

Book Review

Bray, Mark & Lykins, Chad (2012). *Shadow education: Private supplementary tutoring and its implications for policy makers in Asia*. Philippines: Asian Development Bank. 100 p., 32.00 USD, ISBN 978-92-9092-658-0.
Free download available from: <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2012/shadow-education.pdf>

This book is a follow-up of Mark Bray's (2009) *Confronting the Shadow Education System: What Policies for What Private Tutoring?* The first book is about the practice of private tutoring spreading globally, and it discusses the structure and conceptual framework of education policies in response to tutoring, which it calls shadow education, in some major countries. In contrast, this book focuses on private tutoring and the related education policies in Asian countries. The two books share some characteristics: (1) They explore shadow education at the primary and secondary level; (2) they deal with tutoring that is provided for a fee in academic subjects and that occurs outside standard school hours; and (3) they use the metaphor of the shadow because much private supplementary tutoring mimics the mainstream education system. In other words, as the content of mainstream education changes, so does the content in the shadow system, and as the main-

stream education system grows, so does the shadow system.

The authors categorize the private supplementary tutoring phenomena in Asia into three geographical groups: (1) East Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and China, which have a long history of private tutoring in the Confucian tradition; (2) South Asian countries such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, which also have a long history of private supplementary tutoring, but where it has been increased by the competitive society and used as a means to raise teachers' salaries; and (3) North, Central, and West Asian countries, which, as mostly former socialist countries, such as the former Soviet Union and Mongolia, have newly experienced a liberal market system and democracy, and an associated increasing reliance on private tutoring.

This book presents an updated framework from the previous book through which to consider shadow education and policy development; it provides an explanation of the various characteristics, the drivers of demand, and the impact of private supplementary tutoring. The first book is an evidence-based study, whereas this includes numerous studies and quantitative and qualitative data on the three Asian regions in a more comprehensive and comparative way. In addition, it provides specific examples for each

country in a readily digestible manner, so that readers can easily understand each country's circumstances. Importantly, the authors clearly demonstrate that shadow education has both advantages and disadvantages, and suggest how education policymakers and administrators can maximize the positives and limit the negatives.

The book's four chapters cover topics such as mapping the landscape, demand and supply, the impact of shadow education, and the implications for policy makers. In the first chapter, the authors provide information about each country, such as enrollment rates, intensity, difference by students' backgrounds, curriculum, and mode of delivery. This helps the reader understand the nature and intensity of shadow education in each context. The second chapter explores the increase in demand for shadow education, which the authors argue has been created by providers. This has been a common way to explain the shadow education phenomenon in South Korea, and the authors note that the industry has expanded rapidly in South Korea, causing providers to adopt various strategies to stimulate demands that will help ensure their survival amidst heated competition (Lee et al., 2002; Ryu et al., 2009). Private supplementary tutoring in South Korea is not for the purposes of preparing for the school year during the summer break, as mentioned in this book. Rather, it is about learning covered at least one or two years later in school. This is possible because of the air of anxiety among students and parents that the providers of shadow education have created, which is so pervasive that

its influence extends even to the primary school level (Kim & Namkung, 2012).

The authors argue that the negatives of shadow education outweigh the positives, when considering academic achievement, broader skills and values, efficiency and equality, and social cohesion. Without data that assess the effect of shadow education scientifically, parents can only search out private tutoring institutions, which they hope help their children achieve academically, and continue to invest in this sector.

In the discussion of policy implications, the authors argue that the private supplementary tutoring industry has become too large to ignore, and now it is important to prevent its spread. They suggest that this might happen when policymakers are equipped with national quantitative and qualitative data on shadow education and take a number of subsequent steps, including: examining the educational selection system, improving curricula, introducing various technologies, such as educational broadcasting, instructional videos and on-line instruction, reinforcing regulation of the shadow education industry, and building a partnership with private supplementary tutoring service providers.

In addition to the authors' suggestions, there are three that warrant some attention: the establishment of a panel data system, the improvement of the quality of school education, and the assessment of the impact of political measures against private tutoring.

First, a panel database has to be established. This book has a section that presents details of how to establish a national database that includes the production, consumption, and effect of

shadow education. With such a database, policymakers would be better informed about the private tutoring industry. In addition to the topics suggested by the authors for the database, panel data on the effect of shadow education would facilitate the assessment of this industry. The data from the national college entrance exams or on academic achievement are not sufficient for an in-depth analysis of the shadow education phenomena since they are cross-sectional and often do not offer background information on students. Therefore, this would be an accurate and simple way to establish a separate panel database and link it to national data of student achievement. In particular, for the analysis of the various types of shadow education and their quality and effects, it is important to have details of students' backgrounds and to trace their academic achievement longitudinally (Kim, Kim, & Park, 2007).

Second, the improvement of the quality of education in public schools, which is a broader concept than the curricular improvement suggested by the authors, is a key to mitigating the shadow education syndrome in many Asian countries. When public education meets the needs of students and parents, the private tutoring industry is most likely to diminish (Park, 2008; Kim, Lee, & Park, 2008; Kim et al., 2009). Strong education policies on shadow education alone would not be effective unless public schooling itself changes. In this regard, the book could have been improved if the authors had suggested some education policy implications that stress the improvement of public education.

Third, it is important to examine the impact of policy measures against private tutoring. The authors review various education policies in response to private supplementary tutoring, taking South Korea as an example. They point out that some education policies have increased the demand for private tutoring in the short- or long-term, contrary to the intention of policy makers. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the various factors that may create new demand for private tutoring when enacting education policies against private tutoring so that these new policies are effective. It is also important to assess continually the impact of policies on private tutoring so that factors that increase the demand can quickly be identified and eliminated. Only then might there eventually be a curb to the excessive private tutoring phenomena in Asia (Kim et al., 2011). In Korea, researchers are currently analyzing how the new high school and university entrance system may influence the private tutoring industry.

Even without discussion of these three important areas, this book makes an important contribution to the study of shadow education. It answers four major questions: (1) What is the scope and diversity of shadow education in Asia? (2) Why do Asian people pursue private tutoring and why is the industry growing? (3) What is the impact of shadow education? And (4) what are the factors that policymakers need to consider when they enact policies regarding private tutoring? This book is essential for researchers and educational policymakers concerned with the causes and impacts of private tutoring

and the related policies in Asian countries.

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