



# The Examination of school study tours in Zhoushan City from the perspective of "Double Reduction" Policy

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**Abstract.** As a part of the comprehensive practical curriculum of secondary schools and a driving force of all-round education, study tours have played an important role in the domestic secondary education system. With the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, the study tours industry has also witnessed great changes and new opportunities. In order to promote the industry, The article puts forward the educational purpose of study tours from the perspective of pedagogy, analyzes the major problem of study tours in secondary schools in Zhoushan City based on fieldwork and pedagogical theories. The research will offer useful help for high-quality and standardized development of study tours and cooperate with the advancement of the "double-reduced" policy, hoping that study tours can deepen all-round education, further enhance the quality of national predispositions.

**Keywords:** "Double Reduction" policy, study tours, educational value, problem inquiry.

## 1 Introduction

With the improvement of life quality and the continuous diversification of education methods, study tours are recognized by schools and families, and have become one of stars in the field of quality education. Meanwhile, the introduction of "Double Reduction" policy strengthens this trend. In July 2021, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the General Office of the State Council issued the opinions on further reducing the burden of homework for students in compulsory education and the burden of out-of-school training. The "Double Reduction" policy was officially implemented. The purpose of the "Double Reduction" policy is to reduce the burden of students' academic workload, reform education model and realize high-quality development of basic education. Based on this perception, "Double Reduction" policy, which not only speed up the development of study tours, also put forward higher requirements for it, has played a positive role in the market of study tours.

Study tours, also known as educational travel or study trips, refer to organized trips taken by students or professionals for the purpose of learning outside of a traditional

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I. A. Khan et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the 2024 3rd International Conference on Humanities, Wisdom Education and Service Management (HWESM 2024)*, Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research 849, [https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-253-8\\_47](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-2-38476-253-8_47)

classroom setting. Students are the main body of the research and study tours.<sup>[1]</sup> These tours often involve visits to educational institutions, cultural sites, museums, historical landmarks, or companies relevant to the field of study. Study tours provide participants with unique opportunities to deepen their understanding of a subject, gain practical experience, and immerse themselves in different cultures. The purpose of study tours is to provide participants with practical, hands-on learning experiences outside of the traditional classroom environment. Study tours aim to enhance academic knowledge, deepen understanding of a specific subject or industry, and expose participants to different cultures, practices, and environments. The seed of critical self-reflexivity planted in the students during such short-term immersive and experiential learning spaces.<sup>[2]</sup> By immersing participants in real-world settings related to their field of study, study tours help bridge the gap between theory and practice, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and cultural awareness. Additionally, study tours can inspire personal growth, broaden perspectives, and build valuable networks and connections within the professional or academic sphere. They can be a valuable supplement to traditional academic education and help broaden perspectives. To be frank, this kind of tour applies John Dewey's educational philosophy, which emphasizes the concept of "learning by doing," which is also known as experiential learning. Dewey believed that students should learn by actively engaging in hands-on experiences and real-world activities. According to Dewey, education should not be passive but rather an interactive process where students participate in meaningful tasks and projects that require critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. By immersing themselves in practical experiences, students can better understand and retain knowledge, develop essential skills, and apply what they have learned in a relevant context. Dewey's "learning by doing" approach aligns with the idea that education should be experiential, student-centered, and focused on active engagement to facilitate deep and meaningful learning.

Zhoushan City's rich marine cultural resources, red cultural resources, places of interest and beautiful regional customs provides a natural breeding ground, but also for the city of Zhoushan City pointed out the direction of the development of study tour industry. Zhoushan City, the study tour industry has always been hot, unique natural geographical conditions and strong historical and cultural conditions to attract local and foreign primary and secondary school students to experience, learning. Zhoushan Sea Shell International Travel Agency Limited Liability Company general manager Wu Xuhua said that in the summer of 2019, Zhoushan island study tour products attracted more than 2,600 local primary and secondary school student teams and more than 1,000 foreign teams. The summer of 2020 has only local teams due to the impact of the new Crown pneumonia epidemic, but the number of people is the same as in 2019. Relevant data show that Zhoushan received about 100,000 study tour teams in 2018, of which study teams from outside the city accounted for more than 60%, and study tours have become a new growth point for Zhoushan's tourism development and innovation and an effective way to revitalize the countryside. China's research and study tours are compatible with the comprehensive practical activity curriculum. The comprehensive practical activity curriculum emphasizes the use of knowledge from various disciplines, focuses on dealing with real-life problems, and improves comprehensive quality and develops practical ability.<sup>[3]</sup>

Encountered with great chances, at the same time, study tour industry also faces some serious problems that need to be improved. In order to put the "Double Reduction" policy fully into implement and, most importantly, realize the quality education and students' all-round development, this paper listed some major predicaments study tours faced and analyzed the reason through literature investigation, empirical research, case analysis, hoping to contribute to the re-form and upgrading of study tour industry in Zhoushan City.

## **2 Educational Value Analysis of Zhoushan Study Tour Industry**

### **2.1 Study tours as a formality with unclear purpose**

After investigation, we found that part of the travel agency, school or base working on the study tours design unreasonable travelling activities. In order to achieve the educational goals, they tend to ignore the study process of educational significance of the popularization, leading to some problems like study tours are mainly set for formalism. Taking a study tour organized by the Zhoushan Ocean Exploration Sports and Cultural Development as example, the "most beautiful camping season" study tour activities cost less than one day, but arranged ten activities in total. Although the combination of regional characteristics of kayaking, catching the sea and other featured projects, the arrangement is in the state that entertainment activities accounted for far more than the study activities, depart away from the educational objectives. Then, in Zhoushan study education practice base, it carries out some study tour activities. Though there are scores of study tour projects in that base, the design mode is relatively simple and tedious. Limited by time, one-day study tours are arranged for the pattern like "lecture + practical activities + lecture + practical activities ". To some extent, lectures and practical activities don't have strong relation. The reason why they arrange like this is only for the symbolic embodiment of the "learning" process. Plus, practical activities are mostly instant experience or teamwork activities, which contributes to exercise the students' social skills and organizational skills. However, without the systematic curriculum planning, it cannot achieve the true purpose of education. These kinds of study tours are actually the "variants" of traditional tourism only under the "guise" of study tours.

Given that the two causes of the problem, one is that although the study tour is flourishing, but is still in the primary stage of the development in Zhoushan City , therefore ,part of the problem is difficult to avoid. Study base has been in the large-scale construction, and the certification work is gradually on the track. But the relevant base evaluation feedback mechanism has not been formally adopted. Bureau of Culture and Tourism supervision is relatively weak, resulting in some travel agencies lack of the nature of public welfare, lack of motivation for the arrangement of activities, the arrangement of scattered and disorderly activities, not in line with the documents issued by the Education Bureau. The lack of educational significance is not conducive to the promotion of research and study tour overall layout in Zhoushan.

Secondly, the public is unclear about the purpose of study tours. Wang Dinghua, Director of the First Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education, put forward the characteristics of study tours, which contain the two major requirements of "collective activities" and "hands-on experience", aiming to lead students to expand their horizons and enrich their knowledge in a life different from the traditional classroom, to learn in real situations, and to deepen their relationship with nature. The design of the activities of study tours by some study tour organizations is opposed to the purposes and objectives of study tours, deviating from the direction of education and losing its proper power. Some schools, in their excessive pursuit of exam-oriented education, have chosen to simplify study tours, giving up on the cultivation of students' sound personality and individuality, as well as the stimulation of their inner potential. The public confuses the study tours with that of spring and fall tours, emphasizing only the "tour" part of study tours and ignoring their role as school education.

## 2.2 Unregulated study tours

Study tours are developing rapidly under the accompaniment of various advantages and opportunities, but it's still in the initial stage in our country and one of the most severe problems is unregulated study tours. The specific problems are as follows:

First, policies and documents on the standardization of study tours need to be improved. Zhoushan City, Zhejiang Province, has not issued local study tour norms to make further provisions, and local policy has not been actively implemented according to the central policy, leaving opportunities for exploitation.

Secondly, the market for study tours is a mixture of good and bad, and there is a lack of coordination between the upper and lower reaches of the industrial chain. Study tours is regarded as a practical activity with an educational and public welfare nature, which should not be profit-oriented. However, the upstream supply side of the study tour industry chain and the midstream contractor are with a certain utilitarian nature, engaged in the study tour agencies of different nature. Influenced by the market economy, many travel agencies have developed a lot of study tours for the sake of economic benefits, and have become the actual activity planners and organizers, but they do not pay attention to the development and utilization of educational and curricular resources due to the lack of educational perspectives and positions, and the lack of curricular thinking.<sup>[4]</sup> due to the highly competitive environment of the tourism industry, entrepreneurship and innovation are crucial for dealing with current consumer, technological and environmental trends.<sup>[5]</sup> And the downstream organization lacked consultation and contact. What's more, relevant protection mechanisms are defective so study tour product quality varies. Travel agency staff, especially research tutors, are also characterized by high mobility and various quality, and supervision is relatively weak. A research in New Zealand released a finding about study tour tutors, "on both a professional and personal level they are committed to their role and wish to live up to the expectations placed upon them, however they require more support at an institutional level."<sup>[6]</sup> At this stage, firstly, most people are not clear about the concept of study tour tutor, and it is difficult for the government to promote it. Secondly, the certification of study tour tutors is underestimated. Study tour tutor certification has not yet been put on the agenda, leading

to the study tour organization did not set the threshold requirements for study tour tutors. Teachers bear responsibility for the safety of young adolescents when travelling internationally on these tours. Parents and school management place these expectations on teachers and the "in loco parentis" legal and moral implications for teachers to serve as guardians of these children is a role that teachers are not specifically trained for.<sup>[7]</sup>

Thirdly, the curriculum of study tours varies. Nowadays, one of the widely criticized problems of study tours is "touring without learning". Tourism companies have entered the market of study tours and raised the market price. Once the study tour market becomes profit-oriented, there will be a lot of real problems, such as focusing on touring but not focusing on learning. Part of the study tour just adds some elements to the nature of knowledge such as museums, universi-ties, art galleries, and others. Most tours can't achieve the ed-ucational purpose of the study tour. Study tour curriculum arrangement is not standardized meaning that it loses its educational value and becomes just like ordinary tourism and group building activities. However, study tours are different from common tours. Therefore, except for planning the itinerary, the organizers need to work hard on the curriculum. During the development of the study tour curriculum, it is necessary to systematically analyze and integrate the existing experience, learn more from the excellent course cases, and develop a high-quality course model that meets the regional characteristics of Zhoushan City and is conducive to the growth and development of students.

Fourth, lack of a sound regulatory mechanism. The investigation of Zhoushan City found that the study tour industry chain, supervision system, and evaluation system have not yet been perfected. Many schools have to hand over the organization of study tours to travel agencies or other third-party institutions. In all aspects of curriculum construction, base planning, route selection, curriculum implementation, teaching design, curriculum evaluation, etc., study tours should focus on cultivating students' development of core literacy, be based on authentic problematic situations, and promote the in-depth integration of class-room learning and travel inquiry.<sup>[8]</sup> Because the government and the schools do not have a mechanism for supervising and guaranteeing the third-party organizations and the process of study tours, the actual results of study tours fall far short of expectations.

### 3 Conclusions

This paper discusses the major problem of study tours in public secondary education under the influence of "Double Reduction" policy. As the "Double Reduction" is implemented step by step, the market for study tours is also facing a series of opportunities. While exploring the potential of study tours, we should also look squarely at the existing problems. Through literature survey, empirical investigation, interview and so on, the study shows that in current context, one of the most noticeable draw-back study tours show is its lack of executed standard and purpose so that study tours become a mere formality. In order to effectively solve these problems, it is recommended that every study tour ought to achieve the expected educational effect by promoting curriculum development and activity design, realizing curriculum-oriented study tours and

strengthening the supervision and standardization of study tour market, as well as other optimized ways.

In summary, study tours play an indispensable role in education. All the relevant need to work together to ensure that study tours deliver a greater positive impact on school education. Through continuous efforts and improvement, study tours will be able to achieve healthy, orderly and sustainable development and provide students with a broader space for development.

## Acknowledgements

The paper is one of the phased achievements of the 2023 National College Students' Innovation Training General Project "National Innovation Plan" (project number: 202310340065).

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