es necesario mejorar la evaluación de los viajes de estudios; enseñar viajes de estudio no es una vocación; y el Tour de Estudios sobre Deportes de Macao está limitado por los bienes turísticos, las capacidades de los visitantes y el medio ambiente circundante. Además de desarrollar viajes de estudios deportivos, Macao tiene la oportunidad de hacer crecer el turismo costero, lo que respaldará el desarrollo diverso de la industria. Además, los viajes de

estudio sobre deportes apoyarán las fusiones y reorganizaciones de departamentos gubernamentales para redefinir su orientación funcional, así como la integración industrial. El viaje de estudios deportivos se ve amenazado por la falta de un marco de apoyo, supervisión y evaluación de políticas.

**Palabras clave:** Base de Viaje de Estudios; Viaje de Estudios Deportivo; Industria del Turismo Deportivo; Integración de Deportes y Viajes; Concepto.

## INTRODUCTION

Since Macau returned to the motherland twenty years ago, a lot has changed in terms of the economy, culture, tourism, and other areas. Despite significant improvements, the economy has steadily come together to become one that is dominated by the gaming sector. Since the global COVID-19 epidemic broke out at the end of 2019, Macau's economy has undoubtedly been impacted. Thus, the government of Macau Special Administrative Region (SAR) has suggested the "1+4" strategy to direct market adjustments once the COVID-19 pandemic has passed. "1" is to encourage the varied growth of leisure and tourism in line with the objective of creating a global center for leisure and tourism, and to improve, strengthen, and restructure the entire tourism sector. "4" refers to the ongoing promotion of the growth of the four main industries—modern finance, high-tech, exhibition and trade, culture and sports, and comprehensive health—as well as the gradual increase in the share of these industries. On November 1, 2023, the Macau SAR government announced the "Plan for Moderate Economic Diversification of Macau Special Administrative Region (2024-2028)", which is Macau's first comprehensive and systematic industrial development plan.<sup>(1)</sup> This plan carries out detailed planning and deployment for the comprehensive tourism and leisure industry, traditional Chinese medicine and health industry, modern financial industry, high-tech industry and traditional industry transformation and upgrading, as well as the exhibition, trade and cultural and sports industries.

The plan lays out the major objectives, projects, and goals for Macao's moderately diversified economic development between 2024 and 2028. Building "one center, one base, and one platform" has been suggested for Macao since 2011 by the "Macao SAR Government publishes second Five-Year Plan". Macao has been pushing for the establishment of "one base". The cultural sector is growing at a healthy rate, and it has produced many cultural initiatives and brand-building events that enhance Macao's reputation. Events related to sports tourism in Macau are still happening, and as the sports sector grows, new opportunities are opening up. Featured sports competitions like the Macao International Regatta, Macao International 10K, Macau International Table Tennis Tournament, Macau International Dragon Boat Races, Macau International Basketball Tournament, Macau Golf Open, Macau Grand Prix, Macau International Marathon, and China Tennis Tour have all been held in Macau through collaboration with the local businesses, societies, and institutions.<sup>(2)</sup> These international sporting events have helped Macao's local tourism industry grow, and they have also advanced "Sports+" and thoroughly integrated tourism, sports, and other related sectors. In 2025, Macao, Hong Kong, and Guangdong Province will host the 15th National Games. It also gives Macao an opportunity to grow its sports and cultural industries and strengthen its gaming industry's monopoly on a single industry. A sports study tour is a product that blends the three primary industries of sports, culture, and tourism.

In this study, the idea of sports study tours is investigated, and the connection between sporting events and sports study tours is made clear. The study is conceptual in nature and employs SWOT analysis and literature review techniques.

## Literature reviews

For the children of the British royal family and other nobility, tourism served as their primary source of education during the 16th and 17th centuries.<sup>(3)</sup> In recent years, the concept of study travel,<sup>(4,5)</sup> learning mechanism,<sup>(6,7)</sup> promotion strategy,<sup>(8)</sup> theoretical basis,<sup>(9,10)</sup> impact on economy and society,<sup>(11, 12)</sup> study tourists motivation and behavior<sup>(13, 14)</sup> have attracted academic attention. The government, educational institutions, parents, and students have all supported the study tour industry, which still has a lot of room for growth. Study tours are now a recognized standard for high-quality instruction. A novel approach to education that seamlessly combines sports, tourism, and education is the sports study tour. Another key tool for advancing the growth of tourism and education is sports. Consequently, sports study tours are a new approach to advancing education that combine sports, tourism, education, and culture<sup>(15)</sup>.

Study is the purpose, travel is the means, and the base is the carrier.<sup>(16)</sup> The origin of the idea behind China's study tour bases dates back to 2013, when the phrase "study tour" was first used in the "Outline for National Tourism and Leisure (2013-2020)" central policy. First of all, the outline suggested "gradual implementation of study tours for primary and secondary school students." The People's Republic of China's Ministry of Education published "Opinions on promoting study tour for primary and secondary school students" in 2016, and it made

it clear that study tours were part of the curriculum and instructional strategies for these grades. The primary duties of study tour bases include curriculum development, talent training, and safety assurance. Three primary construction models are the research institution + study tour bases co-construction model, teacher-prepared courses + student development model, and independent development model of study tour bases.<sup>(17)</sup> The study tour theme and the base's scientific screening and evaluation must be decided upon before creating a study tour itinerary. Season, time, and the distance traveled on the route should all be taken into account.<sup>(18)</sup>

In accordance with the relevant classification standards of "Tourism Resource Classification, Survey and Assessment" (GB/T18972-2003) and the resource attributes of China's study tour bases, the various base types can be categorized into eight groups: natural resources, cultural heritage, comprehensive practice, agricultural production, industrial plants, event venues, renowned universities, and scientific research institutes<sup>(19)</sup>. In addition to fostering the competitive spirit in sports, sports study tours represent a novel approach to the combined growth of tourism and culture. This study tour model is an additional example of valuing locally specific sports resources and encouraging the growth of local sports to a high standard. Enhancing understanding of sports culture, spirit, abilities, and competition events is the primary goal of sports study tours. This is a valuable method of exercising mental health, enhancing physical fitness, fostering a love of sports, experiencing the sports environment, and experiencing the atmosphere of actual sports competitions. Sports study tours should include group travel, buddy travel, family travel, and other types of travel. Etiquette classes, cultural classes, character classes, special topics classes, training classes, etc. can all be included in curriculum design. Primary school students are primarily evaluated on discipline, enthusiasm, and ability improvement; Middle school students are primarily evaluated on collective participation and the improvement of various abilities (including will, quality, etc.). College students are primarily evaluated on unity, competition, and the improvement of various abilities (including will, quality, etc.).<sup>(20)</sup>

According to academics from Europe, sports tourism only refers to the sports project itself and excludes other forms of tourism. But according to American academics, sport tourism also highlights the tourism-related activities that take place around the time, rather than just the sporting events or activities themselves. Consequently, there are now two ways to define sports tourism: the integration of events and pure activities.<sup>(21)</sup>

Academics compiled the five aspects of the idea of sports tourism in 2017.<sup>(22)</sup> Sports make up the first dimension. Places and tourist destinations make up the second dimension. Time is the third dimension. Here, "time" may refer to the total amount of travel time or only the amount of time needed to complete the project. The timing of the entire tourism process must still be prioritized if we are to optimize the impact of sports tourism. The effects of lodging, dining, transportation, cultural events, and other travel-related activities won't be taken into account if the project's duration is the only factor taken into account. The participant's sense of experience, which includes limitations, relationships with health, and the impact of leisure, makes up the fourth dimension. The economic drivers of sports tourism as a market and industry make up the last component. Studies conducted by academics from the West demonstrate that the first four dimensions need to be developed carefully when creating sports tourism initiatives. Some academics have noted that sports businesses that receive technical and policy support find it difficult to adjust to the market's diversified development. Sports organizations rely heavily on cultural and tourism businesses<sup>(23)</sup>. Sports, culture, and tourism are the three main industries that are integrating. This process can be broken down into three stages: industrial separation, budding integration, and realization integration. When an industry reaches the industrial separation stage, there is no market, product, service, etc. overlap. The three main industrial markets of sports, culture, and tourism are gradually integrating, a process known as the "blooming stage of integration." The diversification of consumer demand has caused the sports industry to progressively expand into the cultural and tourism sectors. Local governments have started to combine two or three departments from the sports, culture, and tourism departments, particularly in terms of systems. Examples of these departments are Zhuhai Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, Huaibei City Culture, Tourism and Sports Committee, etc. The lines separating the sports, cultural, and tourism sectors gradually erode during the realization stage of integration, at which point integration becomes the new norm. Over time, the sports study tour has developed into a growing industry.<sup>(24)</sup>

Currently, the majority of Chinese and international scholars' research on sports tourism focuses on the following topics: spatial distribution characteristics,<sup>(25)</sup> risk management systems,<sup>(26)</sup> sports tourism consumption,<sup>(27)</sup> sustainable development of sports tourism,<sup>(28)</sup> and concept definitions,<sup>(29)</sup> the impact of sports tourism destinations,<sup>(30)</sup> etc. Additionally, sports tourism can be used as a diplomatic tool.<sup>(31)</sup>

## METHOD

This study used keyword searches in electronic databases like the China Academic Journal Network Publishing Database, Web of Science, ProQuest, Scopus, EBSCO, and Google Scholar to define the relationship between sports competitions and study tours and analyze the crucial components of creating a sports study tour base. The key phrases are "study tour base", "sports study tour", "sports tourism industry", "sports and travel integration". The researcher will categorize and summarize these concepts after reading and retrieving

literature on related topics like “Building of Sports Study Tour Base.” The SWOT analysis method is used in this article to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the growth of sports study tours in Macau.

### Findings

Sports study tours are a novel approach to advancing education because they combine sports, tourism, education, and culture.<sup>(32)</sup> Study is the purpose, travel is the means, and the base is the carrier.<sup>(33)</sup> In addition to fostering a love of sports, sports study tours represent a new paradigm for the co-development of tourism and culture. Giving full play to locally distinctive sports resources and encouraging the superior development of local sports is exemplified by this sports study tours. Enhancing understanding of sports culture, spirit, abilities, and competition events is the primary goal of sports study tours. This is a valuable method of exercising mental health, enhancing physical fitness, fostering a love of sports, experiencing the sports environment, and experiencing the atmosphere of actual sports competitions. Sports study tours should include group travel, buddy travel, family travel, and other types of travel. Etiquette classes, cultural classes, character classes, special topics classes, training classes, etc. can all be included in curriculum design. Primary school students are primarily evaluated on discipline, enthusiasm, and ability improvement; Middle school students are primarily evaluated on collective participation and the improvement of various abilities (including will, quality, etc.). College students are primarily evaluated on unity, competition, and the improvement of various abilities (including will, quality, etc.).<sup>(34)</sup>

## DISCUSSION

### An examination of the viability of creating sports study tours in Macau

On October 22, 1987, Macao’s sports scene began to take shape. The Macao Olympic Committee was founded by the Portuguese-Macao government at the time. It wasn’t until September 10, 2008, that it changed its name to the Sports Olympic Committee of Macau, China in compliance with IOC regulations.<sup>(35)</sup> Macau submitted an application to participate in the Olympic Games in 1991, but the Portuguese government—which was in charge of Macau at the time—did not approve of the application. Macau was no longer eligible to apply for membership when the International Olympic Committee changed its charter in 1995 to only allow for the admission of independent nations.

The Macao Olympic Committee formally joined the Asian Olympic Council in December 1989 during the General Meeting held in Bari, Indonesia. Macau triumphantly secured the right to host the 4th East Asian Games in March of 1996. As the host, the Macau SAR government put together the biggest sports delegation in the history of Macau in 2005. Macau was selected to host the 2006 Lusofonia Games on June 8, 2005. Macau was selected to serve as ACOLOP’s first vice-president from 2005 to 2009 and as its president of the executive committee from 2009 to 2013. On August 20, 2007, Macau formally signed a contract to become the host city of the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games after successfully obtaining the right to host the second edition of the event in 2007.<sup>(36)</sup> The 31st meeting of the Asian Olympic Council took place in Macau on November 8, 2012.

### The strengths of Macao in terms of sports study tour resources (S)

Macao offers five key benefits when it comes to creating sports study tours. The facility advantage comes first. There are a lot of five-star hotels in Macao. The regional advantage is the second. Within the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Macao is one of the two special administrative regions and boasts a sizable tourist source market. The cultural advantage comes in third. The government of Macao is making great efforts to establish “one center, one platform, and one base,” where “one base” means “an exchange and cooperation base with Chinese culture as the mainstream and multi-cultural coexistence”. Furthermore, Macao has a rich cultural heritage from the West. These represent Macau’s cultural legacy. Brand advantage is the fourth. The Macau Grand Prix, the Macau International Marathon, and other unique sporting events are just a few of the well-known international sporting events held in Macau. The institutional advantage is the fifth. Macao’s economic development is actively supported by the central government.<sup>(37)</sup>

### Weaknesses of Macao’s sports study tour (W)

Issues with the study tour bases at the moment include: the services offered by the bases typically involve “traveling without learning” and “non-standard learning models”; the base operation team lacks professionalism; and the majority of study travel activities, which are carried out by numerous schools, are to fulfill the assignments provided by the education department. There is a phenomenon of “arbitrary base selection and random course selection” with regard to off-campus task indicators; additionally, there is no established framework for assessing the building of study tour bases (including course design, study tour tutor teaching, and research achievement evaluation).<sup>(38)</sup> The primary issues with study tour bases’ housing are inadequate staffing levels for the dorms, subpar physical amenities, and unsatisfactory experiences with student housing.<sup>(39)</sup> Study tour bases, according

to some academics, ought to be built with “regionality” in mind, utilize local tourism resources to create unique study tour offerings, and have a strong management and publicity system in place.<sup>(40)</sup> Regional, normative, and sustainable principles make up the three main categories of the study tour base construction principles<sup>(41)</sup>. Enhancing the base’s core competitiveness, honing the local architectural style, history, and culture, tourism resources, intangible cultural heritage, etc., and avoiding homogeneity with other study tour bases in themed courses are all part of the regionality principle. According to the normative principle, study tour programs should be strengthened to ensure the dual quality of education and tourism. This means that study tours are an extension of off-campus education. The definition and procedures for study tour instructors, study tour assistants, and study tour courses need to be improved by the government. According to the sustainability principle, building a study tour base ought to have a beneficial effect on the preservation of the local way of life and have the effect of stimulating the local economy. Overexploitation must be prevented in the development of tourism.

However, the growth of sports study tours will be constrained by the environment, tourist skills, and tourism products.<sup>(42)</sup> Tourists will be forced to participate in these study tour products due to their psychological fear of seawater or concern about sun exposure, which is the reason for the restrictions on tourism products. The term “tourist skill restrictions” describes the requirement that travelers acquire a particular skill in order to partake in a particular kind of study tour product. For instance, in order to sail in Macau’s coastal tourism, tourists who are athletes must meet specific requirements. The restrictions imposed by the environment on products are referred to as the limitations of the natural environment. An example of a representative natural resource for a sports study tour would be the ocean. The Macao Special Administrative Region government will use these natural resources as a means of developing sports study tours. However, natural resources also pose a challenge to Macau’s growth in sports study tourism. The ocean area, which only covers 85 square kilometers in Macau, will inevitably act as a natural environmental barrier to the growth of coastal tourism.

#### **Opportunities in Macau for the growth of sports study tours (O)**

Natural and humanities resources are included in sports tourism resources.<sup>(43)</sup> Using the development of Macau’s coastal tourism in 2023 as an example, marine sports like fishing and sailing could be included in the government of Macau Special Administrative Region’s sports study tours. Through coastal tourism, visitors can take in Macao’s historical structures and contemporary landmarks from a maritime perspective, as well as learn about the city’s waterways and water navigation. As a result, they are able to interact closely with the locals on Macao’s waterways and comprehend the evolution of the city’s marine-related industries. They can also pick up sailing skills. Promoting Macao’s marine sports and coastal tourism to locals and visitors will, in the eyes of the government, aid in solidifying Macao’s reputation as a coastal city and advancing the growth of marine tourism. In addition, events such as sporting, educational, and economic contests can be held under the name “Macau, China” in order to fully utilize the institutional benefits of Macau’s “one country, two systems”.<sup>(44)</sup>

Mainland China has a sizable market. The five industries of “tourism, culture, sports, health, and elderly care” were designated as the “five happiness industries” by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in 2016. Of these, three—the tourism, cultural, and sports industries—attracted a significant number of scholars. Some academics have noted that sports businesses that receive technical and policy support find it difficult to adjust to the market’s diversified development. Sports organizations rely heavily on cultural and tourism businesses.<sup>(45)</sup> Sports, culture, and tourism are the three main industries that are integrating. This process can be broken down into three stages: industrial separation, budding integration, and realization integration. When an industry reaches the industrial separation stage, there is no market, product, service, etc. overlap. The three main industrial markets of sports, culture, and tourism are gradually integrating, a process known as the “blooming stage of integration.” The diversification of consumer demand has caused the sports industry to progressively expand into the cultural and tourism sectors. Local governments have started to combine two or three departments from the sports, culture, and tourism departments, particularly in terms of systems. Examples of these departments are Zhuhai Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau, Huaibei City Culture, Tourism and Sports Committee, etc. The lines separating the sports, cultural, and tourism sectors gradually erode during the realization stage of integration, at which point integration becomes the new norm. Over time, the sports study tour and travel sector has developed into a growing industry.<sup>(46)</sup>

#### **Macau Sports Study Tour’s Threats (T)**

There is no system in place for oversight and evaluation. Currently, there are no guidelines or criteria for study tour activities, and neither the study process nor its results are monitored or assessed. There’s no backing from policy. Particularly improved is the Macau government’s policy support for study tours. The definition and procedures for study tour instructors, study tour assistants, and study tour courses need to be improved by the government.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Macao Special Administrative Region, and Guangdong Province

will all jointly host the 15th National Games of the People's Republic of China in 2025. Macao has the chance to build a study tour center and a sports learning brand by taking advantage of the National Games craze. For Macao, it will present a chance to expand the cultural and sports sectors while also enhancing the one industry environment dominated by the gambling industry. In addition to fostering a love of athletics, sports study tours represent a new paradigm for the co-development of tourism and culture. Giving full play to locally distinctive sports resources and encouraging the superior growth of local sports is exemplified by this study approach. Enhancing understanding of sports culture, spirit, abilities, and competition events is the primary goal of sports study tours. This is a valuable method of exercising mental health, enhancing physical fitness, fostering a love of sports, experiencing the sports environment, and experiencing the atmosphere of actual sports competitions. Sports study tour should include group travel, buddy travel, family travel, and other types of travel. Etiquette lessons, cultural classes, character classes, special themes classes, training classes, etc. can all be included in curriculum design. Students in primary school are mostly assessed on their ability to improve, discipline, and excitement. Middle school pupils are mostly assessed on their ability to work together and improve a variety of skills (such as willpower, quality, etc.); college students are primarily assessed on their ability to work together, compete, and improve a variety of skills (such as willpower, quality, etc.).<sup>(47)</sup>

This study, using Macao as an example, examined the viability of developing sports study tours there and employed the SWOT analysis method to identify the strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T) associated with doing so. According to the survey, when it comes to creating sports study tours, Macao has advantages in terms of facilities, location, culture, brand, and institutions. Traveling without learning is one drawback; study tour evaluation needs to be improved; teaching study tours is not a vocation; and the Macao Sports Study Tour is constrained by tourism goods, visitor abilities, and the surrounding environment. In addition to developing sports study tours, Macao has the chance to grow coastal tourism, which will support the industry's diverse development. Additionally, sports study tours will support government department mergers and reorganizations to redefine their functional orientation as well as industry integration. Sports study tour is threatened by the lack of a framework for policy support, supervision, and evaluation.

The Macao government ought to strengthen the mechanisms for monitoring and assessing study tours and offer greater backing for the study tour policy support. Additionally, it ought to enhance the definitions and protocols for study tour assistants, study tour instructors, and study tour courses.

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#### **FUNDING**

This research received no funding.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.



**AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

All authors revised the revised draft, contributed to the article, and approved the submitted version.