

# Shadow Education in Myanmar

## Private Supplementary Tutoring and its Policy Implications

Mark Bray  
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Comparative Education Research Centre  
The University of Hong Kong



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# Contents

Acknowledgements	iii
List of Abbreviations	v
List of Tables	vi
List of Boxes	vii
List of Figures	vii
List of Appendices	viii
Exchange Rates	viii
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Foreword</b>	
<i>Min Jeong Kim</i>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 International Perspectives on Shadow Education</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 <i>Scale and Nature</i>	5
1.2 <i>Relationships with Mainstream Schooling</i>	9
1.3 <i>Implications for Economic and Social Development</i>	10
1.4 <i>Summary and Conclusion</i>	11
<b>2 Myanmar Society, Economy and Education</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 <i>Historical Perspectives</i>	12
2.2 <i>Contemporary Social and Economic Features</i>	13
2.3 <i>The Changing Education System</i>	14
2.4 <i>Learning Styles, Curriculum and Assessment</i>	18
2.5 <i>Structures for Private Supplementary Tutoring</i>	21
2.6 <i>Summary and Conclusion</i>	26
<b>3 Methods of Data Collection</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 <i>Research Design</i>	27
3.2 <i>Sampling</i>	28
3.3 <i>Procedures and Instrumentation</i>	31
3.4 <i>Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange</i>	35
3.5 <i>Summary and Conclusion</i>	38

<b>4</b>	<b>Students' and Parents' Perspectives</b>	<b>40</b>
	<i>4.1 Scale and Motives for (not) Receiving Tutoring</i>	40
	<i>4.2 Providers, Formats and Venues for Tutoring</i>	50
	<i>4.3 Parents' Perceptions on Choices and Roles of Tutoring</i>	53
	<i>4.4 Summary and Conclusion</i>	56
<b>5</b>	<b>Teachers' Perspectives</b>	<b>58</b>
	<i>5.1 Scale and Motives for (not) Providing Tutoring</i>	59
	<i>5.2 Types, Timing, Content and Roles of Tutoring</i>	64
	<i>5.3 Perceptions of Principals' Attitudes</i>	71
	<i>5.4 Teachers' Professional Organisations</i>	73
	<i>5.5 Summary and Conclusion</i>	75
<b>6</b>	<b>Policy Implications</b>	<b>78</b>
	<i>6.1 Financing the Education System</i>	78
	<i>6.2 Human Capital, Social Inequalities, and Parents' Rights</i>	81
	<i>6.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment</i>	83
	<i>6.4 Regulating Private Tutoring Provided by Serving Teachers</i>	86
	<i>6.5 Regulating Private Tutoring in the Marketplace</i>	89
	<i>6.6 Partnership for Research and Development</i>	93
	<i>6.7 Summary and Conclusion</i>	95
	Appendices	98
	References	125
	Notes on the Authors	134

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## List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAPS	Continuous Assessment and Progression System
CERC	Comparative Education Research Centre
CESR	Comprehensive Education Sector Review
CET	Chapter End Test
DERPT	Department of Educational Research, Planning and Training
DME	Department of Myanmar Examinations
EFA	Education for All
EI	Education International
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HKU	The University of Hong Kong
MOE	Ministry of Education
MTF	Myanmar Teachers' Federation
NEPC	National Education Policy Commission
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NLD	National League for Democracy
PTA	Private Teachers' Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
YUOE	Yangon University of Education



## List of Tables

1.1	Cross-national Indicators of Shadow Education	7
2.1	Enrolment, Transition and Completion Rates, Myanmar, 2014/15 (%)	17
3.1	Descriptive Statistics of the Student Sample (Quantitative Survey)	29
3.2	Grades and Genders of Students in the Quantitative Survey	29
3.3	Descriptive Statistics of the Sampled Teachers (Quantitative Survey)	29
3.4	Subjects Taught by the Sampled Teachers in the Quantitative Survey	30
3.5	School-based Interviews	31
4.1	The Scale of Private Tutoring	41
4.2	The Scale of Private Tutoring in Different Streams	42
4.3	Subjects of Private Tutoring	42
4.4	Hours Spent on Private Tutoring	43
4.5	Expenditures on Private Tutoring (Kyats per Month)	44
4.6	Extent to Which Expenditures on Private Tutoring were Perceived to be a Financial Burden	46
4.7	Reasons for Receiving Private Tutoring (%)	46
4.8	Reasons for Not Receiving Private Tutoring (%)	49
4.9	Providers of Private Tutoring	50
4.10	Size of Tutoring Classes (%)	52
4.11	Venues of Tutoring (%)	52
4.12	Times of Tutoring (%)	52
4.13	Students' Perceptions of their Principals' Perspectives on Private Tutoring	53
5.1	Teachers' Reasons for Providing Private Tutoring (%)	59
5.2	Teachers' Declared Reasons for Not Offering Private Tutoring (%)	61
5.3	Teachers' Reported Incomes from School and Tutoring	62
5.4	Descriptive Statistics of Types of Tutoring	63
5.5	Teachers' Opinions on the Effectiveness of Tutoring (%)	64

5.6	Teachers' Opinions on School Education and Tutoring (All Cases, %)	65
5.7	Teachers' Views on Pedagogy in Tutoring (Tutoring Cases Only, %)	66
5.8	Teachers' Opinions on Students and Tutoring (All Cases, %)	67
5.9	Teachers' Perceptions of their Principals' Perspectives on Private Tutoring	71

### **List of Boxes**

3.1	Preparation for Courageous Conversations	36
4.1	The Financial Burden of Private Tutoring	45
4.2	A Parent's Attitude on Investment	54
5.1	Pressures from Parents	69
5.2	Harnessing Peer Pressure to Minimise Corruption	73
6.1	Empty Classrooms	82
6.2	Recognising Realities and Securing Assurances	89
6.3	Talented Tutors, Trained and Tested in the Marketplace	92

### **List of Figures**

2.1	Official Vision Statement (displayed in every school)	15
2.2	Official Prohibition of Private Tutoring Supplied by Teachers	24
2.3	Statement that Teachers were Asked to Sign (indicating that they would not provide private tutoring)	25
6.1	Composition of Household Expenditures on Education, 2009/10	80

## List of Appendices

1	Student Survey (Instrument)	98
2	Teacher Survey (Instrument)	103
3	Student Interview Guide	109
4	Teacher Interview Guide	113
5	Parent Interview Guide	116
6	School Principal Interview Guide	120
7	Discussion Questions for Policy Seminar, Ministry of Education	123

## Exchange Rates

Official exchange rates as of 31 August 2018:

1 kyat = US\$0.00066

1 US\$ = 1,514 kyats

## Executive Summary

Private supplementary tutoring – in Myanmar commonly called private tuition, and internationally commonly called shadow education – is increasingly recognised around the world as a significant phenomenon that can have positive sides in promoting learning and providing incomes for tutors but also has negative sides of maintaining and exacerbating social inequalities with a backwash on mainstream schooling. In Myanmar it is not a new phenomenon, but it has not been carefully researched and its implications have not been adequately discussed.

Myanmar is in a new political and economic era, and the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) which examined educational needs for this new era observed a “need to address private tuition as a critical policy issue”. The CESR contributed to the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) for the government that took office in 2016, and in turn the NESP recognised that in many schools “parents have to pay additional private tuition fees, which are the largest component of household expenditure on education”. The present research, commissioned by UNESCO in liaison with the Union Government of Myanmar, was conducted by a team from the University of Hong Kong (HKU) with support from a team at the Yangon University of Education (YUOE). It addresses the policy implications of private tuition by presenting empirical findings and analysing them within a comparative framework that draws on international experience.

The empirical data were collected from a randomly-selected sample of eight urban and peri-urban schools in Yangon. As the country’s commercial capital and largest city, Yangon is of course not representative of the country as a whole, but informal evidence suggests that patterns of shadow education in other parts of the country have similarities. Within the eight schools, the researchers focused on Grade 9 (Standard 8) and Grade 11 (Standard 10), since those are transition points at the end of middle and high schooling with significant public examinations. The study used mixed methods of quantitative survey and qualitative interviews, collecting questionnaire data from 1,637 students and 331 teachers, and interview data from 32 students, 26 teachers, four principals and 17 parents. In addition, the researchers surveyed relevant literature and solicited the views of multiple stakeholders including

personnel from international agencies, non-governmental organisations, the Myanmar Teachers' Federation (MTF) and the Private Teachers' Association (PTA).

According to the responses in the questionnaire component, 83.4% of Grade 9 students and 86.2% of Grade 11 students had received private supplementary tutoring within the previous 12 months. When asked from whom they received this tutoring, 11.3% (for both grades, combined) indicated that they did so from their own teachers, 3.5% from other teachers in their schools, 10.6% from teachers in different schools, 31.9% from external teachers described as retired, freelance, etc., and 30.8% from 'others' which appeared to include university students, boarding tutorial institutions, and commercial companies. The main motives for the Grade 9 and 11 students were to learn subjects better and to improve examination scores. When asked about the costs, 68.1% of students indicated that the private tutoring was a moderate or heavy financial burden for their families.

Alongside these data from students, 47.7% of sampled teachers indicated that they provided private supplementary tutoring. Most of them stated that they did so in order to supplement their incomes, feeling that although salaries had been raised in recent years their salaries were not adequate to meet their family needs. Three quarters of the teachers provided this tutoring in the students' homes, while 9.5% did so in their own homes, and 17.8% at private schools or boarding tutorial schools. The teachers provided this tutoring despite official prohibitions that on paper had harsh sanctions.

The quantitative and qualitative findings showed a widespread feeling that private tutoring was a normal activity and part of daily life, especially in Grade 11. Students and their families sought it in order to keep up with their peers and to secure learning that they did not feel could be adequately secured if relying on schools. However, the tutoring had a backwash on schooling. Teachers tended to assume that most students who needed tutoring would receive it, and some teachers therefore put less effort into their regular lessons. Further, teachers who were also tutors were tempted to put more effort into the fee-paying work than into their regular duties, and some respondents highlighted issues of favouritism and corruption, especially when teachers provided extra private lessons to their existing students.

Turning to the policy implications, an overarching recommendation is that the authorities should take the theme ‘out of the shadows’ for dialogue with teachers, students, parents and others. The empirical data from this study may assist. The dialogue will enable the different stakeholders to identify both positive and negative dimensions, finding ways to enhance the positive ones and handle the negative ones. These actions can take place at the school and community levels. At a higher level, the authorities should take a more realistic and reasonable approach in sanctions, concentrating on ways to reduce or eliminate the practice of teachers providing private tutoring to their existing students and perhaps being more lenient on other arrangements. At the same time, it is desirable to raise teachers’ salaries so that they have less need to earn supplementary incomes, and to enhance the quality of mainstream schooling so that students feel less in need of external inputs. The authorities already have in mind changes in assessment policies that will help.

International experience suggests that shadow education will not go away, even with improved mainstream schooling, because families will always seek ways to secure competitive advantages for their children. Indeed as Myanmar’s economy grows, families will have greater disposable incomes and demand for private supplementary tutoring may expand rather than contract. Nevertheless, the sector should and can be steered and at least needs to be monitored. The authorities should review regulations for the commercial tutoring sector as well as for school teachers who provide tutoring, and may encourage forms of self-regulation.



## Foreword

In September 2015 the global community (including Myanmar) adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will shape development priorities internationally until 2030. Goal 4 (SDG4) commits signatories to “ensure equitable access to inclusive quality education” for all. In Myanmar, the Ministry of Education has been undertaking wide-ranging education reforms to deliver on these commitments and improve the quality of education in the country. UNESCO, with its global mandate to lead the SDG4 Education 2030 agenda, has been supporting Myanmar to integrate its SDG4 commitments into national policies and to strengthen SDG4 monitoring and reporting.

Within the broader framework of UNESCO’s support for SDG4 implementation under the Capacity Development for Education (CapED) programme, UNESCO commissioned a study of the scale, nature and implications of private supplementary tutoring in Myanmar. Given its implications for access to quality education and for broader inequalities, the topic has a strong bearing on the aims of the SDG4 agenda and the goal of “leaving no one behind”. In Myanmar as in most other countries, private tutoring has a long history and its prevalence is increasing swiftly. It is a complex issue which impacts students’ learning, social equity, teachers’ incomes, and interpersonal dynamics within classrooms, schools and wider communities.

This publication is a product of the study, and explains how private tutoring is perceived among the sampled key stakeholders and the reasons for its quick expansion. Based on the analysis of the findings, verification from stakeholder consultations and wider international experience, recommendations are made for national and institutional policies. These recommendations relate to (i) financing of the education system, (ii) human capital, social inequalities, and parents’ rights, (iii) teaching, learning and assessment, (iv) regulating private tutoring provided by serving teachers, (v) regulating private tutoring in the marketplace, and (vi) partnership for research and development.

The report brings the prevalence of private tutoring to the fore in the hope that it will spark further policy discussion among key stakeholders – parents, students, teachers, governments and other stakeholders who



share concerns about the phenomenon. It observes that the issues are complex and cannot be addressed through a single and simple solution.

We thank the teams in the Comparative Education Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong and the Yangon University of Education for conducting the research. The report has significant relevance for the quality and inclusivity of Myanmar's education system, and will also be of considerable interest to researchers and policy makers in other countries.

*Min Jeong Kim*  
Head of Office, UNESCO Myanmar

## Introduction

This book results from collaboration between the University of Hong Kong (specifically its Comparative Education Research Centre), the Yangon University of Education (specifically its Department of Methodology), and UNESCO (specifically its Yangon office). It focuses on a phenomenon, private supplementary tutoring, which is of growing prominence worldwide. The geographic focus is on Myanmar, and particularly its largest city, Yangon, from which the book carries international as well as national and local implications.

Shadow education is a widely-used metaphor (see e.g. Aurini et al. 2013; Bray 1999, 2009; Jokić 2013; Zhang 2014) to describe out-of-school support in academic subjects. Such support may be delivered one-to-one, in small groups, in large classes, and even through the internet. The shadow metaphor indicates that much of the out-of-school curriculum mimics the in-school curriculum: when the curriculum changes in the schools, so it changes in the shadow.

The present study is concerned with support that is provided in exchange for a fee, in contrast to schooling that at least officially is provided free of charge. Different labels are used in different contexts and for different types of support. In this book the principal label, following international literature, is private tutoring. An alternative label commonly used in Myanmar (and elsewhere) is private tuition, which has led to the Myanmar-language noun *kyu shin* (Kyaw Ye Lynn 2018). The support may be delivered by school teachers and others on a part-time basis to supplement their incomes, or it may be provided by full-time tutors who are either self-employed or working for companies.

Private tutoring has a long history in Myanmar, though has not been well documented. A 1992 report by the Myanmar Education Research Bureau (p.24) described private tutoring as “virtually indispensable to complete secondary education”, and informal evidence suggests that patterns had developed over several decades preceding that 1992 report. The present study is the first in-depth investigation of the phenomenon. It is geographically restricted to Yangon, which is highly urbanised as the commercial capital, and it is limited to middle schooling and high schooling. Nevertheless, many of its findings have implications also for other levels of schooling and other parts of the country. Another recent

study in Sagaing Region (Suante 2017) deserves highlight for juxtaposition, and reference will also be made to newspaper reports and other sources of information.

Shadow education has far-reaching implications. On the positive side, it extends the learning environment and formation of human capital, and it generates incomes and employment for the providers. However, it maintains and exacerbates social inequalities since some families can afford extensive and high-quality support while others can secure only limited and low-quality support and yet others are deprived altogether. Shadow education also has a backwash on mainstream schooling. Classroom dynamics are affected when some students receive support but others do not, since the external support may change students' attitudes to peers and teachers' attitudes to students who do and do not receive tutoring (and to ones receiving it in different amounts and with different qualities). Teachers who provide tutoring secure extra incomes which may help to retain them in the profession, but problems may arise if teachers reduce attention to their main roles in order to reserve energies for the supplementary ones.

The above remarks have echoes in the international literature (e.g. Bray & Lykins 2012; Bray et al. 2016; Kobakhidze 2014; Mahmud & Bray 2017), and are elaborated upon in Chapter 1. Yet each society is different because of its own history and culture. This study in Myanmar thus contributes to the international picture as well as to the national one, bringing its specific features to show how variables have interacted in a specific context at a specific time.

Within the national setting, the study was conducted at a moment of major political change and policy-making opportunity. Following decades of economic isolation, 2015 elections led to a new government and an agenda of considerable openness. A National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) was approved by the new government (Myanmar 2016), based on a Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) that had been published in two phases (Myanmar 2013, 2015). The NESP stressed the need for significant changes to the curriculum and even the structure of schooling, and many parallel initiatives focused on infrastructure, access, equity and other dimensions. The plans for national developments were framed within international goals set by the United Nations, and in particular the Education for All (EFA) agenda (see e.g. UNESCO 2015) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (see e.g. UNESCO 2016, 2017).

The CESR (Myanmar 2015) recognised the prominence of private tutoring in preparation of students for matriculation examination at the end of high schooling. However, it did not investigate the theme in depth, and simply declared a “need to address private tuition as a critical policy issue” (p.26). Similarly, the NESP (Myanmar 2016) in a chapter entitled ‘Basic Education – Access, Quality and Inclusion’ recognised that in many schools “parents have to pay additional private tuition fees, which are the largest component of household expenditure on education” (p.100); and in later chapter about financing recognised the demands of the matriculation examination not only on the public sector but also on “households who may be funding private tuition” (p.243).

The present study responds to the call by the CESR and elaborates on the patterns underlying the NESP clauses. Part of the history of the study lies in a keynote speech delivered by one of its authors, Mark Bray, in the context of decentralisation, financing and related issues at the Forum on Basic Education which was one of the four thematic forums organised by the newly-elected government in Naypyitaw (Bray 2016). State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi presided over the Forum on Basic Education, and included issues of private tutoring in her address (Aung San Suu Kyi 2016a). She has made similar alerting remarks on many other occasions (e.g. Aung San Suu Kyi 2017; see also Kyaw Ye Lynn 2018), observing that private tutoring exacerbates social inequalities and has other problematic features that need to be addressed. A report for UNICEF has also highlighted social and education inequalities reproduced by “the semi-institutionalised tuition system” that adds further burdens to students from low-income families (Sail 2016, p.48); and similarly Ohnmar Tin and Stenning (2015, p.12) critiqued what they called “quasi-compulsory private tuition”.

Following the 2016 Forum on Basic Education, the topic was taken up by the UNESCO Office in Myanmar and discussed further with the government first at national level in Naypyitaw and then at regional level in Yangon. The proposal for research and policy analysis was further developed, and the YUOE was invited to become a partner. Specific approval for the research design was granted at both national and regional levels, and the research approaches were elaborated and implemented as explained in Chapter 3.

The nature and implications of private tutoring of course involve many stakeholders. This report has particular emphasis on teachers, since some are providers of tutoring and all are in some way affected by it.

Moreover, teachers may be the principal channel for enactment of government policies. Yet teachers of course do not operate in isolation. They respond to and lead students and their families; and all operate within the broader economic and social context that increasingly includes entrepreneurs and community bodies that provide private tutoring.

With such matters in mind, this book begins with the international picture, reporting on research on private tutoring in countries of different types. It then turns to the Myanmar context, including its education system, within which the tutoring takes place. The following chapter explains the processes through which the research was conducted, before turning to the findings, first as they concern students and their parents, and second as they concern teachers. The final chapter addresses the policy implications of the study.

# Chapter 1

## International Perspectives on Shadow Education

The history of shadow education is perhaps as long as the history of schooling, though has not yet been adequately documented. Families with economic means and academic needs – particularly for remedial and supplementary help – have long sought ways to give their school-going children forms of extra help. Most commonly this has been through homework that may be assisted by parents, relatives and others, but in some cases it has been through contractual arrangements with tutors. Forms of private supplementary tutoring have been noted during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in such countries as Mauritius, Japan and Greece (Foondun 2002; Sato 2012; Tsiloglou 2005). However, shadow education only became a major phenomenon across the globe at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> (Bray 2017).

The scale, nature and implications of shadow education of course vary across and within countries and cultures. Of particular relevance to the present book are patterns in countries with similar levels of economic development to Myanmar, but the contrasts with countries of higher and lower incomes are also instructive. Moreover, insofar as analysis of the findings of the Myanmar study both benefits from and contributes to the broader picture, it is useful to sketch features of shadow education around the world. Accordingly, this chapter commences with the scale and nature of shadow education in a range of countries before turning to its relationships with mainstream schooling and then its implications for social and economic development.

### 1.1 Scale and Nature

Although statistical data on shadow education are improving, they remain far from adequate. Ministries of Education routinely collect data on the numbers of schools, students and teachers, and also commonly have detailed information about students' attendance rates and achievement, about intended and implemented curriculum, and about many other dimensions of schooling. They do not have comparable information

about shadow education, in part because it is not widely considered a direct responsibility of Ministries of Education and in part because such data are difficult to collect. Tutorial institutions do not always register with Ministries of Education or with any other government bodies, and may fluctuate from one month to the next in their staffing and student enrolments. In contrast to schools, which have official hours and regular sessions each day during term-time, tutorial centres may welcome students on an *ad hoc* basis for different durations during different seasons.

Further, much tutoring is provided not by institutions but by individuals. The present study especially focuses on the supplementary activities of teachers who are otherwise employed in regular schools, and much tutoring is provided by university students and even secondary students on an informal basis. Tutoring is also provided by individuals as a stop-gap activity while seeking other employment, and by housewives and others who do not want full-time paid employment. Such people may prefer to avoid being counted and monitored; and even students and parents may desire to remain 'in the shadows' for an activity that is largely informal rather than to be part of official data-gathering exercises.

These factors pose challenges to efforts to describe the scale and nature of tutoring. Nevertheless, broad pictures may be constructed from scattered evidence. Table 1.1 provides some snapshots from a number of countries in Asia together with countries from other parts of the world. The data were collected at different times and with varying degrees of accuracy, but taken together they do show some overall patterns. Key messages include that:

- *Shadow education is a widespread phenomenon.* Historically it has been most prominent in East Asia, especially Japan and the Republic of Korea; but now it is visible in all continents. Table 1.1 includes examples from North America, South America, the Arab States, the Caribbean and Europe.
- *Shadow education is evident in both high-income and low-income countries.* Table 1.1 includes data from Canada, England, Japan and the Republic of Korea as well as from Bangladesh, Cambodia and India.
- *Shadow education exists at multiple levels of education.* In most

settings the volume of shadow education peaks at the end of secondary education, but some societies also have high enrolment rates in primary education. Indeed, some countries also have high enrolment rates in pre-primary education, and a few have significant and growing shadow education in tertiary education.

**Table 1.1: Cross-national Indicators of Shadow Education**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Patterns</i>
Argentina	Cámara and Gertel (2016) surveyed 360 students who had gained admission to the University of Córdoba. The researchers chose different programmes to identify variations in the demand for tutoring to gain entrance. Rates were 17.5%, 30.9%, 39.2% and 92.4% respectively for admitted candidates in Law, Dentistry, Economics and Medicine (p.140).
Bangladesh	A survey of students in Grades 8 and 10 in four urban and four rural schools found high rates of private tutoring, especially in English. Among urban students, 84.7% had received private tutoring in English within the previous 12 months, while among rural ones the proportion was 60.7% (Mahmud & Bray 2017, p.303).
Canada	Aurini and Davies (2013, p.157) reported that 33% of parents had purchased supplementary education and that 21% of nine-year-old children had received some kind of private tutoring. Eckler (2015) described tutoring as the "new normal".
Cambodia	A survey of students in Siem Reap Province found that 74.7% in Grade 9 and 89.8% in Grade 12 were receiving private tutoring (Bray et al. 2016, p.294). Dawson (2011, p.18) surveyed eight primary schools in three locations, and found that about half of the students had received tutoring.
China	A 2010 nationwide representative sample of students in Grades 1 to 12 found that 46.8% of students with urban residence and 16.9% of ones with rural residence had received private tutoring during the previous year (Liu & Bray 2017a, p.212).
Cyprus	Data analysed by Lampranou & Lampranou (2013, p.40) indicated that in 2009 80.5% of sampled house-holds with school-aged children were paying for private tutoring.
England	In 2015, 25% of respondents to a survey asking whether they had ever received private or home tutoring replied



	affirmatively, and in London the proportion was 44% (Sutton Trust 2015).
Egypt	Data reported by Sobhy (2012, p.49) indicated that 81% of households had children who had received tutoring in the secondary stage, and that 50% had received tutoring at the primary stage.
Ghana	A 2008 survey of 1,020 households found that 48% were paying additional fees for tutoring in primary education (Antonowicz et al. 2010, p.21).
Hong Kong, China	A 2011/12 survey of 1,646 students in 16 schools found that 53.8% of Grade 9 students and 71.8% of Grade 12 students were receiving tutoring (Bray 2013, p.21).
India	Sen (2010, p.315) stated that at the primary level in West Bengal, 57% of students were receiving private tutoring. Data from a nationwide rural survey showed rates among children aged 6-14 ranging from 2.8% in Chhattisgarh to 73.0% in West Bengal (Pratham 2013, p.55).
Japan	A 2010 national survey found that tutorial institutions known as <i>juku</i> had recruited 47.7% of Grade 6 and 61.9% of Grade 9 students (National Institute for Educational Policy Research, 2010).
Korea, Republic of	In 2016, 80.0% of elementary school pupils were estimated to be receiving private tutoring. In middle school the proportion was 63.8%; and in general high school it was 58.8% (KOSIS 2017).
Malta	Statistics cited by Buhagiar and Chetcuti (2013, pp.136-137) indicated that up to 51.9% of primary students and up to 82.9% of secondary students were receiving private tutoring.
Pakistan	A 2016 survey in 144 rural districts found that 11.8% of children attending school received private supplementary tutoring (ASER-Pakistan 2017, p.68). In urban areas the proportions would have been much higher. For example according to the 2012 survey the urban average was 34.0% and reached 60.2% in Karachi bb (ASER-Pakistan 2013, p.131).
Sri Lanka	Pallegedara (2012, p.380) examined 2006/07 survey data of 10,677 households with students aged 6 to 21. Among these households, 64.0% had spent money on private tutoring. This compared with just 23.3% in a comparable survey in 1995/96. Suraweera (2011, p.20) reported that 92.4% of 2,578 students in a Grade 10 survey and 98.0% of 884 Grade 12 students were receiving tutoring.

Trinidad & Tobago	A sample of 801 children in primary schools found that 5.7% in Standard 1 received extra lessons. Proportions rose in subsequent grades to 7.4%, 25.4%, 68.4% and then 88.2% in Standard 5 (Barrow & Lochan 2012, p.411).
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Turning from the scale of shadow education, it is necessary to consider its nature (Aurini et al. 2013; Bray 2009; Bray & Lykins 2012). Beginning with content, much tutoring is closely tied to schooling but some has a broader focus to complement and extend the school curriculum. Thus tutoring may be remedial or for enrichment. Enrichment tutoring is especially likely to diverge from the content provided in schooling; but even remedial tutoring may diverge, for example when the tutors and/or families perceive that students are performing poorly in school because the pedagogic approach does not suit their aptitudes and learning needs, and such tutoring may provide an alternative approach to spark better understanding.

Second, the format of tutoring may be very varied. Much is conducted one-to-one, commonly in the homes of either the students or the tutors but perhaps in schools, libraries or some other public spaces. Other tutoring is in small groups, in full classes or even in large lecture theatres; and technological advances now facilitate tutoring over the internet using computer programmes for guided learning and direct teaching.

A third question concerns the identities of the tutors. The present study is especially concerned with tutoring by regular teachers, either to their own students or to other students from their own schools or from different schools. Alternatively, tutoring may be provided by university students and others on an informal basis; and more formally, especially in cities it may be provided by commercial companies. These companies may be small in scale or have branches in different locations. Indeed some companies operate cross-nationally, usually through franchises.

## 1.2 Relationships with Mainstream Schooling

The shadow cast by the education system has implications for the body that it imitates. On the positive side, students enhance their learning through shadow education. This assists their regular schooling, and may be welcomed by the schools themselves because they also gain prestige from high-performing students (see e.g. Bray & Kobakhidze 2015). On

the negative side, shadow education may cause dissonance if the techniques and concepts advocated by the tutors, for example in mathematics, clash with those of the teachers in the regular schools. Also, problems of diversity arise when some students in the classroom have received tutoring but others have not.

A further challenge is that students may be tired from extensive tutoring in the evenings and at weekends. Students and their families commonly pay particular attention to the tutors, to whom they are making financial payments, and they may doze off during school time which is free of charge and in which they do not have choices of teachers. This challenge may be exacerbated when students learn material in the tutorial sessions ahead of their time in school, and therefore are restless and bored during school lessons. The authorities in China are much concerned about the study burden on students arising from schooling plus tutoring (China 2018).

Also important is the possibility of corruption when teachers provide supplementary private tutoring to their own students (Jayachandran 2014; Kobakhidze 2014). They may be tempted to promote demand by deliberately cutting content during regular hours and then claiming shortage of time. Some authorities strictly regulate such matters, but problems may remain when teachers refer their students to each other on a reciprocal basis.

### **1.3 Implications for Economic and Social Development**

Shadow education also has major implications for the wider society. Beginning with the economic side, tutoring may strengthen human capital for productive uses (Liu & Bray 2017b). Also, it may provide extensive employment through companies and in informal ways. In the Republic of Korea, for example, the sector has been the largest employer of graduates in social sciences and humanities (Kim and Park 2012, p.273).

The above paragraph refers to tutors who are employed or self-employed in that role, while the present study is especially concerned with teachers who also work as tutors. In the latter situations, tutoring supplements incomes and may compensate for low government salaries. This feature may retain people in the teaching profession who would otherwise leave for alternative occupations, and thus enhance the stability

of school systems (see e.g. Williams 2015; Kobakhidze 2018).

However, shadow education also has obvious implications for social inequalities because richer families can secure more and better tutoring compared with poorer families (see e.g. Hartmann 2013; Tansel 2013; Azam 2016). Sometimes rural/urban and gender inequalities are also evident (see e.g. Pallegedara 2012). The present study does not include rural schools but does contrast peri-urban with urban schools. It also notes gender dimensions, though in the sample addressed by this study disparities in shadow education participation between males and females were relatively modest.

#### **1.4 Summary and Conclusion**

Shadow education has become a global phenomenon. It has been particularly prominent in prosperous parts of East Asia, but now is equally visible in low- and middle-income countries of South and Southeast Asia, as well as in parts of Africa, Europe, and North and South America. In some countries it is mainly provided through companies, but in other countries regular teachers play a significant role. This arrangement makes use of the teachers' expertise, and provides supplementary incomes that may help to keep them in the profession. However, issues of corruption may arise, particularly when teachers are tutoring the students for whom they are already responsible in their regular classrooms.

Other positive aspects of shadow education include its role in promoting learning. Again, however, negative sides are also evident. Shadow education is likely to increase social inequalities, and may also impact negatively on regular education by increasing diversity in the classroom, and increasing tiredness, and perhaps clashing in pace of learning. The following chapters will show that such issues arise in Myanmar as well as in other countries.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Myanmar Society, Economy and Education**

Any study of this sort must be placed in its social, economic and educational context. Indeed, “Context matters” is a fundamental principle and injunction for all comparative studies (Crossley & Jarvis 2001). This chapter commences with historical remarks before turning to contemporary social and economic features and then to Myanmar’s education system and the organisation of private supplementary tutoring.

#### **2.1 Historical Perspectives**

Myanmar, previously called Burma, has undergone many political transitions since Independence from the British in 1948, and many of these political transitions have had economic, social and educational consequences. The country’s administrative structure to some extent reflects decisions made in 1948. Regions were formed in areas having a dominant Burman population, and States were formed in areas dominated by ethnic minorities. Today, Myanmar has seven regions and seven states plus a Union Territory. The regions and states have constitutional equivalence, but vary in cultures, population densities and other dimensions. Yangon is the largest in population, and is also the most densely populated. It was the capital (then called Rangoon) until 2005 when that role was taken over by Naypyidaw.

The initial decade of Independence was followed by five decades of military rule and, during much of the period, by international isolation. A 2008 Constitution brought a new framework for change, including elections in 2010 and part of the transition to contemporary times (Holliday 2011; Kipgen 2016). Even more significant were 2015 elections that were the first to be openly contested since 1990. The National League for Democracy (NLD) achieved a majority in both chambers of the national parliament, and embarked on a reform agenda that included particular prominence for education. Lall (2016, p.1) observed that:

Myanmar is reforming. In the country where for decades life

seemed to have come to a standstill, everything is changing at breakneck speed. Positions and policies are fluid and nothing can be taken for granted any more.... What we are looking at is a changed country.

A Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) was embarked upon in 2012, commencing with a rapid assessment and then moving to in-depth analysis (Myanmar 2013, 2015). In turn, these initiatives led to the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP) covering the years 2016-21 (Myanmar 2016). The State Counsellor described the NESP as “a comprehensive, widely-owned and evidence-based roadmap intended to reform the entire education sector over the next five years” (Aung San Suu Kyi 2016b, p.5). It was a major component of the context for the present study.

## **2.2 Contemporary Social and Economic Features**

According to the 2014 national census, in that year Myanmar had a population of 51.5 million (Myanmar 2017a, p.xiii). This was the first census since 1983, when the population was 35.3 million. Within the population are over a hundred national races among which the largest are Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Burman, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Yangon Region, with 7.4 million people, is the most populated region/state, and also has the highest population density.

Official data are available on monthly household expenditures. For the country as a whole, in 2012 they were estimated at 167,434 kyats or approximately US\$170 (Myanmar, Central Statistical Organization 2015, p.144). Within that sum, 63.5% was spent on food and beverages and 36.5% on other items. Yangon Region was more prosperous than most other parts of the country. Households in Yangon had estimated expenditures of 195,059 kyats, within which 60.9% was spent on food and beverages and 39.1% on other items. Education was recorded to consume 2.4% of household expenditures in the country as a whole, and 2.9% in Yangon.

Since the time of the 2012 detailed household survey, incomes around the country have grown considerably as a result of economic boom facilitated by political changes (Myanmar, Central Statistical Organization 2017, p.242). Lall (2016, p.1) observed very visible changes in Yangon, and increasingly elsewhere “from new infra-

structure, the increased pace of life, the growing middle classes, to the changed atmosphere with regard to political and social engagement". Lall added (p.1) that contemporary Yangon "resembles a giant building site". Growth of household incomes permits expansion of resources for education among other dimensions, and also fuels aspirations that are pertinent to the present study.

At the same time, it is important to note social inequalities. Urban households across the country generally had higher incomes than rural ones, and also devoted higher proportions of their incomes to education (Myanmar, Central Statistical Organization 2015, p.151). Within both urban and rural locations are of course many further socio-economic and other inequalities.

### **2.3 The Changing Education System**

Documents are inconsistent in the labelling of sections of the education system, and clarity is therefore needed in the vocabularies used here. The structure has one year of kindergarten, four years of primary schooling, four years of lower secondary schooling, and two years of upper secondary schooling. In the past – and still widely today – the years of schooling (i.e. not including kindergarten) were called Standards (i.e. Standard 1-4 for primary, Standards 5-8 for lower secondary, and Standards 9-10 for upper secondary or high school). In many English-language documents, the word Grade has been used interchangeably with Standard. However, increasingly the kindergarten year is now called a Grade, with the system therefore going from Grade 1 (kindergarten) to Grade 11 (second year of high school). Further, a National Education Law passed in 2014 decided that the total education system would have 12 years following completion of kindergarten (Myanmar 2014, para.16).

At the time of this research, the reform to create kindergarten plus 12 years of schooling had only just commenced. The particular focus of this research is on Standards 8 and 10. In some documents these are called Grades 8 and 10, though as noted other documents, including the NESP (Myanmar 2016, e.g. p.129) identify the kindergarten year as Grade 1 and then label Standards 8 and 10 as Grades 9 and 11. The important point is that at the time of the research, the grades on which the research focuses (hereafter called Grades 9 and 11) were the last

grades of lower secondary and of upper secondary schooling. Each of these grades was a transition point marked by a public examination.

**Figure 2.1: Official Vision Statement (displayed in every school)**



“To create an education system that can generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age”

The 2014 census had shown that in the country as a whole 69.4% of children aged 5-15 were currently attending school (Myanmar 2017a, p.40). The figure for Yangon, at 69.0% was close to the national average. Peak attendance in the country as a whole (85.0%) was at age 9, after which attendance dropped off and had a sharp decline after age 12 (68.0%). Up to age 12, school attendance rates were similar for males and females and in both urban and rural areas. Subsequently, males dropped out (or were pushed out) faster than females; and



children in urban areas stayed in school longer than counterparts in rural areas.

Article 28 of Myanmar's 2008 Constitution, followed up in the 2014 National Education Law, states that the Union is responsible for creating a "modern education system" and adds that the Union shall:

- (a) earnestly strive to improve education and health of the people;
- (b) enact the necessary law to enable National people to participate in matters of their education and health;
- (c) implement free, compulsory primary education system;
- (d) implement a modern education system that will promote all-around correct thinking and a good moral character contributing towards the building of the Nation.

The whole education system has three major sectors, namely public, private and monastic (Lall 2011). Compared with similar British colonies, Myanmar had the highest literacy rate in its own language at the time of Independence from the United Kingdom 1948. Lall (2011, p.221) explained that this was not only because of public education but also because monastic institutions had reduced the education gap for the underprivileged strata. Myanmar has maintained its high literacy rate in the contemporary era, with UNESCO reporting in 2005 that 89.9% of adults and 94.5% of youths were considered to be literate (Lall 2011, p.211). However, these figures could not be generalized for the whole country and many rural areas in particular remained disadvantaged (Zobrist & McCormick 2013).

The academic year runs from June to March, and Table 2.1 shows enrolment rates in 2014/15. Enrolment rates for females were higher than for males, and so were most transition rates. An indication of the steepness of the pyramid is that net enrolment rates for lower secondary were only 63.5%, and at upper secondary were 32.1%. Only 72.5% of middle school students proceeded to high school, indicating that over a quarter were pushed out of the system at that point. These proportions underpin the pressures to receive supplementary tutoring in order to secure examination success.

**Table 2.1: Enrolment, Transition and Completion Rates, Myanmar, 2014/15 (%)**

	Male	Female	Total
Net enrolment rate, primary	82.1	90.8	86.4
Net enrolment rate, lower secondary	59.9	67.2	63.5
Net enrolment rate, upper secondary	30.4	33.8	32.1
Primary to middle school transition	83.3	84.8	83.7
Middle school (Grade 9) completion	43.7	45.9	44.1
Middle to high school transition	78.1	76.3	77.2
High school (Grade 11) completion	24.6	27.7	26.2

Source: Myanmar (2016), p.69.

The government is the main education provider, and manages the basic education system in the public sector through the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Ministry of Religious Affairs is in charge of monastic schools, and private schools are licensed under the Ministry of Trade. However, all schools are required to use the MOE curriculum and textbooks (Zobrist & McCormick 2013). The private education system emerged in recent years, particularly in urban areas and with a major focus on the middle class. According to official figures, the MOE was responsible for over 44,000 schools in 2014 with more than 300,000 schoolteachers serving 8.5 million students (Sail 2016, p.12). Even at the secondary level (and more at the primary level), 86.7% of teachers were female.

In 2012, Myanmar Egress conducted a survey of the views of teachers in Yangon, and presented the findings in a publication entitled *Teachers' Voice* (Lall et al. 2013). The report stressed (p.3) that “[t]here is a lot of good practice in Myanmar schools”, but also highlighted needs for change. One major tension was between the Child-Centred Approach advocated by the authorities and the demands of the examination system that encouraged rote learning. The report also highlighted issues of classroom management in classes that typically had at least 40 students, and “a profession that [needs] increased professional pride and modernisation”. Teachers’ salaries were shown to be low in relation to living costs. A quarter of the 308 teachers surveyed by Myanmar Egress felt that they needed to be paid twice what they were receiving, while 40% felt that they needed three times

the amount, 11% four times the amount, and 23% five times the amount (Lall et al. 2013, p.14).

These issues were echoed in the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (Myanmar 2013, e.g. p.66). The government, recognising the need for improvements, incorporated strategies into the NESP. However, reforms are always complex and are necessarily constrained by budget considerations. Thus at the time of the present study many teachers still felt that classes were too large and salaries too low, and a significant number felt that private supplementary tutoring was a way both to secure the professional satisfaction of smaller classes and the greater incomes necessary to support their families. The views of teachers surveyed for the present study are presented in Chapter 5.

## **2.4 Learning Styles, Curriculum and Assessment**

Analysts commonly lament that the much schooling in Myanmar is dominated by rote learning. Efforts have been made to make curricula more child-centred, and the kindergarten-plus-12-grades system announced in 2014 is being progressively introduced one grade at a time with new curricula. Nevertheless, rote-learning traditions commonly prevail, in part because teachers themselves grew up in the system and in part because it is rewarded by the assessment system. One reason why not only teachers but also tutors are reluctant to use child-centred approaches is that these approaches are more time-consuming. As explained by one interviewee for the present study, “with a child-centred approach, the lesson which usually take one hour may take two hours”. The interviewee added that the approach was also more methodologically demanding: “We have to direct and encourage students to think more by using different methods”. In any case, the interviewee added, the examination system encouraged rote learning.

The Department of Myanmar Examinations (DME) in the Ministry of Education has overall responsibility for assessment of basic education. As explained by the NESP (Myanmar 2016, p.129), the DME oversees three major types of student assessment: the Continuous Assessment and Progression System (CAPS), year-end examinations in Grades 5 and 9, and the Grade 11 matriculation examination. Matriculation examination is widely seen as the most important of these examinations because the university entrance depends on its results, and the examination therefore exerts considerable pressure on students,

families and schools. School-level assessments include monthly Chapter End Tests taken according to the direction of the Department of Basic Education five to seven times a year. These Chapter End Tests are used to identify the class each student will attend the following year. Students in Grades 9 to 11 must take four Chapter End Tests during each year and a summative test set by the region/state government at the end of each semester (Suante 2017, p.14). Students who have passed the Grade 11 Chapter End Tests and two summative tests are permitted to take the matriculation examination for university entrance. The NESP observed (Myanmar 2016, p.129) that:

While the CAPS system practised in previous years was intended to promote classroom-based assessment focused on measuring student learning, the lack of an integrated implementation approach has meant that it has had limited impact in changing the focus on rote learning. In fact there is some evidence that the Chapter End Test component of CAPS may even have reinforced this focus.... In addition, parents have felt compelled to pay tuition fees to help their children do better at tests and exams, adding significantly to the cost burden of education.

Similar remarks apply to the summative tests and the matriculation examination. The latter is set by the DME on a uniform basis throughout the country.

These tests are based on a curriculum that for middle school students (Grades 6-9) has six compulsory subjects, namely Myanmar language, English, Mathematics, Geography, History and General Sciences. In high school (Grades 10-11), students must take Myanmar language, English and Mathematics, and then choose three subjects from optional Myanmar language, Geography, History, Economics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. Middle and high school students are also required to engage in moral and civic education, vocational or agricultural education, physical or life skill education, aesthetic education and school activities that include computer learning (Suante 2017, p.14).

Nevertheless, the examinations taken at the end of Grade 11 have much more weight than those taken at the end of Grade 9. As explained by an officer of the National Education Policy Commission (NEPC) interviewed for the present study:

The Standard 10 [Grade 11] exam is perceived to be a high-stakes exam as students' futures are determined by the marks that they get. If you get a good mark in the Standard 10 exam, you will get into one of the good universities.... As the result of the Standard 10 exam determines a lot of things in students' lives, students, parents and teachers give so much attention on it and invest a lot for students at this level.

The situation in Standard 8 [Grade 9] is different. People do not pay so much attention because it is a low-stakes exam. People know that no matter how well or badly they do in the exam, they will get into the next grade through the automatic grade promotion system.

Many teachers interviewed for the present study lamented the impact of the automatic promotion system, feeling that it reduced students' motivation to work hard and complaining that they had to provide remedial classes to ensure the pass rate. The interviewees noted that the Grade 9 examination was previously a high-stakes test that determined whether students could choose the Science stream or the Arts stream. This was especially important to students with ambition to study medicine or engineering, for which the route was the Science stream. The reform allowed students to choose their stream regardless of their Grade 9 examination results. Teachers commonly guided students to one stream or the other, but the fact that the examination results were not so crucial as they had been in former times had implications for students' motivation.

Nevertheless, even at lower levels of the system examination results retained much significance. The results sent signals to the teachers about the attitudes and abilities of the students, and some schools streamed students by academic ability. Parents did therefore pay attention to examination results, and commonly invested in private tutoring to enhance their children's scores. Thus the examination system was a major driver of private supplementary tutoring even in the early grades, and was especially important in Grade 11.

Also important to the present study are policies on the medium of instruction. These are sensitive, partly because of political forces relating to minority ethnic groups and also because of the balance between Myanmar as the national language and the desire to have

international connections particularly through English (Kyaw Yin Hlaing 2007; Lo Bianco 2016). As noted by Lall (2016, pp.178-179), for decades the authorities insisted on the use of *Bama saga* (Burmese) throughout the education system “to create a national identity based on *Bamar* culture, with Burmese as a ‘unifying’ language”.

Among the major recent developments has been provision in the National Education Law (Myanmar 2014, Chapter 7). Section 43(a) stated that “Instruction can be in Myanmar or English or in a combination of Myanmar and English”, Section 43(b) added that “If there is a need, an ethnic language can be used alongside Myanmar as a language of instruction at the basic education level”. For this research in Yangon, the ethnic minority languages were less of an issue than in other parts of the country, but the balance between the Myanmar and English languages was important. Although the 2014 National Education Law permitted flexibility, in the higher grades the textbooks and examinations and indeed much instruction remained dominated by English. This had implications for the effectiveness of learning both in schools and in private supplementary tutoring.

## 2.5 Structures for Private Supplementary Tutoring

To parallel the above description of the official education system, some description is needed of the shadow system. This description is necessarily less precise because much of the sector operates informally.

A starting point is with vocabulary. In Myanmar, as in some other countries especially in South Asia (see e.g. Foondun 2002; Sujatha & Rani 2011; Jelani & Tan 2012), private tutoring is commonly called private tuition or simply tuition. In format, it has parallels with many other places insofar as it may be provided one-to-one, in small groups or in large groups. It may also be provided over the internet, though in Myanmar this is less common because electronic infrastructure has not yet reached the levels of more prosperous countries. Common vocabulary in Myanmar also refers to guide tuition in one-to-one format, to *wine* tutoring in small groups, and to ‘section’ tutoring in large groups.

Concerning suppliers of private tutoring, the main groups are teachers in mainstream schools who provide tutoring as a side occupation, senior secondary and university students who work as guides, others who provide tutoring on an informal basis, and tutors

working for companies. The roles of teachers and of university students have been longstanding and are given particular focus in the present study. The roles of companies are more recent and part of both market and technological development. An indication of the number and orientation of the companies with particular focus on Yangon may be found in the annual directory published by Myanmar Marketing Research & Development (MMRD) Ltd. entitled *Education Directory and Guide for Everyone*. The 2017/18 version advertised on the back cover a company that operates as a broker for tutors in Yangon, Bago and Mandalay. The website of this company contained links to over 500 academic tutors, with photographs, profiles and prices, plus over 300 tutors for musical instruments, computer software, languages, fashion and other domains. Inside the Directory, 12 pages under the heading of Tuition presented advertisements for 68 other tutorial companies in Yangon (MMRD 2017, pp.137-148).

A further distinctive feature of organisational arrangements in Myanmar is the existence of many boarding institutions. Alongside boarding schools that are an alternative to regular day schools are boarding schools that supplement. Students in the latter category still attend regular day schools, where they are expected to fulfil the 75% minimum attendance requirement and to pass the examinations. These students then go to the boarding schools for further tutoring from teachers and guides and for self-study. Some boarding schools for tutoring have converted to become private schools operating as an alternative to public schools, but when they change their identity they are beyond the scope of the present study. Boarding schools for private tutoring mainly serve Grade 11 students getting ready for matriculation examinations, but some students start boarding in Grades 9 or 10. The quality of boarding tutoring schools varies significantly. Some famous ones, for which the fees are high, hire the best teachers and provide good salaries; but others are rudimentary in facilities and quality.

Legal recognition of private tutoring was presented in the 1984 No.6 Parliament Law for Private Academic Tutoring (Burma 1984). Earlier laws, promulgated in 1951 and 1963, had focused on private schools, but the 1984 law was different insofar as it focused on private tutoring. It was to a large extent politically motivated because the military government headed by U Ne Win feared politicisation in tutorial classes, some of which had over 200 students and were taught

by powerful orators. Among the important provisions on the 1984 law was that persons wishing to open tutoring classes should register with the government. Classes were limited to a maximum of 40 students and the total enrolment in each centre was limited to 160 students. One person could only open one centre, and tutors were permitted to work in only one centre. Penalties for infringement were harsh, namely three years in jail and a fine of 30,000 kyats. The law also prohibited use of public facilities such as schools, prohibited sale of notebooks and textbooks, and required the tutorial centres to follow the school curriculum. Penalties for infringement on this part were two years in jail and a fine of 20,000 kyats.

Accompanying the law were regulations including a stipulation on maximum fees that reflected prices of the era. Saw Gibson (1992, p.10) reported on a 1990 survey of 249 students in nine Yangon schools, observing that 65.6% of middle school students and 90.7% of high school students were receiving private tutoring. The 1984 regulations set a maximum tutoring fee of 10 kyats per subject per month and a maximum charge of 20 kyats even if students took more than two subjects (Burma 1984). However, many students interviewed in the 1990 survey paid over 100 kyats and in some cases as much as 300 kyats per subject. By 2017/18, prices were typically around 3,500 kyats per hour for individual tutoring, which if taken for just one hour per week would mean 14,000 kyats per month. Chapter 4 will show that students surveyed for the present study typically received tutoring in multiple subjects for several hours each week.

In 2003, amendment to the 1984 regulations allowed entrepreneurs to operate more than one tutorial centre but only in different townships (Myanmar 2003). They stipulated that tutoring centres could not teach more than three subjects, even though the core school curricula at secondary level had six subjects. Tutors were permitted to work in a maximum of three tutorial centres, but only in the subjects for which they were registered. The total enrolment was set at 240 students per centre.

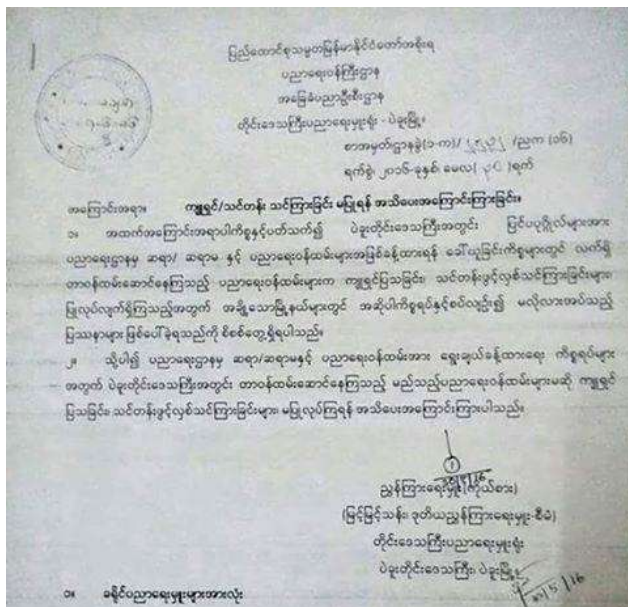
In the mid-2000s the authorities moved further with regulations that prohibited private tutoring by serving teachers, and a 2006 crack-down led to arrest of six Yangon teachers for providing tutoring (Yeni 2006). Nevertheless, commentators at that time doubted its impact. One (cited by Yeni 2006) felt that the government's move was



“just a cosmetic reform”, and that it showed how classroom teaching was deteriorating. Another commentator (also cited by Yeni 2006) observed that the government was forcing teachers and students “into the underground”. The commentator added: “The law scares people, but what can they do? The present education system is under-funded and needs radical reform before it will work.”

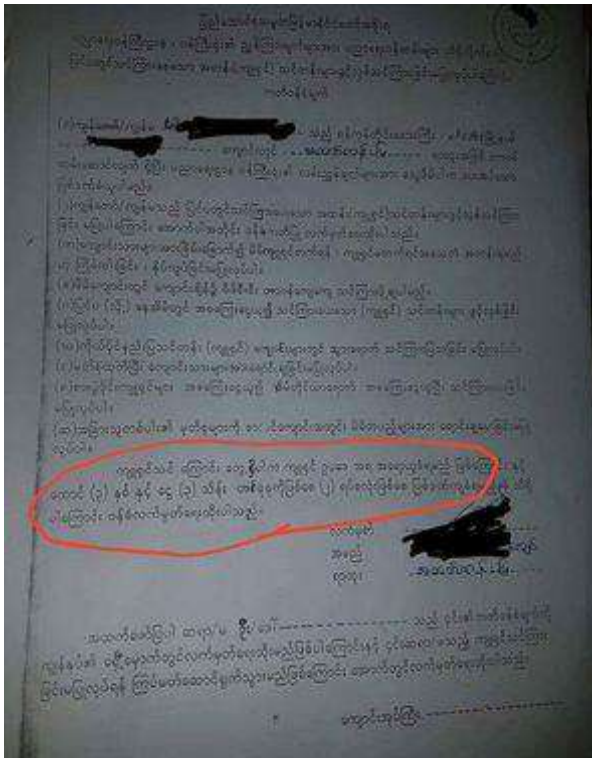
Nevertheless, fierce regulations have remained in place in contemporary times. Figure 2.2 shows an official directive from Bago Regional Education Office prohibiting teachers from providing private tutoring, and similar injunctions had been issued in Yangon. Figure 2.3 reproduces a statement issued by the Yangon authorities that teachers were required to sign indicating that they would not provide private tutoring. This particular version was distributed in 2017. The penalty for infringement was harsh: three years in jail, or a fine of 300,000 kyats, or both. However, the data from this study indicated that many teachers did provide private tutoring even when they had signed the statement. When asked whether they were aware of penalties being imposed, only

Figure 2.2: Official Prohibition of Private Tutoring Supplied by Teachers



one interviewee indicated awareness and it was not the form of drastic penalty envisaged by the regulations. The interviewee referred to a case outside Yangon Region in which a group of teachers who had been providing private tutoring had been transferred from urban to rural schools. She did not name the precise location, but it may have been in Mandalay Region where media coverage had highlighted this measure in November 2016 (Thin Hlaing 2016; Suante 2017, p.7).

**Figure 2.3: Statement that Teachers were Asked to Sign (indicating that they would not provide private tutoring)**



Also pertinent in the legal framework was a private education law drafted in 2017 that was available for public consultation at the time of this research and built on a 2011 law for registration of private schools

(Myanmar 2011; 2017b). The 2011 law appeared principally to apply to institutions that were substitutes for public schools rather than supplements, but could apply to both. Its definition of a private school (paragraph 2a) was “the basic education school established privately and that teaches according to the subjects contained in basic education curriculum and syllabus prescribed by the Ministry of Education or with added lessons for the said subjects for raising the quality of education”. It required conformity to the national curriculum and registration of both institutions and teachers, again with harsh penalties for non-compliance. Persons operating private schools without registration would, on conviction, be jailed for up to three years and fined up to 300,000 kyats, while teachers without registration certificates would on conviction be jailed for up to one year or fined up to 100,000 kyats, or both (paragraphs 33 and 35). The 2017 draft law more clearly applied both to institutions that were substitutes for private schools and to “subject-taught private schools”, with the latter appearing to mean tutorial centres. It stated (paragraph 55) that a teacher working in a private institution without a registration certificate would be jailed for between three and six months or fined two million kyats or both.

## **2.6 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has set the context for the present study. Myanmar has undergone significant political shifts over the decades, and these shifts have far-reaching implications for education as well as for economic and social development. Of particular pertinence have been the 2015 elections which brought a civilian-dominated government. The new regime immediately embarked on many changes, which in the education sector included a Comprehensive Education Sector Review leading to the National Education Strategic Plan.

As noted in the Introduction to this book, the CESR and NESP touched on the theme of private tutoring, but did not explore the topic in depth. Private tutoring has a long history, and even in 1990 enrolment rates in Yangon were high (Saw Gibson 1992). Private tutoring has also been the focus of regulation with fierce penalties for non-compliance but without enforcement of the provisions. Subsequent chapters will show ways in which students, families and teachers view private tutoring, and will include remarks on ways in which out-of-school learning links to in-school learning.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods of Data Collection**

This book draws on long-established research procedures in education and the broader social sciences (see e.g. Johnson & Christensen 2012; Rossman & Rallis 2017), including ones specifically in the domain of private supplementary tutoring (Bray et al. 2015). The instruments and approaches were tailored for the specific Myanmar context, and implementation of the study was made possible by partnership between the HKU and YUOE teams. This chapter focuses on the design, sampling, and processes of collection and analysis of data. It also presents remarks on the nature of partnerships and knowledge exchange.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches. While in many respects it would have been desirable to conduct a national study with careful sampling of all regions, states and townships, a study of such magnitude was beyond the capacity and budget of the research team and its sponsors. For a strategic focus, Myanmar's most populous city was chosen with a sample of urban and peri-urban schools. Informal evidence suggests that rates of private tutoring are higher in Yangon than elsewhere, so in this respect the study focuses on a particularly important location. At the same time, it is able to identify variations within Yangon and to make inferences about other parts of the country.

The choice of mixed approaches was related to the aims of the study and to the nature of the private tutoring. One single method would not have permitted adequate description, analysis and explanation of the complexity. Social science researchers increasingly combine research strategies in order to examine critical issues from multiple perspectives (Cara 2017). Mixed-methods can address complexities in social reality, obtain more comprehensive description of participants' voices, and increase the robustness of understanding (Swain 2017).

For this study, quantitative and qualitative data were mostly collected concurrently, though in some cases the qualitative component

preceded the quantitative one in data collection. The study employed a nested mixed- methods sampling design in which the qualitative sample was a smaller subset of the quantitative component (Onwuegbuzie & Collins 2007). The following section elaborates on sampling design and the characteristics of the sampled population.

### **3.2 Sampling**

The original design envisaged inclusion of schools in rural and remote locations in Yangon Region as well as urban and peri-urban ones, but the design was adjusted to focus only on urban and peri-urban schools. While it would have been ideal to have included rural and remote locations for comparison, Suante's (2017) research in Kale Township, Sagaing Region, and informal evidence from other parts of Myanmar suggests that shadow education is less common in those locations.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the sampling from urban and peri-urban Yangon remains the focus for this study. The research focused only on public schools, because private schools had only begun to emerge in recent years and formed a small proportion of the total number of institutions.

A stratified random sampling design was followed with three stages. First, a list of schools in Yangon Region categorised by district was solicited from the Yangon Region Education Office for random selection of districts. Second, townships were chosen at random from the selected districts; and third, schools were randomly chosen from the selected townships. Within the schools, classes of Grade 9 and Grade 11 were selected according to institutional convenience, e.g. of classes having a free period at the time of the researchers' visit.

The completion of random sampling through numerical codes led to a selection of eight schools among which five were urban and three were peri-urban. For anonymity, they are here described as A-H (Table 3.1). Within each school, almost equal numbers of male and female students were selected for the quantitative survey, with almost equal distribution between Grades 9 and 11 (Table 3.2).

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<sup>1</sup> Higher shadow education enrolment rates in urban areas have also been shown empirically in many other studies, including neighbouring Bangladesh (Mahmud & Bray 2017).

**Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics of the Student Sample (Quantitative Survey)**

<i>School</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Students sampled</i>	<i>% of total sample</i>
A	urban	159	9.7
B	urban	240	14.7
C	urban	277	16.9
D	urban	240	14.7
E	urban	240	14.7
F	peri-urban	161	9.8
G	peri-urban	160	9.8
H	peri-urban	160	9.8
<i>Total</i>		<i>1,637</i>	<i>100.0</i>

**Table 3.2: Grades and Genders of Students in the Quantitative Survey**

	<i>Male</i>		<i>Female</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Grade 9	420	49.0	381	48.8	801	48.9
Grade 11	437	51.0	399	51.2	836	51.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>857</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>780</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>1,637</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Teachers for the quantitative survey were selected by convenience according to availability. Altogether 331 teachers from the eight schools participated (Table 3.3). Most (94.9%) were females, and only 5.1% were males. Almost all the teachers had university education, among whom 10.3% even held Masters degrees. The subjects taught are shown in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.3: Descriptive Statistics of the Sampled Teachers (Quantitative Survey)**

<b>School</b>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<b>Educational level</b>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
A	19	5.7	Secondary school	5	1.5
B	42	12.7	Undergraduate degree	265	80.1
C	64	19.3	Postgraduate diploma	25	7.6
D	40	12.1	Master degree	34	10.3
E	40	12.1	Others/missing	2	0.6
F	43	13.0			
G	43	13.0	<b>Gender</b>		
H	40	12.1	Male	17	5.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>331</i>	<i>100.0</i>	Female	<i>314</i>	<i>94.9</i>

**Table 3.4: Subjects Taught by the Sampled Teachers in the Quantitative Survey**

	No.	%		No.	%
Mathematics	87	26.3	Chemistry	33	10.0
English	85	25.7	Physics	30	9.1
Myanmar	67	20.1	Economics	18	5.4
Science	40	12.1	Other	17	5.1
Geography	35	10.6	Biology	15	4.5
History	33	10.0			

*Note: Some teachers taught more than one subject. The percentages are of the total number of teachers (301) who responded to this question.*

For the qualitative component, four schools were chosen from among those already selected for quantitative work, with a balance of two urban and two peri-urban locations (Table 3.5). Within each school, the planned sample of respondents for the main data collection as follows:

- four students in each of Grades 9 and 11: one boy receiving tutoring, one girl receiving tutoring, one boy not receiving tutoring, and one girl not receiving tutoring;
- eight teachers, preferably teachers of those grades, and with a diversity of subjects;
- the principal; and
- four parents, preferably parents of selected students.

In practice a few extras were recruited in those schools (Table 3.5), and supplemented by ad hoc interviews with personnel from the other schools and in the wider community.

Once the team had preliminary findings, repeat interviews were conducted on an individual basis with three of the principals in the four schools shown in Table 3.5 and with a fourth principal from one of the other four schools. A group interview was also conducted with five teachers from three of the eight schools. These further interviews provided additional insights, and were especially valuable because they also permitted the research team to hear reactions to the preliminary findings. The arrangements through which these interviews were conducted are explained below. In addition, during both the main study and the point at which preliminary findings were available, the HKU team conducted interviews with various stakeholders, including govern-

ment personnel, members of the teachers' professional bodies, tutors, and staff of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).<sup>2</sup> These interviews provided further contextual information and insights about shadow education from the vantage points of the interviewees' professional roles.

**Table 3.5: School-based Interviews**

Schools	Location	Planned Sample				Actual Sample			
		Students	Teachers	Principals	Parents	Students	Teachers	Principals	Parents
A	Urban	8	8	1	4	8	12	1	4
B	Urban	8	8	1	4	8	8	1	5
G	peri-urban	8	8	1	4	8	8	1	4
H	peri-urban	8	8	1	4	8	8	1	4
<i>Total</i>		32	32	4	16	32	36	4	17

### 3.3 Procedures and Instrumentation

The fieldwork, comprising both pilot and main stages of data collection, was conducted between December 2016 and August 2017. Following required procedures in HKU, the planned design and instruments were submitted to the HKU body responsible for overview of ethics in research, which granted approval. Then the pilot stage began with workshops in Yangon during which the HKU team discussed dimensions of the study with the YUOE team in order to cultivate further shared ownership of the research design. Accompanying the YUOE researchers for hands-on experience during the pilot, the HKU

<sup>2</sup> The interviews with government personnel were both in the Ministry of Education and the Yangon Regional Office of Education. They were in formal meetings, but were not audio-recorded. A similar remark applies to meetings with officers of the Myanmar Teachers' Federation (MTF) and the Private Teachers' Association (PTA). Alongside these meetings were audio-recorded interviews with six NGO personnel, two professional tutors who were also PTA officers, and one curriculum committee member of the National Education Policy Commission. In addition, the team had many informal conversations with parents, teachers, personnel from international agencies and others.



team also learned to refine instruments and modify strategies – for example in conduct of interviews to solicit non-evasive responses to sensitive questions. Two-way translation was consistently followed between the English and Myanmar languages, and the pilot interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Following analysis of the initial findings from the pilot study, the HKU team provided feedback to the YUOE team in another round of training workshops. With the help from Myanmar-speaking graduate students in HKU, the HKU team organised back-translations of the survey and interview questions, and then adjusted some wording to improve clarity. During the pilot stage the HKU team also reached out to other educational stakeholders in local communities, gaining a better understanding of the context. This preparation permitted the main study to commence with background understanding of the logistical constraints and appropriate coping strategies.

The questionnaires for the quantitative data consisted of closed-ended questions plus a few open-ended ones (Appendices 1-2). The student data were collected in classrooms either during free periods or during scheduled lessons. The teacher data were collected during breaks, commonly with teachers assembled as groups but sometimes with teachers responding in their own time. The survey data were entered and processed in the computer software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The descriptive statistical analysis of several numerical variables was conducted together with regression analysis to generate an overall picture. The SPSS analysis also facilitated comparison between groups, and provided background information about the prevalence of private tutoring and about participants' attitudes and beliefs.

The core interview questions for the qualitative component of the main study are presented in Appendices 3-6. Interviewers varied the sequence of questions to fit the conversational flow, and adapted and elaborated on some questions to fit the circumstances of particular interviewees. The interview questions were tailored to fit the identities of the interviewees as government personnel, members of the teachers' professional bodies, staff of NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Most of the interviews were conducted in the Myanmar language by members of the YUOE team or, in some cases, by members of the HKU team using English and with Myanmar translation. A few

interviews were conducted by the HKU team directly in English – for example with English-language teachers in the schools and with NGO personnel and other stakeholders. Most interviews lasted for 30-45 minutes, though some extended to 90 minutes. The arrangements made by the YUOE team included contacting the schools in advance and scheduling the interviews during or after lesson times. The interviews took place in empty classrooms, dining halls, laboratories or other available rooms in the schools. Most of the school principals were interviewed in their offices. Each interview was audio-recorded with the consent of the interviewees and later transcribed in Myanmar language by the YUOE team. The transcribed interviews were then translated into English, and some were cleaned and double-checked by a Myanmar-speaking student in HKU. The HKU team also achieved some informal ad-hoc interviews with students and teachers during fieldwork, and when these interactions were sufficiently robust and informative they were added to the data-pool for analysis.

The study was grounded in careful observation of procedures for ethical clearance. As mentioned before, permission to conduct the research was obtained from multiple levels in Myanmar, as well as from HKU's Human Research Ethics Committee. The consent forms for different sectors of stakeholders were prepared in English and then translated into Myanmar. At the outset of each interview, the participants were briefed on the purpose and procedures for the research. Following social scientific convention, the written consent forms emphasised voluntary participation and rights to privacy. Participants' privacy was ensured with pseudonyms or different identifiers. Schools were anonymised, and respondents were assigned numbers to protect their individual identities. In the consent forms, the participants were given researchers' contact information in case they desired to raise any queries.

The qualitative data-analysis was an iterative process throughout different stages of the project. An initial qualitative report was generated after the pilot stage, and a more complete report after the end of the main study. Data were examined and re-examined in search of common themes and categories. Transcripts from interviews were managed, processed and analyzed by the computer software programme

NVivo 11. The software enabled systematic analysis of extensive data from 107 transcripts, with the aims to:

- identify commonalities and differences across different categories of respondents,
- link the items that were related thematically and conceptually, and
- provide descriptions and draw explanations around the codes.

NVivo also helped to locate and retrieve coded text to provide relevant evidence with direct and indirect quotes. Some of the NVivo codes were predetermined based on the interview questions, while others were built during the coding process (see Sang & Sitko 2014, p.137). The basic codes then were merged into larger qualitative themes, after which the themes were lifted to the next level of analytical categories. The researchers also used visualization tools to detect themes during early stages of the coding. Later some conceptual models were created to map the related themes diagrammatically.

The initial set of findings was taken to a pair of workshops in April 2018 to secure comments and explore themes further. The first workshop was for the principals and two teachers selected by the principals from each of the eight schools. Participants received the preliminary findings, commented on what they found surprising or unsurprising, and remarked on their perceptions of policy implications not only at the system level but also at the school level. The second workshop was for other stakeholders in the education system, including NGOs, international organisations, teachers' professional bodies, and the National Education Policy Commission (NEPC). Again participants commented on the initial findings and identified policy implications at various levels. From a methodological perspective, the workshops assisted with verification, elaboration and triangulation of data, especially in the case of the schools since it was possible to generate and address some questions that had emerged from the data and needed more commentary. The analysis was enhanced not only by the workshops but also by some follow-up interviews.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Following the pair of workshops, Roi Seng Hkum, a student on the HKU Master of Education (MEd) programme, conducted a number of formal interviews. She did this in Myanmar language, and then translated and

### 3.4 Partnerships and Knowledge Exchange

Scholars in the field of comparative education have noted that strengths can be enhanced by team collaboration of outsiders and insiders (Crossley et al., 2016). This project certainly gained strength from partnership between different the HKU and YUOE teams. The HKU team brought international perspectives, and also some prior knowledge of Myanmar,<sup>4</sup> which was strengthened with participation of post-graduate students who were speakers of the Myanmar language.<sup>5</sup> The YUOE team was composed entirely of Myanmar citizens fluent in their national language and of course with valuable contextual and cultural knowledge. The core HKU team included two members who had written doctoral theses on shadow education (Zhang 2013; Kobakhidze 2016), and the other two having written extensively on the theme (e.g. Bray 1999, 2009; Bray & Kwo 2013; Kwo & Bray 2014). The Myanmar team also had valuable international experience.

Another major component of partnership came from the UNESCO office where the colleagues comprised a mix of Myanmar and other nationals. Their connections with the Myanmar government were particularly important when official approval for data collection was needed first from the Ministry of Education in Naypyitaw and then from the Yangon Regional Office of Education. The UNESCO and HKU

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transcribed the interviews into English. Valuable comments were received on the initial findings together with insights from the interviewees' professional experience. She conducted a group interview with five teachers, a paired interview with two tutors, and individual interviews with four principals, two personnel from NGOs, and a member of the NEPC.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Bray had first visited Myanmar in 1983, and in 1990 was a member of the Education Sector Study team employed by UNESCO. Two years later he was part of a UNICEF team focusing on costs and financing of education; and in 2012 he was a Resource Person employed by UNICEF for a conference in Naypyitaw on National Development Options with particular reference to education and health. In 2016 he was the keynote speaker for a major Forum on Basic Education organised by the Ministry of Education in Naypyitaw as a major initiative in the new political era.

<sup>5</sup> In September 2017, Peter Kam Tung Tuang Suante (from Chin State) joined HKU as a doctoral student, and Roi Seng Hkum and Min Thein Win joined the MEd programme. Additional help in translation during 2016/17 had been provided by Win Lai Lai Rosie, an undergraduate student on the BA-BEd programme.

teams met personnel from Ministry of Education at an early stage to explain the purpose of the intended study, and to listen to perspectives from government officials. The discussion helped to shape the focus and design of the study in a way that fitted government priorities.

The partnership work required communication at all various stages over different media. The HKU team made eight visits to Myanmar during 2016-18, with different combinations of team members on each occasion. Between visits, most communication was conducted via e-mail. Each visit was purposeful with specific goals e.g. to clarify research design, test and refine instruments, establish local contacts, and reach educational stakeholders to enrich contextual understanding for data analysis. Partnership was achieved and sustained through continual discussion of goals and strategies, clarification of role differentiation with

### **Box 3.1: Preparation for Courageous Conversations<sup>6</sup>**

Below is an extract from the Workshop guidelines for facilitators, to engage participants in the critical inquiry.

Let us make this an opportunity for knowledge exchange and joint ownership of challenges!

We want an inclusive culture of inquiry. Essentially, a facilitator can play an empowering role to (a) motivate active dialogue, and (b) steer for quality thinking.

1. Assume positive intent. To have truly constructive conversations across differences, we need a mindset that something good will happen as a result. This requires assuming positive intent from everyone. We must put our own viewpoints and biases aside in order to capture what the person actually means.

2. Embrace the power of engaged listening. Let us encourage each other to speak up. Listening requires humility and a willingness to engage in someone else's views and experiences by asking clarifying questions for deeper understanding.

3. Cultivate trust for safe interaction – where a little discomfort is okay. Sometimes ground rules to “share freely in trust” can mislead individuals to think their perspectives will not be challenged. To protect a genuinely safe space, we must expect some discomfort – expression of alternative perspectives should be part of the dynamics in a deepening quest.

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<sup>6</sup> The authors thank Lisa Yiu in the HKU Faculty of Education for calling to their attention the vocabulary and value of courageous conversations.

commitment to shared ownership of responsibilities, and cultivation of mutual trust and respect.

Following preparation of initial findings, an HKU Knowledge Exchange grant funded a pair of workshops to reach personnel first from the eight schools and then other stakeholders in the education sector. Partnership within the HKU team during these workshops was taken to a new level by three HKU postgraduate students from Myanmar mentioned above, who undertook both written and spoken translation and much facilitated the communications. Specific attention was given to building joint identification of challenges that could later transpire into partnership for finding solutions (Box 3.1).

The Knowledge Exchange workshops created a platform for university academics, school personnel and other stakeholders to exchange views. In addition to validating preliminary findings, the interactions showed progression from a review of initial findings to community inquiry into the complex and multifaceted phenomenon with emerging questions. These questions were designed to evoke further responses with a focus on the quality of education and on schooling for public good. They were:

1. Looking into the future, do you expect *the scale and nature of private tuition* to decline, increase or remain the same? Why?
2. Do you agree that “schooling is not enough”? How can we (teachers and principals) fulfill our responsibilities to ensure *better schooling* so that there is less need for private tuition?
3. What *school-level policies* are desirable? And how can school-level policies be managed and enforced?
4. What do you think about current *government policies on private tuition*? What would you like to change, and why?

Each workshop concluded with an invitation to each participant to voice major thoughts on the discussion anonymously with regard to two questions, first on identification of a major issue calling for public attention to partnership, and second on a new idea for personal practice. The collective responses were collated and translated for further analysis, and contributed to the concluding chapter on policy implications.

Finally, in September 2018 the draft report was taken to a Policy Seminar hosted by the Department of Educational Planning, Research

and Training (DERPT) of the Ministry of Education in Naypyitaw. This event had 54 participants not only from Naypyitaw but also from other parts of the country. It was opened by the Deputy Minister of Education, who stressed the significance of the topic, and was an occasion both for presentation of the findings and for soliciting feedback. The authors of this report were glad to find broad consensus that the findings matched reality as the participants perceived it. They also benefitted from comments that helped to tighten a few details.

### **3.5 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has explained the design of the study and the ways in which data were collected, managed and analysed. The project is an example of cross-national collaboration with partnership across institutional, linguistic and cultural contexts. The goals were accomplished through accommodation of the calendars of various parties and negotiation of dates for specific activities. The research benefitted on the one hand from the international experiences of several YUOE team members and, by corollary, the Myanmar experiences of several HKU team members. It also benefitted from YUOE's status in the local schools, and from the multiple personal connections of the YUOE team members with specific teachers and principals. Through insider-outsider dialogues, the visits brought about contextual knowledge of relationships and dynamics in schools, from which to approach data-analysis.

The Knowledge Exchange workshops confirmed the value of the findings and also deepened understanding of contexts and implications. More significantly, the process enhanced ownership of the implied challenges. The workshops helped to bring out professional voices from educational stakeholders, calling for further work on partnerships to tackle the challenges together. A similar remark applies to the Policy Seminar held in Naypyitaw five months later.

The study has used both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand different dimensions, and has solicited perspectives from students, teachers, principals, parents and other stakeholders including government officers and NGO personnel. With a focus mostly on school-related actors rather than on the perspectives and activities of personnel running tutorial centres and related enterprises outside the schools, the study has investigated the phenomenon in greater depth than had previously been done in Myanmar. All research designs

naturally have limitations. The most obvious of this study is that it is restricted to eight schools in Yangon, but it can nevertheless present a benchmark and an indication of likely patterns elsewhere in the country. In addition, despite the restricted focus on Grades 9 and 11, the study provides an indication of likely patterns at other levels. With these methodological observations, it is now appropriate to turn to the findings.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Students' and Parents' Perspectives**

This chapter presents data from the surveys of students and from the interviews with both students and parents. It documents their perspectives on shadow education, including the reasons why they do or do not invest in supplementary lessons. The chapter also presents information on the providers, formats and venues for tutoring, and on wider views about the nature of schooling and shadow education.

#### **4.1 Scale and Motives for (not) Receiving Tutoring**

Students were asked whether they had received private tutoring during the previous 12 months. This means that for Grade 9 students the period included part of the time in which they were in Grade 8, and for Grade 11 students part of the time that they were in Grade 10. Overall, 84.9% of students indicated that they had received tutoring within the previous 12 months, with little variation between genders, grades and locations (Table 4.1). For males the figure was 86.4% compared with 84.5% for females; for Grade 9 the figure was 83.4% compared with 86.2% in Grade 11; and for urban students the figure was 88.2% compared with 79.4% for peri-urban students.

In the interviews, students were asked about the first time that they had received tutoring. Among the respondents who recalled their experiences, two had started receiving tutoring in kindergarten, two in Grade 1, one in Grade 2, four in Grade 4, and one in Grade 5. Thus, some students had a long history that had not been driven by the immediacy of the Grade 9 or Grade 11 examinations. One Grade 9 student who had started receiving tutoring in Grade 1 indicated that “until now, there isn’t any year in which I didn’t take tuition”.

Within the sample, some significant variations reflected not only location but also institutional cultures. Most striking was the divergence of School F from the general pattern. In this school, only 53.8% of Grade 9 students received tutoring, i.e. by far the lowest, but the proportion for Grade 11 students, at 98.8%, was the highest. This was a peri-urban school in a low-income area. Because it was low-income, many

**Table 4.1: The Scale of Private Tutoring**

School	Location	Grade 9 (%)	Grade 11 (%)	Total (%)
A	urban	89.8	91.8	91.1
B	urban	95.9	95.8	95.8
C	urban	91.2	93.5	92.4
D	urban	83.9	72.5	78.2
E	urban	86.7	80.0	83.3
Mean for urban		89.5	86.7	88.2
F	peri-urban	53.8	98.8	76.4
G	peri-urban	78.5	82.5	80.5
H	peri-urban	87.5	75.0	81.3
Mean for peri-urban		73.3	85.4	79.4
<b>Overall mean</b>		<b>83.4</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>84.9</b>

Grade 9 students took part-time jobs and had relatively low academic aspirations. Further, because households would only afford tutoring at low prices, private entrepreneurs were not attracted to the area to supply tutoring and teachers were less motivated to provide the service with accompanying risk of censure for breaking regulations. Then, significant numbers of students who performed poorly in Grade 9 did not proceed despite the general policy of automatic promotion, and instead joined the labour market. However, the ones who did proceed to Grades 10 and 11 were relatively motivated in their studies, and evidently these students secured the necessary resources and worked hard.

Another dimension of patterns concerned proportions of students receiving tutoring in different streams of the same grade. Among the eight schools, three had streaming policies in which high, middle and low academic achievers were placed in different classes. In most cases, more students in the high-achieving classes received more tutoring than counterparts in the low-achieving classes (Table 4.2). Thus, although overall proportions for Grade 9 were low in School F, 94.6% of sampled students in the top stream (i.e. Grade 9A, for high achievers) were receiving tutoring compared with only 44.1% in Grade 9D and 21.1% in Grade 9E (for lowest achievers).

Turning to the subjects of private tutoring, Table 4.3 indicates that English, Mathematics and Myanmar were the most popular. These are core subjects in which competence underpins other subjects. Next in

line for Grade 9 students were Geography, Science and History. For Grade 11 students, Physics and Chemistry were as popular as the languages and Mathematics, followed by Biology and Economics. Most students received tutoring in six subjects, though some received it in fewer subjects.

**Table 4.2: The Scale of Private Tutoring in Different Streams**

School	Grade 9 (%)		Grade 11 (%)		
	Class A	Class B	Class A	Class B	Class C
A	100.0	79.3	96.4	95.0	94.7
F	94.6	44.1*	100.0	98.0	100.0
H	92.5	76.9	83.3	86.4	81.8

\* Class D was sampled for this school, not Class B. Class E had an even lower rate – see the text.

**Table 4.3: Subjects of Private Tutoring**

No. of subjects	Grade 9		Grade 11		Subjects	Grade 9		Grade 11	
	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%
One	24	3.6	9	1.3	English	656	97.8	703	97.6
Two	77	11.5	1	0.1	Mathematics	659	96.7	701	97.4
Three	15	2.2	5	0.7	Myanmar	565	84.2	677	93.9
Four	4	0.6	17	2.4	Geography	552	82.3	6	0.8
Five	1	0.1	14	2.0	Science	552	82.3	4	0.6
Six	547	81.8	665	92.9	History	550	82.0	6	0.8
Seven or more	1	0.1	5	0.7	Physics	1	0.1	701	97.2
<i>Total</i>	669	100.0	716	100.0	Chemistry	1	0.1	701	97.2
					Biology	1	0.1	363	50.3
					Economics	0	0.0	327	45.4
					Other	6	0.9	8	1.1

Table 4.4 then turns to the hours spent on private tutoring. Most students reported that they spent between two and three hours per week on each subject, and significant proportions spent over five hours per week on each subject, especially on English, Mathematics and Myanmar. As expected, Mathematics and English received more time than Myanmar. Further, Table 4.4 again shows the heavier tutoring load for Grade 11 students compared with Grade 9 ones. A few students received tutoring every day. For example, as recounted by a Grade 11 interviewee from School A:

I return home at about 4.30 pm, and between 8.00 pm and 10.30 pm I go to tutoring. This routine is from Monday to Friday. On Saturdays I go to tutoring from 7.00 am to 12.00 noon and in the evening from 4.00 pm to 7.30 pm. On Sundays I have to go to tutoring from 8.00 pm to 10.30 pm.

**Table 4.4: Hours Spent on Private Tutoring**

Subjects	Min (Frequency)	Max (Frequency)	Mean	% of students spending 5 or more hours per week
Grade 9 Myanmar	1 (137)	10 (1)	2.35	8.5
Grade 9 English	1 (92)	12 (2)	2.92	15.6
Grade 9 Mathematics	1 (83)	15 (1)	3.17	20.3
Grade 11 Myanmar	1 (95)	9 (10)	2.95	12.6
Grade 11 English	1 (76)	14 (1)	3.39	21.9
Grade 11 Mathematics	1 (71)	12 (1)	3.40	22.1
Science*	1 (134)	8 (2)	2.30	8.4
Geography*	1 (140)	8 (2)	2.30	7.5
History*	1 (136)	10 (1)	2.36	6.6
Physics**	1 (53)	9 (7)	3.52	25.9
Chemistry**	1 (80)	9 (3)	3.23	20.2
Biology**	1 (69)	9 (2)	3.01	22.9
Economics**	1 (39)	8 (1)	2.87	24.6

\* Grade 9 subject; \*\* Grade 11 subject. Data based on valid cases of students who received tutoring in each subject.

This was perhaps an extreme case, but shows the study load for some students. Most students like this one had their tutorial classes after the school classes, but a few undertook them before the school classes, in some cases commencing at 6.00 am. One school operated a double-shift system with senior students in the morning and junior ones in the afternoon. In this school, many of the junior students receive tutoring in the mornings, but the senior ones received it in the afternoons and evenings. Double shifts permitted teachers as well as students to be available, and some teachers preferred double-shift schools for that reason.

This tutoring of course requires considerable financial outlay. The NESP (Myanmar 2016, p.239) reported on a 2009/10 national household expenditure survey that had shown tutoring to comprise 41.5% of total household spending on education. Concerning the Yangon sample for the present research, Tables 4.5 and 4.6 show reported expenditures and the extent to which the students felt that the expenditures were a burden on their families. Mean reported expenditures for Grade 11 students were over twice the level for Grade 9 students; expenditures were generally higher for males than for females; and expenditures were also generally higher in urban than peri-urban locations. Over half of the students considered the expenditures to be a moderate financial burden, while 31.9% said they were not at all a burden and 8.0% said they were a heavy burden. This is a combined statistic for both grades, however, and at 11.3% the proportion reporting a heavy burden was higher for Grade 11 students. Box 4.1 presents insights on this matter from one of the interviewees in the commercial tutoring sector.

**Table 4.5: Expenditures on Private Tutoring (Kyats per Month)**

Money Spent on Tutoring	Grade		Gender		Location	
	Grade 9	Grade 11	Male	Female	Urban	Peri-urban
Minimum	1,200	8,000	1,200	1,200	1,200	5,000
Maximum	300,000	440,000	440,000	400,000	440,000	400,000
Mean	42,797	100,460	76,277	67,223	80,672	49,571
Std. Deviation	39,828	79,021	74,847	61,805	75,577	40,522

*Note: Data on expenditures per month were processed based on following rules: (a) data excluded on cases with a "no" answer on participation in tutoring; (b) data cleared as missing data with cases with "0" value on money expenditure; (c) cases with Z value higher than 2.0 (outliers) excluded.*

#### **Box 4.1: The Financial Burden of Private Tutoring**

When the team presented the interim findings to a group of stakeholders, one expressed surprise that only 8.0% of students (11.3% in Grade 11) had described private tutoring as a heavy financial burden. The quotation below presents his reasoning, together with a comment on the implications:

"Really tuition is a big financial burden for many families. I will provide an example. Let's say both parents are civil servants. Even a civil servant whose position is at Director level only gets 180,000 kyats. Suppose they have one child in Grade 9 and another in Grade 11. For the Grade 9 student [receiving *wine* tutoring in all subjects], the minimum monthly tuition fee is around 80,000 kyats. I am talking about the minimum cost without any guide tuition, just for tuition. If you calculate the school fees together with the tuition fees for the Grade student, it is over 100,000 kyats. For the grade 11 student, the minimum tuition fee is around 150,000 kyats. So just the tuition fees for their two children will cost them 250,000 kyats and their salary that they get directly from government is 360,000 kyats.

"It is not enough to survive, so what they will do is to take a bribe at their work or do other side jobs. For instance, they will procrastinate the process of application, if people want the process to be done fast, people have to bribe them. This is the situation of Myanmar in which everything is intertwined each other. If we just calculate the cost of tuitions directly on the salary that people get directly from government nowadays, 70% to 80% of parents' salary is used for their children's tuitions.... So how do people survive? By taking bribes. Without this extra income, it is not possible for a lot of people to survive. That's why people and government are afraid to touch any parts of the system."

Taking both grades together, 70.4% of all students indicated that they received tutoring in the expectation that it might help them to "learn subjects better", and 62.1% of students received tutoring to "improve examination scores" (Table 4.7). The latter was particularly high in Grade 11 (70.0%) because the national examination at that level was a stronger determinant of future life chances than the examinations

in previous grades. As mentioned above, examination grades in Grade 9 were certainly important but were tempered by the policy of automatic promotion. In addition to these two reasons, “parental demands” were important reasons for some students.

**Table 4.6: Extent to Which Expenditures on Private Tutoring were Perceived to be a Financial Burden**

Feeling of financial burden	All Cases	Grade		Gender		School location	
		Grade 9	Grade 11	Male	Female	Urban	Peri-Urban
Not at all	420 (31.9%)	275 (42.0%)	145 (21.5%)	212 (30.4%)	208 (32.9%)	310 (31.0%)	129 (34.1%)
Moderate	803 (60.1%)	348 (53.2%)	454 (67.3%)	425 (61.0%)	377 (59.7%)	602 (60.3%)	226 (59.8%)
Heavy	107 (8.0%)	31 (4.7%)	76 (11.3%)	60 (8.6%)	47 (7.4%)	87 (8.7%)	23 (6.1%)

**Table 4.7: Reasons for Receiving Private Tutoring (%)**

Reasons	All Cases	Grade		Gender		Location	
		Gr. 9	Gr. 11	M	F	Urban	Peri-urban
Learn subjects better	70.7	74.6	67.7	67.6	74.9	73.9	63.5
Improve examination scores	62.1	53.5	70.0	60.6	63.9	60.8	65.6
Parent choice	25.2	24.1	26.0	29.0	20.9	25.6	24.1
Urged by teacher	2.9	1.6	4.0	3.9	1.7	3.5	1.3
Follow friends	4.4	3.9	5.0	5.8	2.9	4.6	3.9
Other	3.5	1.6	5.3	4.5	2.4	1.0	4.6

Further understanding about motives can be gained from the interviews. The focus on examination scores, especially in the matriculation examination at the end of Grade 11, was driven by a fear of being left behind in the competition. This was well illustrated by one NGO representative:

I never took any tuition until 8<sup>th</sup> standard [Grade 9], because of our family’s poverty. I started taking tuition in 9<sup>th</sup> standard [Grade 10] as it was the foundation for 10<sup>th</sup> standard [Grade 11] which was

thought to be an important turning point of life that I must be highly prepared for.

Other assessments, such as the region-wide examination at the end of Grade 9, and the district-wide exam at the end of Grade 5 also pushed students to receive private tutoring, as experienced by two respondents:

My mother thought that Grade 5 was very important as it was a district examination, so she got the study guide.

Grade 9 is a government exam. So, I had to try to pass that exam at that time.

In addition to the fear of lagging behind in the competition, it is worth noting the ambition of some high-performing students:

Now I want to get six distinctions in Grade 11. When I was younger, I took tutoring to attain good foundation for higher grades.

The main reason is that I am very clever now, but I want to be cleverer..... I was able to pass all the subjects in the past, but I am not satisfied with the past results. So I discussed with my mother and then I attend tuition for higher grades.

The examination pressure was perceived not just objectively by the presence of the examination system, but equally or even more as pressure from parents and their peers.

My mother told me to attend tuition because I am watching too much TV and am very talkative at home.

My parents thought that I became weak in academic studies. They thought that taking tuition is better for me. These reasons made me feel I need to take tuition.

Our neighbours have also sent their children to tuition since they were young. It is just like a routine task.

Another major track from interview data leads to the perceived nature of learning. Remedial work was seen to be achieved by repeated labour under guidance.



I can ask something that I haven't completely understood at school... I can be given support to do my homework. And then, if I am given homework from tuition, I can do more comfortably at home because I learned twice, once in school and then in tuition.

Some students proclaimed that they need a better learning environment in tutoring class, as they cannot learn independently at home. They prefer learning in a group with peers, with the guidance not available at home. As one student recounted, "at home my parents cannot guide me much, and I am distracted from studies". The student added remarks about the benefits of learning together with classmates.

An additional factor which went beyond the quantitative survey emerged as the perceived deficiency in school education. For the question "can students learn well at school without tuition?", five out of 20 students who responded gave negative answers. In their opinion, "no practical activities", "can't explain well", "big class size", and "limited teaching time" made the school class inadequate.

In the school, teachers ... don't tailor to the individual needs. They just read the lessons in the textbook. It can't be said that they explained... As for me, attending classes are just to meet my classmates.

I think that the class size is very large and this makes a teacher difficult to teach around 60 students effectively. Although bright students are comfortable in such a class, weak students may have troubles. My parents thought that class teaching was not enough to get high grades.

At the school, the teacher explains. But the available time is about 40 minutes, so we cannot fully understand what the teacher explains. At tuition, the available time is about two hours, it is more effective and we can ask what we did not fully understand.

Among students who did not receive tutoring, the most important reasons (Table 4.8) for not receiving were "doing well enough at school" (41.5%) and financial considerations (39.4%). Concerning the latter, one interviewee recounted:

I told my parents that I needed tuition. At that time, they told me to look for the tuition which cost only three/four/five thousand

kyats. However, nowadays, this affordable amount is too low for me to find any available offer. That's why I cannot receive tuition.

In Grade 11, more students felt that financial burden was the reason for not taking tutoring, and fewer students felt that they were doing well enough at school compared to Grade 9. Students in peri-urban schools were more concerned about financial issues than counterparts in urban schools.

**Table 4.8: Reasons for Not Receiving Private Tutoring (%)**

Reasons	All Cases	Grade		Gender		Location	
		Gr. 9	Gr. 11	M	F	Urban	Peri-urban
No time	15.7	16.4	14.9	12.9	18.3	16.8	14.1
Financial	39.4	32.0	47.4	40.5	38.3	31.4	50.5
Parent choice	6.8	8.2	5.3	6.0	7.5	8.0	5.1
Enough at school	41.5	49.2	33.3	40.5	42.5	36.5	48.5
Not worth	2.5	3.3	1.8	4.3	0.8	1.0	3.6
Friends not taking	6.8	4.1	9.6	5.2	8.3	7.3	6.1
Other	8.1	9.0	7.1	11.3	5.0	11.8	3.0

Some students did not receive private tutoring because they perceived no need to do so. To them, the teaching in school class was enough. A few students took tutoring in some subjects but not those which they considered well taught. For example, one student took private tutoring in Geography and History but not in Myanmar, English and Mathematics, since "teaching these subjects in school is efficient". Some students who needed extra help could obtain it from parents, siblings or relatives. For example:

I don't take tuition as my mom has been a private tutor since she passed the matriculation examination. She gives tuition every year. She has never sent me to tuition since she can teach me.

Time deficiency was also mentioned as a reason for not demanding private tutoring. For example, one student who received heavy daily training in football had no free time to take private tutoring. Among all the reasons, a striking statement from one Grade 9 girl was that:

One of my aunts told me that I can pass the Grade 9 exam only if I take tuition. I want to prove that I can pass the exam without taking tuition.

This student showed determination to demonstrate independent achievement despite external urging.

#### 4.2 Providers, Formats and Venues for Tutoring

Students were asked from whom they received private tutoring, and indicated with ticks in multiple categories if they received tutoring from multiple types of providers. Table 4.9 shows that 11.3% of respondents said that they received tutoring from their own teachers, 3.5% from another teacher in the respondents' schools, and 10.6% from teachers in different schools. Nearly one third received tutoring from external teachers, described as "retired, freelance, etc."; and an equivalent number ticked the box 'Other'. It seems that some had in mind study guides who were still high school students, while others may have referred to tutoring in boarding schools and from companies.

Adding together the different categories, the student responses indicated that 25.4% received tutoring from some category of serving teacher (their own, another teacher in their school, or a teacher in a

**Table 4.9: Providers of Private Tutoring**

Providers of tutoring	Grade 9		Grade 11		Grades 9 and 11	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
My own teacher	94	10.1	115	12.5	209	11.3
Another teacher in my school	29	3.1	36	3.9	65	3.5
Teacher from a different school	100	10.8	96	10.4	196	10.6
A university student	23	2.5	62	6.7	85	4.6
A university teacher	24	2.5	112	12.2	136	7.4
An external teacher (retired, freelance, etc.)	374	40.2	215	23.4	589	31.9
Other	286	31.0	283	30.8	569	30.8
<i>Total</i>	930	100.0	919	100.0	1,849	100.0

*Note: Respondents were asked to tick multiple categories if they received tutoring from multiple types of providers.*

different school). This contrasts with the survey data on sampled teachers (see Chapter 5), that indicated that 47.7% of respondents were providing tutoring. At least part of the gap may be explained by the fact that an additional 31.9% of students ticked the box about external teachers (retired, freelance, etc.), and respondents may not have been very clear about the identities of tutors or the meanings of the categories.

The data also demonstrated patterns of group size (Table 4.10). The most common types were “small group” (40.4%) and “large group” (51.6%). Relatively few students indicated receipt of individual or boarding tutoring. This doubtless reflected the high costs of both forms; and boarding tutoring was perhaps less in Yangon than in other parts of the country because public transportation was more easily available and because many of the institutions that had been set up for boarding tutoring had converted into private schools operating as alternatives to public institutions.<sup>1</sup> In addition the Yangon authorities may have been more stringent in prohibition of boarding tutoring, in line with the 1984 law.

The most common venue for tutoring was a tutoring centre,<sup>2</sup> serving over half of the surveyed participants (Table 4.11). Teachers' homes were also common places for instruction, especially for Grade 9 students (34.7%).<sup>3</sup> The majority of students (77.3%) received tutoring during weekdays, and only 29.6 % of them did so during weekends and 7.4 % during holidays (Table 4.12).

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<sup>1</sup> The proportion of students reporting that they received tutoring in boarding institutions (4.7%) was similar to that estimated by the sample of teachers, i.e. 3.2% (Table 5.4). These numbers in the Yangon sample were strikingly at variance with the 69.1% found by Suante (2017, p.57) in his sample of Standard 9 students in Kale Township, Sagaing Region. Discussing this matter with the authors of the present report, Suante felt that the figures for both Yangon and Kale could be considered credible. As indicated, the Yangon figure might be low because ready availability of public transport and other facilities (including electricity and street lighting) reduced the need for Yangon students to stay overnight and because many boarding institutions had turned into private schools. At the same time, Kale had a stronger reputation for this type of provision and therefore longer traditions.

<sup>2</sup> In the English version this was “tutoring centre” and in Myanmar version it was translated as “a building where tutoring takes place”.

<sup>3</sup> The figures for receipt of tutoring in students' and teachers' homes were, however, at variance with those reported by the teachers (Table 5.4). The teachers had estimated that 9.5% of students received tutoring in the teachers' homes and that 75.9% had received it in the students' homes.

**Table 4.10: Size of Tutoring Classes (%)**

	All Cases	Grade		Gender		Location	
		Grade 9	Grade 11	M	F	Urban	Peri-urban
Individual	10.6	11.0	10.3	11.1	10.1	11.2	9.2
Small group	40.4	41.1	39.7	44.0	36.5	41.3	38.1
Large group	51.6	52.2	51.2	48.2	55.6	49.7	57.0
Boarding	4.7	2.4	6.7	5.6	3.5	4.3	5.8
Other	0.1	0.3	0	0.1	0.2	0.2	0

Note: Percentages exceed 100.0 because respondents were permitted multiple responses.

**Table 4.11: Venues of Tutoring (%)**

	All Cases	Grade		Gender		Location	
		Grade 9	Grade 11	M	F	Urban	Peri-urban
My home	12.2	13.0	11.5	12.2	12.2	12.9	10.5
Teacher's home	34.7	43.4	26.5	33.9	35.6	32.8	39.6
At school	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.2	2.0	1.1	4.7
Tutoring centre	53.2	42.8	46.8	53.7	52.8	55.0	48.6
Boarding school	4.5	1.3	7.4	4.9	4.0	4.2	5.5
Other	3.0	3.7	2.4	4.1	1.8	3.5	1.8

**Table 4.12: Times of Tutoring (%)**

	All Cases	Grade		Gender		Location	
		Grade 9	Grade 11	M	F	Urban	Peri-urban
Weekends	29.6	20.9	37.7	27.3	32.2	26.9	36.7
Weekdays	77.6	81.9	73.9	75.3	80.0	77.4	78.0
Holidays	7.4	6.3	8.3	7.1	7.8	7.0	8.4

Finally, Table 4.13 reports on students' perceptions of their principals' perspectives on private tutoring. The students were asked whether their principals discouraged, required, encouraged or tolerated tutoring. One third indicated that their principals required tutoring, while another third said that their principals tolerated it, and 20.4%

indicated that the principals encouraged but did not require. Only 8.8% of respondents indicated that their principals discouraged tutoring. These numbers may be compared with the views of teachers in the same schools and thus referring to the same principals (Table 5.9). Interestingly, over half of the teachers stated that the principals discouraged tutoring, and only 6.7% of the teachers stated that the principals required tutoring. Thus the students and the teachers may be receiving rather different messages.

**Table 4.13: Students' Perceptions of their Principals' Perspectives on Private Tutoring**

Perception of Perspectives	N	%
Discourages tutoring	145	8.8
Requires tutoring	552	33.7
Encourages but does not require tutoring	335	20.4
Tolerates tutoring	528	32.2
Missing	79	4.8
Total	1,639	100.0

### 4.3 Parents' Perceptions on Choices and Roles of Tutoring

Some parents' perceptions have already been reported via the students, and in the next chapter will be further reported via the teachers. The study secured additional perspectives through a direct sample of parents accessed via the eight schools. Other direct perspectives came through interviews of other stakeholders who were also parents, and through informal conversations in various settings. In general, mothers were more likely to take the major role in supervising their children's schooling and related decisions, though of course fathers – and indeed other family members including aunts, uncles and grandparents – also had important views. Among the 17 formal interviews in the four sampled schools (Table 3.5), 11 were mothers and six were fathers. Eight of these parents had children in Grade 9, and nine had children in Grade 11.

As already indicated, parents commonly feel pressed to secure tutoring for their children. They know that society is competitive and that many other children are receiving it. As such, they fear being left behind in this competition. Especially in Yangon, they perceive that private tutoring has become the norm in the higher grades of schooling

and even to some extent at the lower grades. At the same time, parents may see tutoring as a good investment. Box 4.2 presents an excerpt from an interview that would resonate with many other parents, showing ambition with clear goals and strategic targets within financial constraints.

#### **Box 4.2: A Parent's Attitude on Investment**

*Interviewer:* Can you tell me about your own family experiences concerning private tuition?

*Interviewee:* Yes, certainly. When my eldest daughter was in Grade 10, I could not afford private tuition. I was struggling for my family living expense. But she was bright; she was only eight marks behind the entry mark of Medical University.... As I was from a rural area, we thought highly of medical professionals. So, I made her apply to the Medical University for her first choice, Dental University as second choice, and then University Pharmacy and then nursing and so on. I wanted my son and daughters to get a better life than mine. Educating my son and daughters is the most valuable thing I can give to them.... And now, my children are providing private tuitions as well to support the family income because soon I am going to retire.

*Interviewer:* And for your daughter, was the tuition effective? Did it work?

*Interviewee:* I couldn't afford a special class for my daughter. A special class is the tuition with a few students and expensive fees. When my daughter was in Grade 10, a special class cost around 2,000 - 3,000 kyats. So I sent her to normal tuition where there were 100 ~ 200 students with the tuition fee of 500 kyats.

How much was the tuition effective? She could pass the matriculation examination with just going to school regularly. Just pass. But with the help of the tuitions, she got higher marks. I lived in a rural area until my eldest child was in Grade 8, and then I moved to the city for my children's education because cities have better private tuitions compared to rural areas. I couldn't afford the best private tuition in town, but with a lot of struggling I could still send my children to a better private tuition called Section Tuition with 100~200 students in one class. Also, I couldn't afford to send them to private tuition for all six subjects. I had to prioritize the subjects for them, such as Physics, Chemistry and English.

*Interviewer:* So it was a good investment?

*Interviewee:* Yes, of course.

Among the 17 parents in the four sampled schools, eight provided tutoring for their children and nine did not. Factors leading the parents to invest in tutoring included awareness of the examination pressures, dissatisfaction with the quality of schooling, a feeling that children were not able to manage by themselves, and peer pressure in the desire not to lag behind. By contrast, factors cited by parents who did not send their children for tutoring included that extra help was already available within the home and that tutoring could have a negative impact. Concerning this negative impact, one parent explained that:

Students are becoming easy-going, and tutoring reduces independent learning and diligence. When they reach Standards 4 and 8 (Grades 5 and 9) and other grades that have a public examination, they are in trouble because they arrived too easily. They no longer have ability to rely on themselves [because] they are used to relying on tutors [and are] expecting to get exam hints from tutors.

Of course other parents had a rather different view, feeling that students could not manage without such support and therefore employing tutors.

Among the parents who employed tutors, interesting statements were made about the strategies for securing appropriate people. One father explained that:

When we planned to send our children to tuition, we first looked for information about that tuition. We studied the tutors' principles and the students' exam pass rate in previous years. Just after studying such things, we sent our children to them.

When asked if they had ever approached teachers for tutoring, only two responded affirmatively. This perhaps reflected the fact that the parents had been identified by the school authorities, who were aware of the regulations; but the remarks of these two parents were nevertheless interesting. One parent approached her daughter's teacher for mathematics tutoring because she desired consistency in methods for solving problems:

In this school, they have a tradition of reducing exam scores if the student uses different methods from their school's teaching. So I hired her math school teacher in order to practice in order to practice the same method both at school and tuition.



The other parent had a related but slightly different observation. During school lessons, she said, teachers taught “generally”, but during private tutoring they taught “comprehensively those chapters that were important for the exam”.

I found that when my daughter was young, just a small mistake of a student who did not receive tuition from that school teacher could determine that student’s ranking significantly. First position would become second position....

In general the interviewees, like these two, perceived benefits rather than risks from securing tutoring from existing teachers. These benefits included the opportunity to learn lessons again with the same teacher; more and better chances to practice; and closer relationships between teachers and their tutored students. Further, the teachers charged lower prices than outside providers, and parents had a feeling of safety: “We can trust the teachers, and it is safe by taking tuition from our children’s own teachers”. Only three of the 17 parents talked about the risks of teachers tutoring their own students, showing awareness of issues about favouritism and conflict of interest.

#### **4.4 Summary and Conclusion**

This chapter has presented students’ and families’ perspectives together because to a large extent they overlap. In the lower grades, decisions on whether or not to invest in tutoring are almost entirely made by adults rather than children. As the children grow older the balance shifts, but even in Grades 9 and 11, which are the main focus of this research, the final decisions are commonly made jointly by the students and their families.

Summarising the quantitative component of this research, the chapter has noted very high enrolment rates in tutoring among the sampled students in the eight schools. The three schools that streamed students according to academic performance generally showed that higher-achieving students were more likely to receive tutoring than lower-achieving ones. This pattern, which would seem to show both effect and cause of tutoring, matches patterns in other parts of the world (see e.g. Bray et al. 2014, p.31). The most popular subjects were mathematics, English and Myanmar, in that order, with stronger demand in Grade 11 than in Grade 9. Tutoring was perceived as a

financial burden for many households, with 11.3% of students feeling that it was a heavy burden. Nevertheless, it was viewed as a major support not only in content but also in the environment for study which was not so favourable at home. Learning outcomes were widely viewed as measurable through examination results, which may not be in harmony with the broader vision of education to which the NESP and many educators aspire. A question remains on how these wider visions can be achieved. Nevertheless, some students did feel self-confident and a few considered themselves able to achieve adequately through their schooling and related support even though their families could have afforded tutoring.

When asked about the providers, 22.4% of students indicated that they received tutoring from some category of serving teachers, either in their own schools or in different schools, with an additional 31.9% ticking the box of “external teacher (retired, freelance, etc.)”, and 30.8% ticking the box “other”. The last of these categories appeared to embrace guides who were still high school students, tutors in boarding schools, and companies. The largest category (51.8%) was for large-group tuition tutoring, followed by 40.4% small-group tutoring. Only 10.6% reported receipt of individual tutoring.

From the perspectives of both students and parents, tutoring had to a large extent become a general norm and was seen as a necessary investment.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, variations were naturally evident to reflect the aspirations, personalities and contextual circumstances of individual students and their families. As the following chapter indicates, variations could also to some extent be explained by the skills and attitudes of individual teachers. Further, judgements about deficiencies in school education raise complex issues that require attention across stakeholders in community dialogues. The book will return to this theme in the final chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> This observation echoes the words of Ohnmar Tin and Stenning (2015, p.12): “Nearly all students in government schools also attend some form of private tuition. Teachers, looking to supplement their income charge for these extra classes and have made attendance in these classes synonymous with pass rate.”

## Chapter 5

### Teachers' Perspectives

The Myanmar government (Myanmar 2016, p.62) has highlighted the importance of teachers in the context of the National Education Strategic Plan (NESP):

The successful implementation of the NESP Reforms will require behaviour change among head teachers, teachers and education managers at all levels of the national education system. Behaviour change means doing things differently... [It] will be teachers in all schools and educational institutions who will play the most important role in the successful implementation of the NESP reforms.

Teachers' perspectives on private tutoring are important not only because many teachers provide such tutoring (to their own students and/or to the students of other teachers) but also because the tutoring can change classroom dynamics. Tutoring may support slow learners and thus reduce disparities in the classroom; but it may also increase disparities by stretching high achievers. Further, as noted in Chapter 1, when students learn subjects in advance from their tutors, they may feel bored during regular lessons; and they may have more respect for tutors to whom they are paying fees and over whom they have a choice than for teachers who are allocated without choice. Yet when students perform well in their examinations, multiple actors including teachers and their schools claim the credit.

This chapter begins with the scale of tutoring provided by the teachers and with their reported reasons for providing or not providing it. The chapter then turns to the types of tutoring provided by the teachers who did so, and to the timing, content and perceived roles of the teachers as tutors. The next section reports on teachers' perceptions of the attitudes to tutoring of their principals. It is followed by remarks on the views of teachers' professional organisations; and the final section summarises and concludes.

### 5.1 Scale and Motives for (not) Providing Tutoring

Table 3.3, in Chapter 3, indicated that 331 teachers responded to the questionnaire survey. Among these teachers, 158 (47.7%) stated that they provided private tutoring. All of these teachers indicated that they did so “to help students learn better” (Table 5.1). Most of the 158 teachers stated that they offered tutoring “to satisfy demands from parents” (92.5%), “to have more teaching experience” (92.5%), “to supplement income” (91.1%), and “to prepare students for examination” (82.6%). A smaller proportion of the 158 teachers, but still more than half (58.6%), indicated that “opportunity to teach in a smaller class” was among their reasons. One teacher stated that “the more I teach, the more I learn”, and added that the extra books and literature used in tutoring helped to improve her pedagogical skills. It is worth noting this positive stance to gain from learning, even when the meaning of learning seemed ambiguous.

**Table 5.1: Teachers' Reasons for Providing Private Tutoring (%)**

Reasons	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
To supplement my income	2.8	6.2	74.5	16.6	9.0	91.1
To help students learn better	0.0	0.0	69.2	30.8	0.0	100.0
To satisfy demands from parents to teach their children more hours	3.4	4.1	67.8	24.7	7.5	92.5
To prepare students for examination	5.6	11.8	60.4	22.2	17.4	82.6
To teach in a smaller class	13.6	27.9	50.0	8.6	41.5	58.6
To have more teaching practice	1.4	6.2	63.7	28.8	7.6	92.5

*Note: These are responses from the 158 among 331 teachers who indicated that they provided tutoring.*

The interviewed teachers similarly named economic benefit as a major motive for providing tutoring. One interviewee observed that “being in a government school gives more opportunity to make money

than being a freelance teacher”, because the school was a place in which the teacher could market herself. Another major reason stressed by interviewees was responsiveness to parents’ requests. The interviewees felt that the government should raise teacher salaries to de-incentivise teachers to provide tutoring, but they felt that higher salaries would not decrease pressure from “ambitious parents”.

Over half (53.3%) of the 45 interviewed teachers (in the main and supplementary samples) indicated that they provided tutoring either individually or in small groups. Some teachers worked part-time in boarding schools and offered classes there, while others organized *wine* (small group) tutoring. Some teachers taught different subjects in school and tutoring classes. For example, one teacher was teaching Economics in Grade 10 at school but teaching Myanmar language in private tutoring. The interviewer did not ask what major(s) this teacher had studied in the teacher training institution, and since it is common for teachers have double majors the teacher might have majored in both subjects. In any case, the teacher may have chosen to offer Myanmar-language tutoring because the subject is in stronger demand due to examination pressures, and therefore can command higher prices.

In the quantitative survey the 173 teachers who did not provide tutoring, who comprised 52.3% of the total sample, observed that the regulations discouraged teachers from doing so (68.3%) and/or identified ethical considerations (64.5%). Others indicated that they were busy with their families (65.7%) and workload from schools (63.7%). Only 20.7% of teachers indicated that they did not offer tutoring because they had adequate salaries from government schools (Table 5.2). It may be surprising that only two thirds referred to the regulations, since on paper these regulations are indeed strong. The teachers’ views may reflect the pragmatic recognition that the regulations were widely ignored and perhaps sympathy with people who ignored them in the context of low salaries.

**Table 5.2: Teachers' Declared Reasons for Not Offering Private Tutoring (%)**

Reasons	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
I am busy with my family	11.3	22.7	49.6	16.3	34.0	65.9
I am busy with teaching at school	14.5	21.8	50.0	13.7	36.3	63.7
I have enough salary from government school	37.9	41.4	19.8	0.9	79.3	20.7
My professional ethics	12.9	22.6	54.0	10.5	35.5	64.5
The regulations discourage teachers from offering tutoring	9.5	22.2	54.0	14.3	31.7	68.3

Note: These are responses from the 173 among 331 teachers who indicated that they did not provide tutoring.

Further insights on this matter were provided by the interviews. One principal, looking across the whole system (i.e. including primary schools) observed that "Some teachers ... simply cannot provide tuition after school every day as teaching is very tiring". Further, if the teachers are in low-demand subjects and working in the junior grades, "even if they want to provide the tuition after school, there will be few students; and compared to what they give and what they get, and the tired feeling is not sufficiently compensated by the fees." Nevertheless, the principal added, "few teachers can afford their living expenses without tuition". Some respondents highlighted the government's regulations that prohibited some teachers from offering tutoring. For example, one principal remarked: "Here all teachers have to give their agreement to follow the policy by signing a form and they are afraid of getting into trouble."

Elaborating on the financial picture, teachers' basic salaries were increased in 2011 and again in 2015, but many teachers still struggled to make ends meet (Buske 2016; Lall, 2016). Some teachers indicated in the interviews that although salaries had been raised, inflation had eroded the improvements to the extent that the change had not made a big difference

**Table 5.3: Teachers' Reported Incomes from School and Tutoring**

<b>Monthly income from school</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
less than 170,000 kyats	41	12.4
170,000-179,999 kyats	123	37.1
180,000-189,999 kyats	86	26.0
190,000 kyats and more	66	20.0
Missing	15	4.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>331</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Monthly income from tutoring</b>		
less than 50,000 kyats	15	9.4
50,000-99,999 kyats	47	29.7
100,000-149,999 kyats	45	28.4
150,000-199,999 kyats	10	6.3
200,000 kyats and more	29	18.3
Missing	12	7.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<b>Tutoring income/school income</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than 25%	12	8.4
26%-50%	50	34.5
51%-75%	44	30.4
76%-100%	11	7.6
101-200%	23	15.9
More than 200%	6	4.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>100.0</i>

to their lives. The survey respondents in this study reported monthly salaries ranging from 154,000 to 250,000 kyats with an average of 178,829 kyats (Table 5.3). Among the 158 teachers providing tutoring, 146 reported their incomes from this tutoring. Amounts varied from 10,000 to 900,000 kyats per month, with an average of 127,524 kyats. During interviews, teachers commonly observed that tutoring remained the most stable way for teachers to augment their salaries from schools. However, other forms of revenue generation were also noted including sale of cooked food and even work as a butcher.

At the same time, teachers were willing to undertake social responsibilities. On the question "If you are offering tutoring, do you charge students different fees depending on their ability to pay?", 70 (44.3%) of the 158 teachers responded positively. Further, nearly half of the respondents (46.8%) indicated that they had offered tutoring to some students free of charge. Mostly, the teachers were paid by cash (27 out of

31 indicated this), while four teachers indicated that they accepted other means of remuneration because they took into consideration parents' economic status and preference to pay in goods such as food and clothes and/or services.

The interviews also raised the question whether private tutoring affected relationships between teachers in their schools. The data showed that it created income inequality among teachers that could negatively affect collegial relationships. One teacher elaborated: "I can get extra income because of tuition. But other teachers may be jealous of their colleagues due to tuition."

Overall, despite variation in the practice of tutoring in response to the government regulating policy against teachers' tutoring, the financial constraint in teachers' salary and the need for an extra income carries a major incentive alongside a perception of students' need for support of their learning.

**Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistics of Types of Tutoring**

	N	%		N	%
<b>Types of tutoring</b>			<b>Estimation of students receiving tutoring</b>		
Individual	63	39.9	<b>Grade 9</b>		
Small Group	57	36.1	0%	11	6.1
Large Group	46	29.1	1-20%	18	10.1
Boarding	5	3.2	21-40%	7	3.9
Other	1	0.6	41-60%	7	3.9
<b>Place of tutoring</b>			61-80%	15	8.4
Teacher's own home	15	9.5	81-100%	9	5.0
Students' homes	120	75.9	Do not know	112	62.6
At school	0	0.0	<i>Total</i>	<i>179</i>	<i>100.0</i>
At private school	23	14.6	<b>Grade11</b>		
At boarding school	5	3.2	0%	9	5.0
Other	0	0.0	1-20%	19	10.6
<b>Time of tutoring</b>			21-40%	11	6.1
Weekends during school year	80	50.6	41-60%	7	3.9
Weekdays during school year	91	57.6	61-80%	13	7.3
Holidays	5	3.2	81-100%	20	11.2
Other	6	3.8	Do not know	101	56.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>158</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>180</i>	<i>100.0</i>



## 5.2 Types, Timing, Content and Roles of Tutoring

Among the teachers sampled in the quantitative survey who provided tutoring, 39.9% indicated that they offered one-to-one individual instruction, 36.1% small-group tutoring, and 29.1% large-group tutoring (Table 5.4). Much tutoring (75.9%) was reported to take place in the homes of students. Other places included private schools (14.6%), teachers' own homes (9.5%), and boarding schools (3.2%). Tutoring was usually offered on weekdays (57.6%) and weekends (50.6%) during the school year. Only 3.2% of teachers reported that they provided tutoring during holidays. Many teachers were reluctant to estimate the proportions of their students receiving tutoring, and those that did were generally far from the proportions indicated by the students themselves (Table 4.1). This was perhaps surprising, but may reflect a culture of silence about the matter. It may be assumed that the students did not tell their teachers, and that the teachers rarely discussed matters openly among themselves.

Teachers shared their opinions on the effectiveness of private tutoring in relation to schooling (Table 5.5). The majority of teachers (78.5%) agreed that tutoring helped students to cover materials that were not covered in regular classes. Over 60% of teachers felt that tutoring would improve students' ability and their examination scores. However, only a third felt that it had emphasis on examination tips, and 74.0% of teachers disagreed with the statement that "all students should attend tutoring".

**Table 5.5: Teachers' Opinions on the Effectiveness of Tutoring (%)**

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
Tutoring helps students to raise examination scores	11.7	21.7	56.9	9.7	33.4	66.6
Tutoring improves students' ability	6.3	24.3	58.6	10.9	30.6	69.5
Tutoring provides examination tips	21.0	41.0	34.6	3.4	62.0	38.0
Tutoring helps students to cover materials that are not covered in class	5.7	7.0	68.8	18.5	12.7	87.3
All students should attend tutoring	28.6	53.9	14.1	3.4	82.5	17.5

The next question concerned the length of the school day. Over 60% of the teachers felt that the school day was long enough for instruction of the school curriculum (Table 5.6). However, 64.8% felt that the curriculum was overcrowded and that students had to “learn too much too fast”. Half (51.4%) of the teachers also felt that the curriculum covered too many subjects.

**Table 5.6: Teachers' Opinions on School Education and Tutoring (All Cases, %)**

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
The school day is long enough to cover all the material on the curriculum	4.4	34.7	55.3	5.6	39.1	60.9
If the school day were longer, fewer teachers would offer tutoring	14.7	48.0	33.3	3.9	62.7	37.2
The current school curriculum has too many subjects to cover	6.8	41.7	46.9	4.5	48.5	51.4
The current curriculum is overcrowded and students have to learn too much too fast	8.7	26.5	54.8	10.0	35.2	64.8

Among the teachers who offered tutoring, a majority (90.2%) followed the school curriculum in tutoring class and only 37.0% used textbooks other than school ones (Table 5.7). Few teachers (11.2%) indicated that they focused on examination questions in their tutoring classes. One third (35.8%) stated that they usually assigned homework in tutoring classes, meaning that the majority did not assign homework.

**Table 5.7: Teachers' Views on Pedagogy in Tutoring (Tutoring Cases Only, %)**

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
In my tutoring class, I follow the school curriculum.	1.9	7.8	72.7	17.5	9.7	90.2
In my tutoring class, I use different textbooks from the school ones.	16.6	46.7	34.4	2.6	63.3	37.0
In my tutoring class, I mainly focus on examination questions.	53.3	35.5	9.9	1.3	88.8	11.2
In my tutoring class, I usually assign homework.	25.8	38.4	32.5	3.3	64.2	35.8
In my tutoring class, I mainly focus on exercises.	19.6	40.5	35.9	3.9	60.1	39.8

Teachers were asked if teaching was easier when many students in class received tutoring. Two thirds (64.4%) responded positively, but an almost equivalent proportion (62.2%) indicated that students who attended tutoring were less attentive in class (Table 5.8). A majority (70.5%) of teachers indicated that students learned school materials in advance through private tutoring classes. Most teachers (82.9%) felt that low-achieving students should receive tutoring, and only 36.0% agreed that high-achieving students should go for tutoring. In addition, 58.5% of teachers indicated that the government should reduce emphasis on examinations. As for the impact of tutoring on students learning, 59.3% of teachers disagreed that tutoring “encouraged rote learning” and nearly half (40.7%) felt that tutoring “encouraged critical thinking about cause and effect”.

The qualitative data enriched the understanding of teachers' perspectives. On the positive side, respondents felt that tutoring offered more learning opportunities and that repetition of materials enhanced learning. Some teachers added that it increased students' confidence. On the negative side, tutoring occupied students' leisure time: one teacher

even compared tutoring to a “prison” that limited students’ freedom to go where they wanted at weekends. Teachers also recognised that the

**Table 5.8: Teachers’ Opinions on Students and Tutoring (All Cases, %)**

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total disagree	Total agree
Teaching in school is easier when many of my students attend private tutoring	9.1	26.5	60.4	4.0	35.6	64.4
Students who attend tutoring classes are less attentive in class	6.2	31.8	49.2	12.8	38.0	62.0
Students who attend tutoring classes know school materials in advance	5.0	24.5	65.9	4.6	29.5	70.5
High-achieving children should receive private tutoring	15.0	49.0	32.3	3.7	64.0	36.0
Low-achieving children should receive private tutoring	3.6	13.5	67.4	15.5	17.1	82.9
Government should reduce emphasis on examinations	7.4	34.1	46.8	11.7	41.5	58.5
Tutoring encourages rote learning	13.5	45.8	31.6	9.1	59.3	40.7
Tutoring encourages critical thinking about cause and effect	14.4	35.8	44.8	5.0	50.2	49.8
Tutoring takes away students’ time and space for other activities	5.0	16.6	58.5	19.9	21.6	78.4

financial burden for some families, who had to “buy education for their children, which is very expensive”. Some teachers highlighted that tutoring created mental stress for some students, because they spent whole day learning – first in school and then without proper rest in tutoring. More broadly, some teachers felt that tutoring created an environment in which parents and students lost trust and confidence in public education.

Yet another concern of the teachers referred to advanced learning in tutoring, which created a difficulty in class. Some teachers reported that those students who received tutoring in advance, for example during holidays, lost interest in school learning. This created problems in terms of classroom management. For example, one teacher explained that “students who get tuitions act arrogantly as they have learned the lessons already so we need to scold them sometimes in order to manage the class well”. Further, some students preferred the pedagogic styles of their tutors, which caused disagreements with the teachers. One mathematics teacher explained:

We teach differently from tuition, and students prefer the way from tuition. Because of that, we sometimes get angry and scold the students to follow our way. Especially my subject, mathematics, has many ways to get to the solution. . . . I show my students step by step computation, but in the end they follow the way from tuition and skip some steps to get to the answer. I want them to know how we arrive at the answer. Sometimes there are many steps, but tuition teachers reach the answer with just two or three steps. I want to teach them why and how we get to the answer.

Private tutoring also drained the energies of the teachers. When asked how tutoring affected their professional and personal lives, most teachers replied that they were stressed. Tutoring took significant portion of their free time, but many teachers felt that they “had to” provide tutoring because they were financially dependent on it. Some taught until 10.00 or 11.00 pm, which left no time for family. One teacher reported:

I am physically and mentally exhausted. I would prefer not to offer tuition: it is very tiring work. The whole day we are here in school, and in our extra time we are teaching tuition. It is tiring, very tiring.

**Box 5.1: Pressures from Parents**

Most teachers and principals felt that tutoring was not necessary, and that school education was enough for students to pass examinations. However, they were not always able to convince the parents.

Some teachers reported that "it is not good to deny", since they wanted to "have friendly relations with the parents", and they provided tutoring as "a kind of help to parents". In one teacher's words: "We become tuition teachers because we are being forced by the parents and students".

Another teacher explained: "Most parents request us for their children to provide tuition because they have to do their business and also no time to train them. So we have to teach everything they learned from school in tuition. We pick up their children with us to tuition in the evening after school hours so that their parents feel safe and satisfied for their children's learning."

Another teacher, in her late 50s, remarked:

Tuition reduces my private time. I am very tired because of my old age. It increases my stress.

Because of the demands, the teachers often did not find enough time to prepare for school lessons. Some reserved energy for tutoring, which perhaps contributed to poor quality of teaching in schools.

The interviewed teachers also mentioned other drivers of demand for tutoring, including:

- *Large classes.* Some teachers mentioned the difficulty of managing students in classes that in some cases exceeded 60 students. They felt unable to address students individually, noting that some needed more attention than others. Tutoring was perceived as an opportunity for students to receive more individual attention. One interviewee added that some teachers did not even make efforts to meet individual needs in large classes.
- *Limited class time.* School time was considered inadequate by some teachers. In the words of one: "During 45 minutes, there are many factors in addition to teaching. So, I cannot teach effectively. Therefore, students must take tuition."
- *Examinations.* Many interviewees highlighted the roles of examinations as major drivers of tutoring. They particularly had in mind the external examinations at the end of Grades 9

and 11, but also mentioned the regular Chapter End Tests (CETs).

- *Peer pressure.* Some teachers and principals linked the demand for private tutoring to peer pressure. In the words of one interviewee:

Mainly this is the demand of the environment. Nowadays in Myanmar, students feel inferior unless they join tuition classes.

One teacher added that:

Sometimes, you know, actually, students persuade their friends to attend together. “Hey, our teacher is very funny, we eat together, we go outside, and after finishing tuition we go together and eat something.” So, the friends become interested to join in learning together.

- *Expecting favours from teachers.* Three respondents mentioned that some parents sent children to their teachers for tutoring with the expectation of gaining favours. In the words of one of them:

In Yangon region, most parents think that if their children attend their teachers’ tuition, they will get high marks and good position in the class. Also they think that if their children do not attend their teachers’ tuition, they won’t get good marks and awards.

In the wider literature, related remarks on the previous point were made by Myo Myint (2015, p.123). He observed that some teachers recruit students for tutoring classes by discriminating against students who do not attend their extra classes and by giving extra marks to those who do. Teachers may also form networks among colleagues to provide special services to students who receive supplementary lessons. The findings also resonate with UNICEF study (Sail 2016), which illustrated pressures with a quote from a 17-year-old girl in an urban part of Kayah State (p.38):

At school, I struggled to keep up. The teacher recognised that I was

finding it hard, but wasn't able to offer any additional support; she merely suggested that I take tuition. I couldn't afford this, so didn't take it and remained weak in class. Many others in my class took tuition and did better because of it.

The report observed that students with learning difficulties who turned to teachers for extra help were commonly told just to “study harder”, “try harder” or “take tuition” (p.38). Nevertheless not all teachers are in this category, and some interviewees for the present study stressed that they treated all students equally. One, for example, emphasised that “teachers should not discriminate between students who can pay tuition fees and those who cannot.”

### 5.3 Perceptions of Principals' Attitudes

In the quantitative survey, teachers were asked to indicate their perception of their principals' attitudes towards tutoring. Over half of them (56.2%) indicated that the principals discouraged private tutoring (Table 5.9), and only 9.4% teachers felt that their principals required or encouraged private tutoring. If considering the proportions only among the teachers who responded to this question (i.e. excluding the 69 teachers who did not respond), the proportions would be 71.0% of respondents perceiving that the principals discouraged tutoring and only 11.8% perceiving that their principals required or encouraged private tutoring. These figures contrasted with the views of the students in the same schools (Table 4.13). One third of the students had indicated that their principals required tutoring, while another third said that their principals tolerated it and 20.4% indicated that the principals encouraged but did not require.

**Table 5.9: Teachers' Perceptions of their Principals' Perspectives on Private Tutoring**

	<i>N</i>	<i>% (all categories)</i>	<i>% (excluding missing responses)</i>
Discourages tutoring	186	56.2	71.0
Tolerates tutoring	45	13.6	17.2
Encourages but does not require tutoring	9	2.7	3.4
Requires tutoring	22	6.7	8.4
Missing response	69	20.8	



The differences in perceptions may reflect the awareness by the principals and teachers, but not the students, of the government prohibition of teachers providing private tutoring. Chapter 2 noted that teachers were commonly required to sign statements indicating that they would not engage in private tutoring. This was true among the sampled schools, with some using standard forms and another using wording devised by the school itself. Students may not have been aware of these matters, and may have been more likely to view tutoring as a normal part of life. In any case, the regulations were not always observed, even by teachers who had signed the forms. Principals recognised this fact, and some operated on a “don’t ask, don’t tell” basis in which it was more convenient to avoid than to confront the issue.

Also worth noting are some management challenges experienced by principals. One principal in the interviews highlighted the challenges of corruption when teachers disclosed school-based examination questions during tutoring sessions (see also Zobrist & McCormick 2013, p.10). The principal added that teachers who provided supplementary tutoring “acquire authority and power” which “creates problems and disruptions in school discipline”. Some teachers had pressured the principal to be assigned to particular classes, especially the ones approaching the Grade 11 examination pressures and ones containing students from prosperous families. Again, however, this observation must be balanced by recognition that such teachers were a minority. In the interviews, 33 teachers responded to the question whether they recommended their own students to receive tutoring. Almost all (32 of the 33 teachers) stated that they never did so, commonly adding that they would feel “guilty” to do so. One teacher elaborated:

We have never recommended. It is totally the students’ choice. If they think it is necessary for them, we have nothing to say about that. The other thing we won’t recommend students to go for private tuition is because parents will think that we do not want to do our jobs. For those rich students, even if we don’t recommend, they will go outside for private tuitions. But for those poor students, even if we recommend, they will not be able to go.

Principals no doubt understood the diversity among their teachers, and had to find ways to handle individual cases as well as general patterns. One principal employed peer pressure among his own teachers (Box 5.2).

**Box 5.2: Harnessing Peer Pressure to Minimise Corruption**

One principal interviewed during the research had a school-based strategy to handle the dangers of corruption that could arise from private tutoring. The principal recognised the official prohibition of private tuition, but understood why it remained common and felt that it could even have positive dimensions. To handle the challenges of corruption, the principal harnessed peer pressure.

*Interviewer:* In our data we found that some teachers providing tuition lost focus on their classroom teaching and that tuition also carries a tendency towards corruption. Have you witnessed this in your school?

*Principal:* Yes, these challenges are also evident in our school. We are all human.... When human beings have the same goal, they cooperate well and there will be unity. But when their agendas differ, all the negative aspects will come up.

When this appears in my school, I have to work hard on it. When I have five good teachers that give tuition class well and one teacher becomes corrupt, then these five have to team up and convince the corrupt teacher to repent. If we were to ignore the situation and let the corruption continue, it will spread. So in our school we try to tackle that from the beginning.

**5.4 Teachers' Professional Organisations**

Two professional organisations are relevant to this study, and their views will be considered in turn. One is the Myanmar Teachers' Federation (MTF), which is a national body affiliated to the global umbrella body for teachers' unions headquartered in Belgium, Education International (EI). The MTF was established in 2012, and has sections for higher education, basic education, monastic education and private education. The last-named includes private tutoring, and the MTF Executive Committee includes persons working for tutoring centres. The MTF is recognised by the Myanmar government, and its offices are on the campus of Yangon University, which is itself a government body. The MTF has brought teachers' voices to significant meetings convened by the Ministry of Education.

On the topic of private tutoring, the MTF does not have an official position. However, members of the Executive Committee interviewed for the present study provided valuable comments. On the one hand the MTF "asserts the right of teachers to teach freely", i.e. without bureaucratic

constraints and in diverse contexts. On the other hand, MTF officers have concerns about some features of private tutoring and particularly about situations in which teachers are receiving supplementary payment for extra tutoring to their existing students. Unlike some teachers' associations in other countries (see e.g. Bray & Kwo 2014, pp.56-57), the MTF does not have a code of practice on the matter. Officers felt that a code might be developed in the future, but "the time is not right" to embark on such a venture at the present time, given other priorities and the possible conflicts that might be encountered. Meanwhile, the MTF would like the quality of schooling to be developed to a point at which supplementary tutoring is not necessary. At the same time, officers do have concerns about the quality of tutoring in some settings, and would advocate for tutors to have professional qualifications in the same way that teachers in schools are expected to have such qualifications. One interviewed MTF officer additionally argued that the government should provide training to tutors in the same way that it does for teachers.

The second professional body relevant to this study is the Private Teachers' Association (PTA). This body has origins in 2011 when a committee was formed to serve members in Yangon, though aspired to have a nationwide presence (Yoe Pyay Pyit Aung 2016). The Association was mainly established as a social and welfare organisation, e.g. supporting members in crisis from health or in other challenges, but has also conducted professional roles such as comment on draft legislation for the private education sector. A particular focus has been securing permits to teach in private institutions, which requires a Green Card issued by the government. The PTA serves teachers in both private schools and private tutoring companies, and has advocated for eased restrictions on issue of Green Cards. When asked about the relationship with the MTF, the PTA officers interviewed for this study replied that links were cordial and mutually supportive – which indeed was the counterpart response to the same question when MTF personnel were asked about the PTA.

The PTA, like the MTF, recognises the need for regulations in the tutoring sector, but is also concerned that regulations should be realistic and implementable. To secure a Green Card, for example, PTA officers indicated that applicants must have either a Masters' degree or five years teaching experience of teaching – but they cannot (legally) get five years of teaching experience if they are not permitted to commence. Further,

the regulations state that tutorial centres should not teach more than three subjects, even though many students would like support in six subjects; and regulations also place geographic restrictions on tutorial centres, stating that a new centre cannot be opened within 200 metres of an existing centre, which would mean that a pair of tutorial centres wishing each to offer three subjects to make the total of six would not be able to operate adjacent to each other. The PTA officers also pointed out that the substantial fee for registration of a tutorial centre favoured large institutions and discriminated against small ones. In any case, they added, definitional ambiguities concerning tutorial centres allowed entrepreneurs with multiple branches to describe themselves as a single institution.

Related matters concerned the harsh penalties for teaching without a Green Card, namely three years in jail or a fine of 3,000,000 kyats. As one PTA member pointed out, tutors are helping the young generation to learn academic content more fully and more effectively, and as such it is unreasonable to treat them as if they would be doing something of extreme moral harm. As such, the PTA officers felt that a review of multiple dimensions of the regulations would be desirable. At the same time, they would welcome some forms of quality assurance such as regular inspection of tutorial centres in the same way that schools are regularly inspected.

### **5.5 Summary and Conclusion**

The skills, roles and attitudes of teachers are central to the operation of all education systems. Myanmar has many dedicated teachers, and the sample of Yangon teachers surveyed for this study was well qualified with university education. Chapter 2 mentioned the Myanmar Egress report entitled *Teachers' Voices* (Lall et al. 2013), and the data in the present chapter echo many dimensions of that report including that “[t]here is a lot of good practice in Myanmar schools” (p.3).

At the same time, teachers need to provide for their families despite salaries that are perceived to be low in relation to the cost of living. Nearly half of the teachers sampled in the quantitative survey indicated that they provided private tutoring, and many of the other teachers were sympathetic to the practice. Although government regulations prohibited teachers from providing private supplementary tutoring, many teachers continued to do so. The teachers' motives included desire to help their

students as well as to gain extra incomes, and significant proportions of teachers were willing to tutor low-income students free of charge. At the same time, some teachers perceived opportunities that could be manipulated for their personal gain. Principals were perceived by the majority of teachers to be discouraging of tutoring, but some teachers perceived their principals to be tolerant or even encouraging/requiring tutoring. These patterns reflect the tensions of daily ambiguity in practice amidst competing forces.

Teachers' professional organisations also felt the tensions, on the one hand upholding the integrity of the profession but at the same time supporting their members and recognising the need for teachers to receive incomes that were adequate for family support. They felt that tutoring provides benefits to society, and the interviewed managers and teachers of tutorial centres felt that they could be recognised as complementing schooling rather than competing with it.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the NESP Reforms call for behavioural change among school educators. The importance of mapping the reform targets must be accompanied by recognition of reality as reported by teachers and principals. A significant challenge for building change dynamics is to identify and address gaps between goals and reality. This study has captured some understanding of the undercurrents among various forces. In provision of tutoring, teachers are not solely accountable for classroom disparities between high and low achievers. A focus on relationships may shed light on an ecosystem of education within which teachers interact with diverse players. Parents are under peer pressure to subscribe to tutoring, which paradoxically creates more competitive pressure. Such competition even reaches beyond the target of public examinations, as manifested in the demand for advanced learning of subject matter, which generates problems of students' motivation to learn in a regular classroom and teachers' difficulties in classroom management. Even when tutoring has merit under normal circumstances as a support to address students' learning needs, excess demands with ambitious goals beyond the focus on learning needs can carry counter effect on classroom life. These demands may hamper students' natural learning curiosity, and undermine teachers' energy to serve in regular classrooms because they must also allocate time and energy to their extra tutoring. At worst, tutoring provision can be portrayed in a prison image that traps students from normal recreational

activities at weekends. A further threat comes with the vicious cycle of public education being undermined with decline in quality of teaching instead of advancing the changes for NESP Reforms.

In reviewing the complex relationships in flow of demand and supply for intensification of tutoring, the significance and meaning of education may be neglected when services of private tutoring become distant from a drive in supplementing school effort to achieve the goals of education. This report cautions against images of teachers as victims or problems, and calls for public attention to the drive behind the complexities. If the energy drive is not clearly located and given thorough collective attention from stakeholders in the educational ecosystem, teachers may remain an easy target to resolve the perpetuating problems. A quest for alternative practices may begin with community dialogues, such as those pursued in the two workshops for teachers and principals described in Chapter 3, during which stakeholders from various organisations converged on issues of code of conduct for quality of both schooling and tutoring, and of realistic regulations which can be implemented. Public participation in pursuing an understanding of the complex phenomenon can become a vantage point for desirable changes in protection of an educational ecosystem with focus on quality of education and schooling for public good.

## Chapter 6

# Policy Implications

Having presented key findings from the data, the final set of questions concerns the policy implications. This chapter is mainly concerned with government policy, especially at the national level, but also has relevance for management of schools and thus for the institutional level. As indicated in Chapter 3, initial findings on the scale and nature of private tutoring were taken to workshops for school principals, teachers, and other educational stakeholders for verification and discussion about policy implications. The chapter draws on these community dialogues as well as on wider international experiences.

The chapter commences with remarks about finance for education, particularly having in mind first teachers' salaries and second the balances between government and household financing. It then turns to issues of human capital and of parents' rights, including the right to choose to invest in the education of one's children. The third section focuses on teaching, learning and assessment, commenting on the nature of activities in schooling and the shadow sector and on the implications of the NESP's advocacy of reform. Then, turning more specifically to private tutoring by serving teachers, the fourth section considers policies at both system and school levels on teachers' provision of extra lessons. The fifth section considers policy frameworks for regulating private tutoring in the wider marketplace, and the final section summarises and concludes.

### 6.1 Financing the Education System

Among the teachers surveyed for this research, 91.1% indicated that their reason for providing private tutoring was "to supplement my income" (Table 5.1). The implication of this statement, confirmed in the interviews, was that teachers would be less likely to offer tutoring if their official salaries were higher. This proposition has some basis in evidence from other parts of the world. For example in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (China) where teachers' salaries are good, very few teachers provide private supplementary tutoring. The reason is on the one hand that they have less financial need, and on the other hand that society knows that they have less

financial need and thus would much disapprove of teachers appearing to be greedy. Similar observations apply for example in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore. However, it would be unrealistic to recommend the Myanmar government to pay teachers at anything approaching the levels of the Hong Kong SAR, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Singapore. Myanmar's economy may be improving, but cannot be expected to reach even the levels of middle-income countries in the near future.

Nevertheless, significant shifts have already been achieved. The National Education Strategic Plan (NESP – Myanmar 2016, p.231) indicated that proportions of finance for education had shifted from 31% government, 63% household and 6% external donor in 2009/10 to budgeted amounts of 66% government, 30% household and 5% external donor in 2013/14. This shift had been achieved through increased government recurrent budget allocations from 274,000 million kyats to 1,130,000 million kyats. The main component in the increased recurrent spending was a quadrupling between 2011/12 and 2015/16 of pay and allowances for teachers and civil servants, together with recruitment of new teachers. Related data showed not only that overall public expenditures had increased but that those in the education sector had increased faster than most other sectors (Hook et al. 2015, p.22). These shifts brought Myanmar closer to the average proportional government expenditures in members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In 2011/12, public spending on education in Myanmar formed only 0.7% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP); but by 2012/13 it had been raised to 1.6% and by 2013/14 to 2.1% (Myanmar 2016, p.234).

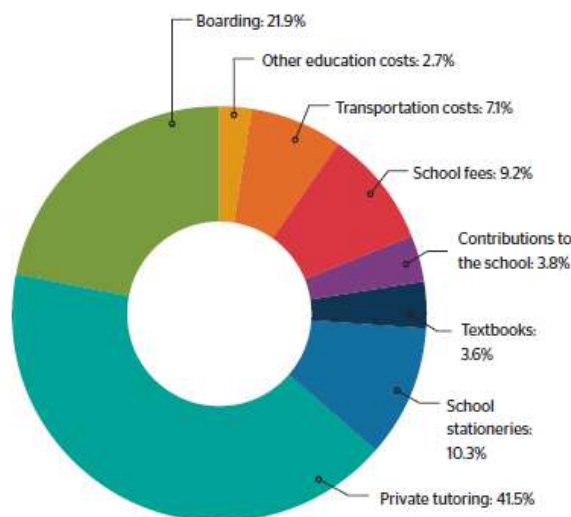
However, the NESP recognised that even with these increases, public spending on education remained considerably below the ASEAN average of approximately 3.6%. Further, as noted in Chapter 5, interviewed teachers felt that the improvements in their salaries had been eroded by inflation. A strong case can thus be made for further increases in salaries, perhaps accompanied by instructions that these increases have been designed to allow teachers to have decent incomes without providing tutoring. Some teachers might still go to the marketplace, which might be considered inevitable and perhaps acceptable at Myanmar's current level of development, but at least the authorities could use the salary increases as an instrument to reinforce the message that tutoring of students in the teachers' own schools – and especially the teachers' own students – is not acceptable. The increased financial



resources would of course require negotiation with other sectors, but a strong case can always be made for education.

Viewing the picture from the household side, the NESP presented figures on the composition of expenditures on education in 2009/10 (Figure 6.1). Private tutoring was by far the largest item, reportedly forming 41.5% of the total. Next in order of size were boarding (21.9%), school stationery (10.3%), school fees (9.2%), transportation (7.1%), contributions to the school (3.8%), and textbooks (3.6%). The NESP stated that many of the largest expenditure items had been taken over by the government, and the NESP authors therefore “assumed that household expenditure has significantly declined over the last few years and ... will continue to fall in the coming years with implementation of the free and compulsory education policy covering basic education” (Myanmar 2016, pp.238-239). However, this assumption of anticipated reduction seems questionable. First, the largest items – private tutoring and boarding – were not taken over by the government; and second, as incomes grow parents may be more willing to spend money on private tutoring in the hope of securing a competitive advantage for their children (see e.g. Box 4.2).

**Figure 6.1: Composition of Household Expenditures on Education, 2009/10**



Source: Myanmar (2016), p.239.

Further, even if the government succeeds in dissuading teachers from providing private supplementary lessons, such lessons will still be available in the marketplace from companies and other informal providers including university students – as in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and many other countries (Bray 2009; Bray & Lykins 2012). With such factors in mind, household expenditures on private tutoring are more likely to increase than to decrease.

## **6.2 Human Capital, Social Inequalities, and Parents' Rights**

Many people, with support from economic literature, view education as an investment in human capital (see e.g. Keeley 2007; Fitzsimons 2015; Johns et al. 2017). Viewed simplistically, this can be interpreted to imply that most, if not all, expenditures on education are an investment able to generate economic returns. However, little research has focused on this theme in the domain of shadow education, and policy makers should not assume that all shadow education contributes meaningfully to human capital (Liu & Bray 2017b). Thus, shadow education may subtract from the school system if students pay less attention during regular school hours. It may also subtract if teachers neglect their duties, either because they assume that all needy students receive tutoring or because they are themselves providing tutoring and pay more attention to these market-oriented activities than to their school work. Further, students may even absent themselves from school, especially in the final grades, because they prefer to go to tutoring (Box 6.1).

More positively, governments may feel that shadow education does contribute to learning achievement, and this has certainly been asserted by various interviewees. As such, the case can still be made that some forms of tutoring do enhance human capital and in turn contribute to economic productivity in a way that has also been argued elsewhere (see e.g. Byun 2012; Byun & Park 2014). Thus, the labour and time invested in tutoring is not necessarily misspent.

Nevertheless, private tutoring has social as well as economic impact. It is obvious that families with more money can purchase greater amounts and better qualities of private tutoring than can families with lower incomes. This ability to invest maintains and exacerbates social stratification. At one stage the Korean authorities felt that shadow education was both contributing to social inequalities and imposing a heavy study burden on generations of students. In 1980, the Korean

government even prohibited private supplementary tutoring, making it illegal either to supply or receive (Bray 2009, pp.47-54). Yet this prohibition could not be enforced. Much tutoring simply went underground – and did so at a higher price, which further exacerbated social inequalities. The policy was also challenged from the perspective of human rights. In 2000 the law courts declared the policy unconstitutional, meaning that the government could not prevent families from spending money on supplementary education for their children.

The lesson from this experience for Myanmar and other countries is that supplementary education will always exist: it cannot be prevented, and ambitious parents with economic resources will always seek ways to promote the life prospects of their children. Further, the interconnections promoted by globalisation make societies more competitive than they used to be; and economic reforms in Myanmar will deliver increasing resources so that families are no longer operating at just survival level but can also afford extras including supplementary tutoring. In turn, allied to the remarks made above, the marketplace will respond to demand and perhaps stimulate it further.

#### **Box 6.1: Empty Classrooms**

Faced by a problem of absenteeism, in part because students prefer to skip school classes in order to go to tutoring, the government sets a minimum attendance requirement of (only) 75%. But this minimum becomes difficult to enforce as the Grade 11 matriculation examination approaches. As one principal explained, teachers are willing to teach but "no students are in the classroom.... Students only rely on tuitions, and even when they come to school, they will tell the teachers not to teach them."

When asked to explain how the school managed the situation, the principal indicated that in some respects the school complied:

We divide the students into two groups: a group who are doing well with their studies and a group who have difficulties with their studies. We have to allow the absenteeism of some students who seem good with their studies as they want to study at tuitions.

The principal stressed that all teachers had to attend regularly, even when only a few students were in the class. However, the principal recognised that the situation discouraged teachers who felt that the tutorial classes were valued more than their own.

Nevertheless, the above remarks about the marketplace do not necessarily involve teachers who are currently employed in schools. Non-school providers of tutoring may take teachers (and especially good teachers, with strong reputations) away from the schools, but it is rare for marketplace providers in Korea (and other countries, such as Japan and Singapore) to have on their payrolls teachers who are simultaneously employed in schools. Assumptions about education as an investment in human capital must take account of the complex interplay of actors in the broader educational environment. The Myanmar government can and should continue to pursue policies on the extent to which school teachers provide private supplementary tutoring; and separately it can and should have policies about commercial providers in the marketplace.

### **6.3 Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Especially in the interviews, many stakeholders made pertinent comments about the nature of teaching, learning, and assessment both in the schools and in the shadow sector. Remarks included critique of rote learning and excessively teacher-centred instruction, in part because of the roles of examinations. The Grade 11 matriculation examination was observed to have a particularly strong backwash effect because of its high-stakes implications for post-secondary studies and future life chances. The impact of the examinations at Grades 9 and 5, and of the Chapter End Tests, was ameliorated by the policy of automatic promotion. Shadow education was in particular demand when students realised that they had not secured enough knowledge and/or skills for the public examinations. Yet many teachers were critical of the automatic promotion policy which, they said, reduced incentives for students to study diligently and added to diversity in the pace of learning in their classrooms. The desire for help from study guides also revealed gaps between teaching and learning in school and also power relationships, as illustrated by one student: “You do not dare to ask the teacher when you do not understand something. With a study guide, you can talk to each other like friends.” An overview of teaching, learning and assessment from the perspectives of both teachers and students can shed light on the shared sense of helplessness.

The NESP (Myanmar 2016, p.129), indicated that the government was committed to improving the quality of education as an integral part of wider reforms. It added that a key focus was “a move away from an

assessment and examination system focused on the accurate repetition of acquired content knowledge to a more balanced education system that assesses student learning progress against national learning standards related to child educational development and the skills they will need for lifelong learning". The nature of assessment is certainly a key, and the NESP also recognised constraints caused by the Chapter End Tests, which had been introduced to secure uniformity and structure but which "encourage rote learning and short-term memorisation" (p.131).

In this connection, one of the full-time tutors interviewed for the present study applauded the principles of the child-centred teaching, but felt a need for compromise because the approach demanded more time. He added that he had to "focus on helping students to get high score in the exam and to finish teaching a quota of lessons that is required for students to be able take the Chapter End Tests at school". As such, his provision was indeed shadow education. Nevertheless, he did have more flexibility than the teachers at school, who were required to follow the precise order of lesson-units in the textbooks. By contrast, as explained by one teacher, tutors could adjust the order:

For example, in tuition for biology they will choose to teach units 5, 7, 10 and 12 first because if the students master these four units the students can be sure of achieving the passing mark of 40. So tuition will start teaching from the back, and no inspectors come and check them and tell them not to teach backward.

This teacher felt that the tutors in effect had some sort of unfair advantage and that "school teaching will always be one step behind the tuition as long as teachers have to follow the system such as teaching manual". Thus, in the teacher's perception the needed reforms were not just in the system of assessment and Chapter End Tests but also in the flexibility that could be granted to school teachers. Such flexibility could be not only in the sequencing of lessons but also in the types of materials used for classes.

An added challenge to teaching and learning, as mentioned by teachers in the workshops, was the requirement to cover the curriculum with insufficient school hours, while feeling overloaded with non-teaching duties. Teachers lamented the declining quality of learning and examination results for which they were held responsible, but felt already fully stretched. A corollary was the decline of school attendance among

advanced learners who sought private tutoring. As reported by one student: “Clever students don’t attend the class. Some students take tuition in the morning. So, they are not able to go to school.”

A further challenge arose from the medium of instruction. Chapter 2 noted that since promulgation of the 2014 National Education Law, instruction in middle and high schooling has been permitted in English or Myanmar or a combination of both, but that the textbooks and examinations had remained in English and even the teaching had remained in English in some schools because it was perceived to be more prestigious and better connected with the outside world. A member of the NEPC interviewed for the present study explained that because all textbooks have remained in English, both students and teachers struggle. This, he added, “is one of the reasons that leads to rote learning in which students memorise everything that they have been taught for the exam”; and indeed “if you ask teachers to write down their opinions regarding the lesson in English, they cannot do it”.

In any case, even the teachers who do have competence in English face the constraints of traditions in what one principal called “parrot learning”. This principal was a chemistry teacher, and lamented that students just tried to memorise information instead of trying to understand it. The examination format, she added, was both cause and effect:

If the format of the exam question is changed just a little bit, students do not know how to answer the question. For instance, I can’t even change sodium to potassium in the chemistry exam question. If I change the word from sodium chloride to potassium chloride, the students fail to solve that question.

This principal did admit that some teachers did not even try hard, instead just accepting the constraints and treating their work more as a job than a vocation. This, she added, was among the reasons why many students sought tutoring. “Most students,” she stated, “perceive that school teaching is inadequate”, and that many even looked down on school teachers. “There is a reason [for this situation]: it is true that some teachers do not care about their children’s learning and they teach students out of obligation”. As indicated earlier, such statements are nevertheless accompanied by general concern about contextual constraints which hamper teachers’ motivation. These patterns underlie

the cause-effect cycles between performance and morale in an appeal for support to teachers in their professional commitments.

The observations also raise broader questions about the implication that tutors in the marketplace may be more effective in facilitating learning. Of course the competence and diligence of tutors also vary, but the remarks about teachers' motivation show that the issues of tutoring are embedded in a much wider picture (see also Myo Myint 2015; Myo Win 2017). The new curricula for the kindergarten-plus-12-grades system, introduced following the 2014 National Education Law and implemented progressively one grade at a time, aspire to change traditions and will eventually reach the upper-middle and high schools. Nevertheless reforms as systematic changes, albeit clarity in intentions, are always slow and complex, as having to identify and address pivotal points for changes and requiring cultural shifts not only for teachers and students but also for families and even employers.

Meanwhile, the reality is that shadow education is not only ingrained but in many respects consolidating. When asked in interviews and workshops whether they expected shadow education in the future to expand, stay the same or decline, some respondents felt that it would decline because schools would become stronger and shadow education would become less necessary. However, others predicted that it would remain the same or expand because social competition would be at least as vigorous as before and more opportunities in the marketplace would become available. This indeed does reflect patterns elsewhere: shadow education is strong in countries with strong education systems such as China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Singapore as well as in countries with weaker systems such as Bangladesh, Cambodia and India. These observations again take commentary to ways to regulate the shadow education sector, because it will not simply disappear even if the quality of mainstream schooling improves.

#### **6.4 Regulating Private Tutoring Provided by Serving Teachers**

As noted in Chapter 2, the government has fierce regulations about private tutoring delivered by teachers. At least on paper, the penalties for infringement are draconian: three years in jail, or a fine of 300,000 kyats, or both. In many schools, including the ones covered by the present

research, teachers have been asked at the beginning of each academic year to sign declarations that they will not provide private tutoring. One principal in the sample for this research required teachers to write out the statement by hand rather than just asking them to sign pre-printed statements. Yet even in these situations, some teachers still provided private tutoring. In many cases the provision was to students from other schools, but in some cases it was to students from their own schools and even from their own classes.

Among the reasons why the penalties had not been enforced was that they were too extreme. Chapter 2 noted that the previous government had made a gesture of crackdown in 2006 (i.e. over a decade before the conduct of the present research), and that in 2016 five teachers in Mandalay Region had been transferred from urban to rural schools as a punishment for providing private tutoring. Nevertheless, overall the teachers and other stakeholders felt that the sanctions were just paper threats. Some interviewees suggested that one reason was that the government would face a strong political backlash if the regulations were enforced with the harsh punishments that the regulations envisaged. One interviewee highlighted patterns of bribery which in effect created their own equilibrium, and added that “That’s why people and government are afraid to touch any parts of the system” (Box 4.1).

In any case given that demand for private tutoring will not evaporate, and given that teachers feel underpaid and thus needing to seek (and feeling justified in seeking) extra incomes, it would seem that a wiser approach might be to manage dimensions of supply by teachers rather than prohibit that supply altogether. Thus, the authorities might consider differentiated views on teachers providing tutoring:

- to their own students,
- to other students in their schools, and
- to students from other schools.

As noted previous chapters, the first situation is particularly problematic because it can raise dangers of conflict of interest: teachers may feel tempted deliberately to reduce the content of regular lessons in order to promote demand for supplementary ones. Also, issues of favouritism may arise if teachers give preference to the students who have received their supplementary lessons. The second situation is not quite so problematic, but does raise issues particularly when systems of mutual



referral are in place with teachers sending students to each other on a reciprocal basis. The third situation is perhaps the least problematic. Students already know that they can go to the marketplace to find tutors, and if teachers are also in the marketplace then at least the students gain access to trained personnel. Ironically, the marketplace is also indirectly helping the government by supplementing the teachers' salaries and perhaps therefore retaining them in the profession. A similar observation on this dimension has been made in Cambodia (Bray et al. 2016).

Should the government decide to strengthen its resolve to reduce or eliminate the practice of teachers tutoring students in their own schools, then a major arena for action should be the schools themselves. The research found a widespread perspective that schools are at the bottom of the chain and that policies should be set and enforced at the government level. However, much can be achieved at the school level where teachers, students and families know each other as individuals rather than as anonymous categories. Thus, school principals, senior teachers and members of school committees can create channels to explain to teachers, students and families why the practice is problematic. The communication with families may be especially important, since teachers are commonly pressed by parents to provide private tutoring. Chapter 4 pointed out the parents interviewed for this study saw more strongly the benefits rather than the risks of having teachers tutoring their children. Improved awareness on this theme will come from joint ownership of the problems – as indeed was evident in the pair of workshops organised by the present research team to discuss preliminary findings.<sup>1</sup> Then if a school policy of prohibition is discussed and agreed, it is much more likely to be followed when the various actors are aware that they would be exposed to their peers. Box 5.2 in Chapter 5 recounted ways in which one principal harnessed peer pressure to tackle potential corruption issues among teachers, and Box 6.2 highlights a complementary strategy from a different school which shows the value of an autonomous initiative at the school level.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 3, Section 3.4.

### **Box 6.2: Recognising Realities and Securing Assurances**

This study has confirmed the common knowledge that many serving teachers provide supplementary tutoring despite official prohibition. School principals recognise the realities, and devise their own coping strategies. One explained:

If teachers plan to provide tuitions, I will check with them where, who and why. Do they provide tuitions in response to parents' requests? If yes, I ask teachers to make a mutual agreement with parents that teachers are providing tuitions out of parents' requests. I told them frankly that if something happens at the end and parents complain about teachers, they will be the one who will lose their job.

I also tell the teachers clearly that if they provide tuitions to students, they should teach them well and must not share the exam questions or subtly discriminate between the students.... They must not omit any lessons in their school teaching intentionally for the sake of tuitions. If they dare to violate the rules, do it but I will make sure they bear the consequences.

What I did was ask them to provide three sets of exam questions before the semester exam. I randomly check with individual students from different classrooms if they have learned all the topics from the three sets of exam questions. If not, I ask the teachers why they omitted the specific topic for this class.... Teachers must teach all the students the same and teach well. They must not omit some parts of teaching because they want children to attend their tuitions. I try to act explicitly so that there is no problem regarding this aspect of tuition in my school.

## **6.5 Regulating Private Tutoring in the Marketplace**

The wider marketplace for private tutoring has not to date received so much attention in Myanmar because it has not reached the scale of other countries. However, rising incomes from economic growth are likely to promote this marketplace. Already significant development has become visible, and the trajectory is likely to become stronger as entrepreneurs identify opportunities. The commercial supply of tutoring not only caters for existing demand but also stimulates further demand because families see the availability of services and note that their peers are already taking advantage of those services. Many commercial providers are small-scale, but experience in China and elsewhere suggests that in due course large companies may be established with branches in multiple locations. Further, with the international opening of Myanmar's economy the likelihood increases of cross-border operations with companies that are

headquartered elsewhere operating branches in Myanmar on either a direct or a franchised basis.

Among the distinctive features of educational provision in Myanmar is the role of boarding institutions. Many of these institutions in Yangon commenced as supplementary organisations catering for students who were enrolled in schools during the day time. With the evolution of legislation, some of these boarding institutions registered as private schools in which students could register instead of attending public schools rather than in addition to attending public schools. The present research has not examined the boarding tutorial institutions in detail, but indeed they might deserve closer investigation. Future research might also review the range of other forms of commercial provision.

Meanwhile review of regulations elsewhere (Bray & Kwo 2014) points out that the policy measures can focus separately on the business and the educational sides of commercial enterprises. The business side includes such domains as:

- *Accounting and taxation*: Do the enterprises keep clear accounts, and do they pay tax according to official procedures?
- *Contracts*: Do employees and clients have clear and appropriate contracts?
- *Health and safety*: Do the premises have appropriate toilets, fire escapes, etc.?
- *Advertising*: Are advertisements honest and acceptable within social norms?

These domains would likely be addressed not by the Ministry of Education but by the Ministry of Commerce and its affiliates.

On the educational side, matters may be more complex. Categories for consideration may include:

- *Qualifications of tutors*. Stakeholders around the world commonly suggest that governments should set minimum qualifications for tutors and should police enterprises to ensure that these requirements are followed. However, the qualities of good tutors may differ from those of good teachers in school settings, and no formal provision exists in Myanmar for training tutors alongside the provision for training teachers. In any case, some tutors may develop great talent through

experience, individual initiative and peer support within entrepreneurial teams (see Box 6.3). It would seem unreasonable and also wasteful of talent to prevent such people from undertaking beneficial tutorial work in which they are very effective and for which both the tutors and their students gain much satisfaction.

- *Curriculum.* Legislation for private schools serving Myanmar nationals requires institutions to cover at least the core curriculum set out by the Ministry of Education; and supplementary institutions that copy the core curriculum are indeed shadow bodies. However, it seems reasonable to permit supplementary institutions also to focus on domains that are either different from or are extended beyond those of the core. Thus, they might address sports, music, minority languages, religion and other domains which receive little or no emphasis in schools, and they might cover advanced mathematics, literature, cultural studies and other domains that go beyond those addressed in schools. Recognising this diversity, the government might be wise to avoid a ‘one size fits all’ approach.
- *Prices.* Stakeholders commonly advocate ceilings on prices in order to avoid the exclusion of medium- and low-income groups. However again the matter is not simple. First, the supplementary sector is much more diverse than the school sector in content, premises, hours of operation, durations of different curriculum packages, quality of tutors, etc., so uniform prices cannot easily be set. Second, even if they are set, entrepreneurs would likely find ways to evade the regulations – and families might comply with these evasions because they want to satisfy their own needs and aspirations in the competitive environment. And third, the Myanmar

**Box 6.3: Talented Tutors, Trained and Tested in the Marketplace**

When interviewing tutors in the commercial sector, the research team met individuals who were passionate and talented. Some did not have formal training, but were clearly strong professionals. They had learned from experience and were validated by their clients in the market-place. In any case, formal teacher education would have been oriented towards schooling rather than towards tutoring, and it is doubtful whether possession of a formal teaching qualification would have made them even better.

This theme was discussed with officers from the Private Teachers' Association (PTA). On the one hand these personnel desired legitimacy for their profession; but on the other hand very reasonably they did not want constraints from a teacher training system that was oriented towards schooling and made assumptions that were not necessarily valid or relevant for the type of work in which they were engaged.

Indeed a case can be made for the government to leave such matters to the marketplace, though perhaps with mechanisms through schools, community bodies and the media to help parents to assess the quality of the services that they receive. Meanwhile, the PTA officers envisaged that a future role for their Association might include experience-sharing among members for professional development. As such, the marketplace could have its own mechanisms for enhancing the expertise, ethics and other appropriate professional orientations of tutors.

authorities do not have the necessary personnel for enforcement – and arguably have more important priorities. It is perhaps significant that even the Hong Kong government, which operates in a relatively transparent and well-resourced environment, has explicitly decided to avoid trying to regulate prices in the supplementary tutoring sector (Bray & Kwo 2014, p.37).

Nevertheless, recognition of these constraints does not mean that the matters should be ignored by the authorities. The government should at least collect basic statistics to monitor the commercial sector, and should include consideration of its role in activities such as implementation of the NESP and in preparation of updates. As noted, the existence and operation of the sector has major implications for social inequalities, for academic achievements and burdens on students, and for the operation of schools. Further, the government can encourage self-regulation of the sector through professional bodies. Such self-regulation

has been evident in Australia, for example, where the Australian Tutoring Association (ATA) has issued a code of ethics to which it expects its members to adhere (Bray & Kwo 2014, pp.71-77). Comparable initiatives have evident in China and Japan (Zhang & Yamato 2018, p.329).

A further benefit of government monitoring is that the information provided by the authorities can enable consumers to protect their rights in the marketplace, and to make better informed choices for the benefit of their children. In this respect, the media can play a valuable role. Newspapers, television and radio have long been important, and in contemporary times websites and related internet content play an increasingly pertinent role. This consumer awareness and empowerment may have relevance not only to checks and balances on the work of commercial enterprises but also to that of informal providers such as university students and others who operate as guides.

## **6.6 Partnership for Research and Development**

The vibrant discussion of findings during the knowledge-exchange workshops (see Section 3.4) involved a spread of educational stakeholders on the questions whether schooling is enough and how school educators can improve schooling so that there is less need for private tutoring. Each community dialogue also confronted concerns that cannot be dealt with independently by individual sectors. For instance, teachers' perceptions of limited flexibility to decide on content and sequencing of teaching reflect a system that to some extent demands mechanical adherence to schedules and sequences. At the same time, this sense of inhibition may also call attention to teacher education approaches that may not have prepared teachers to tackle gaps between multiple demands. The issues are complex. Instead of making teachers solely accountable for the fact that students seek private tutoring (and also themselves providing tutoring), the public should pay some collective attention to interrelationships between sectors and ensure that teachers receive needed support.

Amid the waves of curriculum reform and the upgrading of teacher education to four-year degree programmes with innovative pedagogies, the proliferation of private tutoring is like an elephant in the room. Every educational stakeholder has a role that may not have been fulfilled, leading to a paradoxical contribution to feeding the elephant. Yet when talking about the related problems from their own angles, each may

behave like a blind person feeling the elephant. Quality of education, as the focus for reform initiatives, can be undermined by the elephant that occupies space in the system, hampering equity, quality and effectiveness of public schooling. Yet, the elephant is not to be blamed, just as cycles of cause-effect ambiguity unsurprisingly fuel the demand for private tutoring to reduce the gap between rote-learning in an over-crowded curriculum and the examination-driven mindset of teachers and students.

Dialogues can assist mutual hearing for a shared concern that something needs to be done about the problems. Voices in the workshops can be summarised in a convergent awareness of and commitment to a need for joint accountability. In the words of one participant: “It is not easy to bring about changes for healthy education; yet if we do not try, there will be no real change as desired by the public.” Proposed policy changes can stand a better chance of success if grounded in a collective understanding and ownership of the reality as socially co-constructed. Research can contribute to community inquiry and involvement of collective and individual reflections on the prospect of changes. Such contributions were evidenced in the written responses before the conclusion of the pair of workshops with schools and other stakeholders in Yangon during which the draft report was presented, and then during the group discussions of the Policy Seminar in the Ministry of Education, Naypyitaw.<sup>2</sup> This study has provided observations about the significance of a mode of partnership for research and development that involves voices of diverse educational stakeholders to identify and converge on salient social causes (e.g. for teachers and students to achieve a learning culture beyond competition). Problems, when redefined in public quest, can motivate changes in individual practices with more alertness in claim of responsibilities and quest for positive relationships to cultivate a learning environment, as well expressed by one principal:

We have to make changes in the learning environment of students to attract students’ interest. Students should have fun learning in schools. Instead of complaining about the negative impact of private tuition, we should focus on how to attract children to come to schools. First, we have to motivate teachers to engage parents in their children’s processes of learning, instead of helplessly putting

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<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 3, Section 3.4.

up with their criticisms which may indicate their desire to participate in their children's learning... Now the new curriculum has [been launched], and I believe that we can make changes in school learning if we can create a learning environment.

The change of mindset can be made possible with alternative experiences. In practical terms, school principals, as team leaders for teachers' professional practice and as mediators for policy implementation, can play salient roles in initiating dialogues on partnership and sharing of desirable changes to strengthen the quality of schooling. Partnership for research and development is desirable and feasible when accompanied by creation of space for educators to converge in further inquiries to cultivate developmental practices.

## 6.7 Summary and Conclusion

The NESP (Myanmar 2016, p.10) pointed out that: "In Myanmar society education is traditionally valued as a key determinant for social mobility and it is widely recognised as a critical building block for nation building, national unity and sustainable development." This statement has much pertinence for the present study. Indeed education – including shadow education – is a key determinant for social mobility; but the ways and extent to which shadow education is a critical building block for nation building, national unity and sustainable development are more questionable.

The Introduction to this study pointed out that private supplementary tutoring is not a new phenomenon in Myanmar. However, it appears to have gathered strength and arguably deserves much more attention from policy makers. On the positive side, private supplementary tutoring can contribute to learning and to human capital formation; but it also maintains and exacerbates social inequalities, and has a backwash on schooling.

Experience elsewhere suggests that private supplementary tutoring will never be removed, so the main policy questions are how to steer it. Most stakeholders would agree that the baseline should be to ensure that public schools have sufficient quality so that shadow education is not a necessity – i.e. that reasonably diligent students can do well without it. Comparative analysis does show that even countries with good education systems have shadow education sectors (see e.g. Bray 2011; Hallsén &



Karlsson 2018). Nevertheless, patterns are arguably less problematic in those countries than in lower-income countries such as Myanmar. This research has contributed to knowledge exchange dialogues that have recognised the social forces in an educational ecosystem and the blurring of boundaries with schooling. With a confrontation of the presumed judgements of deficiencies in formal schooling, stakeholders in countries of all types can collectively identify challenges for better understanding of the differentiated roles of public and private providers and move towards shared ownership of responsibilities. In the longer run, policy development can secure stronger public acceptance and support through continual flow of informal dialogues that can gradually shape stakeholders' partnership relationships.

A particular focus for the present study has been on the roles of teachers. The Myanmar authorities have long been critical of the practice of in-service teachers providing private tutoring, and have had regulations with fierce sanctions. Given that these regulations have not been effective, arguably the situation needs to be reviewed. Teachers reasonably desire their salaries to be raised to a level at which they would no longer need to secure supplementary incomes, and moves can be made in that direction. To complement overall guidelines, it would be desirable for school educators to be responsible for policy decisions at the school level that focus on equity and quality in education. It may be worth considering prohibition of teachers tutoring their own students but more tolerance of teachers tutoring students from other schools and perhaps even the students of other teachers within their own schools. Such policies would then bring the hidden practices into the open for minimising corruption risks, and enable practices to be steered more easily.

The chapter has also focused on policies for commercial providers of private tutoring. This sector is relatively modest in Yangon compared with such cities as Bangkok, Hong Kong and Seoul; but it is likely to grow during the coming years, and again it would be desirable to steer the sector during its formative years rather than to try to take remedial action when it is too late. Government policies may cover educational dimensions as well as the business side of the operations, but the latter are perhaps easier to address. In any case, some goals are best achieved by encouraging self-regulation in the industry and by empowering consumers. Achievement of these goals will be facilitated by awareness-

raising among parents, students and other members of the public. Media outlets can be utilised alongside official channels to achieve this goal, primarily through information dissemination but also by promoting partnerships. Indeed an overarching recommendation of this study is that the authorities take the whole theme ‘out of the shadows’, collecting further data on it and arranging for discussions in multiple forums so that different stakeholders can understand the implications and identify appropriate ways forward.

The fourth of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved by the United Nations in 2015 is about “inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all”. Education can be seen as an ecosystem in which all species are related to each other in lifelong learning (Bray & Kobakhidze 2015). The species include students, teachers, principals, parents, administrators and policy makers. Attention to multiple voices permits inclusiveness to improve understanding of situations. Collective inquiry is itself part of a change process that can lead to improvements for younger generations in a sustainable future.

# Appendices

## *Appendix 1: Student Survey (Instrument)*

Many students in Myanmar and around the world attend private tuition. This survey will help us learn more about why students receive tuition, who teaches these classes, how they teach them, and why.

*By private tuition, we mean paid supplementary tuition in academic subjects that you also study in school. Private tuition that we are interested in can be individual, small or large group and can take place in students' homes, teachers' homes, in boarding schools or in any other appropriate location.*

The survey should take approximately thirty minutes to complete. This research was approved by the Ministry of Education of Myanmar for the use in your school. It is voluntary, which means you can choose not to complete the survey without any penalty. The survey is completely anonymous and confidential. We will not share any personal information about you or your school with others. In our research reports, anonymous names will be used to describe the schools to disguise their location. After completion of our research report, the original surveys will be destroyed within one year to ensure the security of the information. For more information about this survey, you may contact Yangon University of Education at 951526373 or the University of Hong Kong Research Ethics Committee at +852 2241 5267.

### **Background**

1. What is your gender?      <sub>1</sub> Male      <sub>2</sub> Female
2. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Which Standard (Grade) are you now?  
<sub>1</sub> Standard 8      <sub>2</sub> Standard 10
4. Which class are you in?  
<sub>1</sub> Class A    <sub>4</sub> Class D    <sub>7</sub> Class G    <sub>10</sub> Class J  
<sub>2</sub> Class B    <sub>5</sub> Class E    <sub>8</sub> Class H    <sub>11</sub> Class K  
<sub>3</sub> Class C    <sub>6</sub> Class F    <sub>9</sub> Class I    <sub>12</sub> Other (Class \_\_\_\_\_)
5. What is your ethnicity? (Please write) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you have siblings?  
<sub>1</sub> Yes                      <sub>2</sub> No

If you indicated **Yes**, please indicate how many siblings do you have?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the highest level of education that your **mother** has completed?

- <sub>1</sub> Secondary school (basic education)
- <sub>2</sub> Undergraduate degree
- <sub>3</sub> Postgraduate diploma
- <sub>4</sub> Master degree
- <sub>5</sub> Doctoral degree
- <sub>6</sub> Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the highest level of education that your **father** has completed?

- <sub>1</sub> Secondary school (basic education)
- <sub>2</sub> Undergraduate degree
- <sub>3</sub> Postgraduate diploma
- <sub>4</sub> Master degree
- <sub>5</sub> Doctoral degree
- <sub>6</sub> Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Have you received private tuition in the past 12 months?

- <sub>1</sub> Yes
- <sub>2</sub> No

10. Why **did or didn't you** take private supplementary tutoring in the past 12 month? (can tick more than one)

**I took some, because:**

- <sub>1</sub> I want to learn subjects better.
- <sub>2</sub> I want to improve my examination scores.
- <sub>3</sub> My parents chose it for me.
- <sub>4</sub> My teacher asked me to secure some tutoring.
- <sub>5</sub> To prepare for the national examinations.
- <sub>6</sub> To follow my friends who take tuition.
- <sub>7</sub> Other

**I did not take any, because:**

- <sub>1</sub> I don't have time.
- <sub>2</sub> I don't have the money.
- <sub>3</sub> My parents don't want me to do it.
- <sub>4</sub> I am already doing well enough in school
- <sub>5</sub> It doesn't seem worth the money.
- <sub>6</sub> Not many of my friends are doing it.
- <sub>7</sub> Other

11. **What types** of tuition did you receive in the past 12 months? (can tick more than one)

- <sub>1</sub> Individual tuition

- 2 Small group (number of students in group: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 3 Large group tuition (number of students in group: \_\_\_\_\_)
- 4 Boarding tuition
- 5 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 None

12. **Where** do you usually receive tuition? (can tick more than one)

- 1 In my home
- 2 In teachers' homes
- 3 At school
- 4 At tutoring centre
- 5 At boarding school
- 6 Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 None

13. **When** do you usually receive tuition? (can tick more than one)

- 1 Weekends during the school year
- 2 Weekdays during the school year
- 3 Holidays
- 4 Other time (please indicate) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 None

14. For which subject(s) do you receive tuition? (Tick all that apply.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Myanmar     | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Physics                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 English     | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Chemistry                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Mathematics | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Biology                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Geography   | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Economics                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 History     | <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Other (Please state: _____) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Science     | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 None                        |

15. How many hours each week during school year (term time) do you attend tuition in each subject? (If you do not take tuition, please write zero)

Myanmar	_____Hours	Physics	_____Hours
English	_____Hours	Chemistry	_____Hours
Mathematics	_____Hours	Biology	_____Hours
Geography	_____Hours	Economics	_____Hours
History	_____Hours	Science	_____Hours
Science	_____Hours	(please state:___)	

16. Who are your tutors? (tick all that apply)

- 1 My own teacher from school

- <sub>2</sub> Another teacher in my school
- <sub>3</sub> A teacher from a different school
- <sub>4</sub> A university student
- <sub>5</sub> A university teacher
- <sub>6</sub> An external teacher (retired teacher, freelance teacher, etc.)
- <sub>7</sub> Others
- <sub>8</sub> I do not have a tutor

17. For the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In my tuition class, the tutor follows the school curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. In my tuition class, the tutor uses different textbooks from the school ones.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. In my tuition class, the tutor mainly focuses on exam questions.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. In my tuition class, the tutor usually assigns homework.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. In my tuition class, the tutor mainly focuses on exercises.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

18. Which of the following best describes the way your principal feels about tuition? He/She:

- <sub>1</sub> Discourages tuition
- <sub>2</sub> Requires tuition
- <sub>3</sub> Encourages but does not require tuition
- <sub>4</sub> Tolerates tuition.

19. To what extent do you agree that private supplementary tutoring has improved your ....? (Tick ONE each)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Examination grades	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. Relationship with school teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. Confidence in examinations	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. Confidence in school academic performance	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. Learning strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

20. Do you have a part-time job?

<sub>1</sub> Yes (state the job) \_\_\_\_\_ <sub>2</sub> No, **because** \_\_\_\_\_  
**because** \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Support the family's needs | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub> Family income is sufficient          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> Gain pocket money          | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub> Parents want me to focus on studying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub> Gain job experience        | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub> I want to focus on studying          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub> Other _____                | <input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub> Other _____                          |

21. How much does your family spend on average **each month** on tuition in all subjects? \_\_\_\_\_ Kyats.  
 (Please provide your best estimate.)

22. Please comment on the extent to which you feel that this expenditure is a burden for your family (tick only one)

<sub>1</sub> Not at all a burden  
<sub>2</sub> A moderate burden  
<sub>3</sub> A heavy burden

**Thank you very much for your time!**

Appendix 2: Teacher Survey (Instrument)

[Introductory explanation same as for student survey]

**Background**

1. What is your gender?      <sub>1</sub> Male      <sub>2</sub> Female
2. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What is your ethnicity? (please write) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have children?  
<sub>1</sub> Yes                      <sub>2</sub> No  
 If you circled Yes, how many? (please indicate number) \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?  
<sub>1</sub> Secondary school (basic education)  
<sub>2</sub> Undergraduate degree  
<sub>3</sub> Postgraduate diploma  
<sub>4</sub> Master degree  
<sub>5</sub> Doctoral degree  
<sub>6</sub> Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many years have you been teaching?  
<sub>1</sub> 1-2years                  <sub>4</sub> 11-15years  
<sub>2</sub> 3-5years                  <sub>5</sub> ≥16years  
<sub>3</sub> 6-10years
7. Which standard(s) in this school do you teach? (tick all that apply)  
<sub>1</sub> Standard 8  
<sub>2</sub> Standard 10  
<sub>3</sub> Other (Please state: \_\_\_\_\_)
8. What subject(s) do you teach in school? (Tick all that apply)  
<sub>1</sub> Myanmar                      <sub>7</sub> Physics  
<sub>2</sub> English                          <sub>8</sub> Chemistry  
<sub>3</sub> Mathematics                  <sub>9</sub> Biology  
<sub>4</sub> Geography                      <sub>10</sub> Economics  
<sub>5</sub> History                          <sub>11</sub> Other (Please state: \_\_\_\_\_)  
<sub>6</sub> Science                          <sub>12</sub> None
9. Do you offer Tuition?  
<sub>1</sub> Yes                      <sub>2</sub> No



10. How many hours each week during school year (term time) do you offer tuition in each subject? \_\_\_\_\_ total hours.  
(If you do not offer tuition, please write zero)

Myanmar	_____ Hours	Physics	_____ Hours
English	_____ Hours	Chemistry	_____ Hours
Mathematics	_____ Hours	Biology	_____ Hours
Geography	_____ Hours	Economics	_____ Hours
History	_____ Hours	Other (please	_____ Hours
Science	_____ Hours	state: _____)	

**Reasons for Tuition**

11. (a) If you are offering tuition, please indicate how much each of the following factors influences your decision to do so. (Tick ONE across each item)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. To supplement my income.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. To help students learn better.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. To satisfy demands from parents to teach their children more hours.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. To prepare students for examination.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. To teach in a smaller class.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
6. To have more teaching practice.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

11. (b) (for those who did not provide tuition)

I do not provide tuition, because \_\_\_\_\_ (Tick ONE across each item)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
7. I am busy with my family.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
8. I am busy with teaching at school.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
9. I have enough salary from government school.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
10. of my professional ethics.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

11. of the regulations that discourages teachers to offer tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
--	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

**Characteristic of tuition**

12. What types of tuition do you offer?

- <sub>1</sub> Individual tuition
- <sub>2</sub> Small group (number of students in your group: \_\_\_\_\_)
- <sub>3</sub> Large group tuition (number of students in your group: \_\_\_\_\_)
- <sub>4</sub> Boarding tuition
- <sub>5</sub> Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

13. Where do you usually provide tuition?

- <sub>1</sub> In my home
- <sub>2</sub> In students' homes
- <sub>3</sub> At school
- <sub>4</sub> At private school
- <sub>5</sub> At boarding school
- <sub>6</sub> Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

14. When do you usually provide tuition?

- <sub>1</sub> Weekends during the school year
- <sub>2</sub> Weekdays during the school year
- <sub>3</sub> Holidays
- <sub>4</sub> Other time (please indicate) \_\_\_\_\_

15. Please estimate the percentage of students in your class(es) who have received private tuition (from you or anybody else) in the last 12 months:

	0%	1-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%	I do not know.
Standard 8	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>5</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>6</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>7</sub>
Standard 10	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>5</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>6</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>7</sub>

16. For the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. (Tick ONE across each item)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Tuition helps students to raise exam scores.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. Tuition improves students' ability.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. Tuition provides exam tips.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. Tuition helps students to cover materials that are not covered in class.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. All students should attend tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

### Curriculum

17. For the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree. (Tick ONE across each item)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The school day is long enough to cover all the material on the curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. If the school day were longer, fewer teachers would offer tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. The current school curriculum has too many subjects to cover.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. The current curriculum is overcrowded and students have to learn too much too fast.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

**Pedagogy**

18. For the following statements, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In my tuition class, I follow the school curriculum.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. In my tuition class, I use different text-books from the school ones.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. In my tuition class, I mainly focus on exam questions.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. In my tuition class, I usually assign homework.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. In my tuition class, I mainly focus on exercises.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

19. What is your view on the following statements about tuition?  
(Tick ONE across each item)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Teaching in school is easier when many of my students attend private tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
2. Students who attend tuition classes are less attentive in class.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
3. Students who attend tuition classes know school materials in advance.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
4. High-achieving children should receive private tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
5. Low-achieving children should receive private tuition.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
6. Government should reduce emphasis on exams.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
7. Tuition encourages rote learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
8. Tuition encourages critical thinking.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>
9. Tuition takes away students' time and space for other activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>1</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>2</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>3</sub>	<input type="checkbox"/> <sub>4</sub>

**School governance**

20. Which of the following best describes the way your principal feels about tuition? He/She:
- <sub>1</sub> Discourages tuition.
  - <sub>2</sub> Requires tuition.
  - <sub>3</sub> Encourages tuition.
  - <sub>4</sub> Tolerates tuition.

**Income**

21. What is your current monthly salary in school (not including payments from other sources)? \_\_\_\_\_Kyats
22. How much do you earn on average each month from tuition?  
\_\_\_\_\_Kyats.
23. If you are offering tuition, do you charge students different fees for tuition depending on their ability to pay?  
<sub>1</sub> Yes      <sub>2</sub> No      <sub>3</sub> I do not offer tuition
24. Do you offer tuition to some students for free?  
<sub>1</sub> Yes      <sub>2</sub> No      <sub>3</sub> I do not offer tuition

**Thank you very much for your time!**

### Appendix 3: Student Interview Guide

#### Instructions for Research Assistants (RAs)

At the outset, the researcher will thank the student for willingness to participate in the study and then summarize the purpose of the research in her/his own words [RA: see instructions below]. Then the researcher will explain the consent form and ask the student to agree to the terms and conditions by signing two copies. The researcher will give one copy of the signed consent form to the student and collect the second copy. After that the researcher will ask the student to give permission for audio recording<sup>1</sup>. The researcher turns on the recorder and the interview starts.

#### Pre-interview script for RAs

Thank you for giving me your time today. I would like to begin by telling you about the project. Many students in Myanmar take private tuition. This private tuition gives students a chance to continue their learning after government school hours. It also gives teachers a chance to supplement their income. Many teachers are teachers and private tutors at the same time. However, not many researchers have taken the time to try to understand the root causes of private tuition, such as teachers' living conditions and students' learning conditions. This is why we are having this interview with you today.

By private tuition, we mean paid supplementary tuition in academic subjects that you also study in school. This excludes tuition provided by family members free of charge, and also extra-curriculum activities in non-academic subjects such as in piano, chess, dance etc. Private tuition that we are interested in can be individual, small or large group and can take place in students' homes, teachers' homes, in boarding schools or in any other appropriate location.

This research has been approved by the Ministry of Education and also by your school principal.

*[Instructions for transcribers – please make note on a student's gender in the beginning of a transcript]*

#### Questions

##### General

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Tell me about yourself. Which standard are you in?
- Which are your favourite subjects in school? Why?

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<sup>1</sup> RA: If the participant does not give permission for audio recording, do not audio record the interview. Try to make handwritten notes.

- How do you feel about your academic performance in school?
- Are school grades and exam results important to you? Why or why not?

### **Tuition experience**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- We are interested to learn about private tuition.
- Do you take tuition?

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- Could you tell me when you first started to take tuition? On what subjects did you take tuition then? On what subjects do you take tuition now?
- Who suggested it?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- We know that you are not receiving tuition at this moment.
- Why you do not receive tuition?
- Did you ever take tuition? If yes, at what levels, in what subjects? Why did you receive tuition at that time, and why did you drop it?
- Do your school teachers know who does and does not receive tutoring? If so, what is their attitude?
- Do your teachers treat you differently from classmates who take tuition?
- Does the fact that you are not taking tuition by your own teachers affect your examination performance? If so, how?
- Do you feel pressure that your classmates are receiving tuition and you are not? Can you give an example?
- Have you ever felt pressured to take tuition? If so, by whom?

### **Time, Location and providers**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- When do you take tuition? [RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]
- What type of tuition do you take [e.g. individual tuition, "Wine" or small group, large group, boarding tuition, etc.]
- Where do you take tuition - in teachers' homes, in your home or elsewhere?
- Who are the tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals]
- How much time do you spend on tuition for each subject?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- I am going to ask you questions about time, location and types of tuition that other students, your peers take. Answer these questions to the best of your knowledge.
- Do you know when students take tuition? [RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]

- What type of tuition do they take [e.g. individual tuition, “Wine” or small group, large group, boarding tuition, etc.]
- Where do they take tuition - in teachers’ homes, in your home or elsewhere?
- Who are their tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals]
- How much time do they spend on tuition for each subject?

### Reasons/Learning

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- What made you feel you need to take tuition?
- Do you like taking the tuition classes?
- Is tuition effective i.e. it improved your exam scores, or increased your interests in subjects?
- Did you become more confident? In what ways? Why?
- How many of your peers are receiving tuition (a quarter, half, three quarters, almost everybody)?
- Is tuition popular among your peers in school? Why?
- Can students learn at school well without tuition?
- Does tuition affect school attendance in Myanmar? *[RA: Ask if students miss classes because of tuition. Especially relevant at Standard 10].*
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and teachers?
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and peers?

### Finances

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- How much does your family pay monthly for your tuition in all subjects?
- Is the tuition cost a financial burden to your family?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- Do you know how much your friends’ families pay monthly for tuition in all subjects? You can answer this question in regards to one friend only.
- Is the tuition cost a financial burden to their families? Do they even talk about this with you?

### Pedagogy

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- What do your tutors teach in tuition classes? Describe activities and approaches.
- Do they follow the school curriculum? Do they tailor to your individual problems?



- What textbooks do you use in tuition – are they the same as in school?
- Do you get homework from tutors? If yes, then how often do you get homework from tutors -is it happens seldom, often or always”?”
- Are there any differences in the teaching styles of your school teachers and your tutors? Can you please give some examples?

(RA: for *WITHOUT* tuition)

- Do you know what tutors teach in tuition classes? Describe activities and approaches if you heard of them from your peers.
- Do they follow the school curriculum? Do they tailor to students’ individual problems?
- What textbooks do students’ use in tuition – are they the same as in school?
- Do students get homework from tutors? If yes, then how often do they get homework from tutors -is it happens seldom, often or always?
- Are there any differences in the teaching styles of your school teachers and tutors? Can you please give some examples?

#### **Tuition Law/Regulations**

(RA: for both *WITH* tuition and *WITHOUT* tuition)

- We know that there is a tuition law in Myanmar. Have you ever heard of it? If so, what does that law say?
- Have you ever heard of a teacher being praised or punished because of providing tuition? If so, please tell me what you have heard.

#### **Family**

(RA: for both *WITH* tuition and *WITHOUT* tuition)

- Tell me about your family. What do your parents do?
- Do you have siblings? How many?
- Do your parents ask you what happened in school every day?
- Do they check your homework and help with it, if needed?

#### **Future**

(RA: for both *WITH* tuition and *WITHOUT* tuition)

- What do you want to do in the future?
- Going to university? Which university?
- What occupation do your parents expect you to enter?
- What do you want to study in university?
- Will your tuition help you with these career goals? How?

(RA: this question is only for *WITH* tuition)

This has been a great experience talking with you. Thank you again. Before we end, is there anything else you would like to comment on?

[Conclude interview.]

Appendix 4: Teacher Interview Guide

[Introductory explanation same as for student interviews]

**General**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Tell me about yourself. How long have you been a teacher? Which subjects are you teaching currently and at which standards?

**Scale, Grades, Subjects, Popularity**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Is tuition popular among students in Myanmar?
- Why do students go for tuition? What are the main reasons for it? [RA: e.g. examinations, parents' request, curriculum, class size]
- In which standards are students receiving private tuition most? Why?
- In your opinion, approximately what percentages of students in Standard 8 and 10 [RA: ask separately in each standard] receive tuition?
- Which subjects are particularly popular?
- Why some students do not take tuition?
- Can students learn at school well without tuition?

**Time, Location and Providers**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- When does tuition take place? [RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]
- Where does tuition usually take place in teachers' homes, in students' homes or elsewhere?
- What are the most common types of tuition? [e.g. individual tuition, "Wine" or small group, large group etc]
- Which type of tuition is most expensive and which one is least expensive?
- Who are tuition providers i.e. tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals, university students]
- In Myanmar you differentiate two types of providers: teachers and study guides. Could you describe their duties and similarities and differences between them?

**Reasons for Tuition**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- In your opinion, what are the main drivers behind schoolteachers' decisions to tutor students in Myanmar?
- What proportion of teachers in this school provide tuition?
- Is tuition a topic of discussion among teachers in schools or do they prefer to be silent about this topic?

### **Teacher's Tuition Experience**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- How long have you been providing private tuition?
- How many private students do you currently have?
- Are your students from this school or from other schools?
- Compare your teaching style (pedagogy) in school versus in tuition class. What are the things/activities/approaches you do similarly or differently?
- Do you use same textbooks in schools and tuition and follow the same curriculum?

### **Role and Identity as a Teacher-tutor**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- How do you feel about the work as a teacher-tutor? Does it affect your personal (family life) or professional life (teaching at school)?
- Do you feel comfort or discomfort of being a teacher and tutor at the same time?
- What are challenges and benefits associated with being a teacher-tutor?

### **Impact on Schooling**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Does tuition affect school attendance in Myanmar? *[RA: Ask if students miss classes because of tuition. Especially relevant at Standard 10].*
- In what ways does it affect relationships among teachers?
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and teachers?

### **Economics of Tuition**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- May I ask you how much do you charge per hour/per lesson?
- What forms of remuneration other than money for tuition are you aware of?
- How much do you earn per month in salary (government school)? Is that enough to live?
- How much do you earn per month from private tuition?
- Do you have any other sources of income?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- Do you know how much tutors charge per hour/per lesson in your subject?
- What forms of remuneration other than money for tuition are you aware of?
- How much do you earn per month in salary (government school)? Is that enough to live?
- How much do teachers earn per month from private tuition on average?
- Do you have any other sources of income?

### **Marketing**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Have parents ever approached you for tuition? Describe the situation.

- Do you recommend your own students to receive tuition in the subject you teach? Why or why not?
- Do you recommend any other teacher (s) that you know are professionals in your subject?

**Tuition Law/Regulations**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- We know that there is a tuition law in Myanmar. Have you ever heard of it? If so, what does that law say?
- Have you ever heard of a teacher being praised or punished because of providing tuition? If so, please tell me what you have heard.
- It seems the law exists on paper but many teachers do not follow the rules. What are the reasons?
- In your opinion should tuition be regulated or ignored by the government?
- If you were a policy-maker, what would you do differently?
- What are the risks or benefits of teachers tutoring their own students?

**Future**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- We are about to finish the interview. Based on what we have discussed, could you please summarize major advantages and disadvantages of tuition?
- Concerning future, will demand for tuition increase in Myanmar or decrease? Why do you think so? Discuss the factors.
- What do you feel about the impact of tuition on the wider society? Do you feel that it is something to be encouraged or discouraged?

This has been a great experience talking with you. Thank you again. Before we end, is there anything else you would like to comment on?

[Conclude interview.]

### Appendix 5: Parent Interview Guide

[Introductory explanation same as for student and teacher interviews]

#### General

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Tell me about yourself. How many children do you have? In which standard(s) do(es) your child/children study?
- What is the level of education you have attained?
- How do you spend most of your time – are you employed? If so, what is the nature of that work?

#### Learning

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- How do you expect your child/children to perform in school? How does she/he actually perform?
- What do you do at home to support your child/children's education? Do you usually help your child/children with homework?

#### Tuition Experience

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- Do(es) your child/children receive tuition?  
*(RA: for WITH tuition)*
- How many of your children receive private tuition?
- Since which standard has s/he received tuition?
- In which subjects does s/he receive tuition? Why in those subjects and not in others?
- How many times a week and for how long does s/he receive tuition?

#### Reasons for Tuition

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- Why do you send your child/children to tuition? *(RA: e.g. exam pressure, curriculum, pedagogy, peer influence)*
- Who in your family made the decision to send your child/children to a tutor? Please describe the process.
- Why do some parents not send their children to tuition?
- Some teachers say that among major reasons why most students receive tuition are parents' general anxiety and consequent pressure over students. Do you agree? Why or why not?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- What is a reason why you do not send your child/children to tuition?
- Why do other parents (for example, parents of the other children in your child's class) send your child/children to tuition? **(RA: e.g. exam pressure, curriculum, pedagogy, peer influence)**

- Some teachers say that among major reasons why most students receive tuition are parents' general anxiety and consequent pressure over students. Do you agree? Why or why not?

**Effectiveness of Tuition**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- Is the tuition received by your child/children effective/ useful? Can you elaborate? How do you measure effectiveness/ ineffectiveness?
- What do you think about quality of secondary education?
- Can students learn at school well without tuition?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- Is the tuition received by other children in your child's class effective/useful? How do parents measure effectiveness/ ineffectiveness?
- What do you think about quality of secondary education?
- Can students learn at school well without tuition?

**Time, Location and Providers**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- When does your child/children take tuition? *[RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]*
  - What type of tuition do they take [e.g. individual tuition, "Wine" or small group, large group, boarding tuition, etc]? Why?
  - Where do they take tuition: in teachers' homes, in your home or elsewhere?
  - Who are the tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals]
  - Have you ever approached a schoolteacher for tuition? Describe the situation.

*(RA: if a student receives tuition from his/her own teacher, ask the following questions)*

- Why did you decide to send your child to her/his own teacher?
- Does the teacher teach differently in school versus in tuition? If so, what is different and what is similar?
- What are the risks or benefits of teachers providing tuition to their own students?
- How did you select a particular tutor/tutors for your child? Has anyone recommended her/him?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- When do children usually take tuition? *[RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]*

- What type of tuition do they take [e.g. individual tuition, “Wine” or small group, large group, boarding tuition, etc]? Why?
- Where do students usually take tuition: in teachers’ homes, in your home or elsewhere?
- Who are the tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals]
- Why some parents decide to send their child/children to her/his own teacher for tuition?
- Do teachers teach differently in school versus in tuition? If so, what is different and what is similar?
- What are the risks or benefits of teachers providing tuition to their own students?

### **Costs of Tuition**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- What is an average monthly cost for all tuition lessons for one child?
- Is it a financial burden for your family? Why or why not?
- Have you ever encountered any problems in paying fees on time? If yes, how did the teacher(s) react?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- Do you know how much families pay on average for all tuition lessons for one child?
- Do you think it is a financial burden for families? Why or why not?
- Have families ever encountered any problems in paying fees on time? If yes, how did the teacher(s) react? Please tell me what you have heard.

### **Impact on Schooling**

*(RA: for WITH tuition)*

- Does tuition affect your child/children’s school attendance [*RA: Ask if student(s) have to miss classes because of tuition. Especially relevant at Standard 10*].
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and teachers?
- And what about relationships between students and peers?

*(RA: for WITHOUT tuition)*

- Does tuition affect students’ school attendance in Myanmar? [*RA: Ask if student(s) have to miss classes because of tuition. Especially relevant at Standard 10*].
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and teachers?
- And what about relationships between students and peers? Please tell me what you have heard.

**Educational/Occupational Aspirations**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- What do you want your child/children to become in future?
- Do you want him/her to go to university? Why or why not?
- What kind of job or work do you want him/her to do later in life? Why?
- Will tuition help him/her with the career goals? How? (Only for WITH tuition)

**Future of Tuition**

*(RA: for both WITH tuition and WITHOUT tuition)*

- We are about to finish the interview. Based on what we have discussed, could you please summarize major advantages and disadvantages of tuition from parental perspective?
- What do you think in regards of tuition in the future – will demand for tuition increase or decrease? Why do you think so? Discuss the factors.
- In your opinion, should tuition be regulated by the government?
- If you were a policy-maker, what would you do differently?
- What do you feel about the impact of tuition on the wider society? Do you feel that it is something to be encouraged or discouraged?

This has been a great experience talking with you. Thank you again. Before we end, is there anything else you would like to comment on?

[Conclude interview.]



### Appendix 6: School Principal Interview Guide

[Introductory explanation same as for student, teacher and parent interviews]

#### General

- Tell me about yourself. How long have you been a school principal? Are you also teaching in this school? If so, which subject and at which standards?

#### Scale, Standards, Subjects, Popularity

- Is tuition popular among students in Myanmar?
- Why do students go for tutoring? What are the main reasons for it? [RA: e.g. examinations, parents' request, curriculum, class size]
- In which standards are students receiving private tuition most? Why?
- In your opinion, approximately what percentages of students in Standard 8 and 10 [RA: ask separately in each standard] receive tuition?
- Which subjects are particularly popular?
- Why some students do not take tuition?
- Can students learn at school well without tuition?

#### Time, Location and Providers

- When does tuition take place? [RA: ask about days of a week, weekend and tuition during holidays]
- Where does tuition usually take place in teachers' homes, in students' homes or elsewhere?
- Is tuition allowed to take place in school premises? Why or why not?
- What are the most common types of tutoring? [e.g. individual tutoring, "Wine" or small group, large group etc.]
- Which type of tutoring is most expensive and which one is least expensive?
- Who are tutoring providers i.e. tutors? [e.g. school teachers, retired teachers, other professionals, university students]
- In Myanmar you differentiate two types of providers: teachers and study guides. Could you describe their duties and similarities and differences between them?

#### Reasons for tutoring

- In your opinion, what are the main drivers behind schoolteachers' decisions to tutor students in Myanmar?
- What proportion of teachers in this school provide tutoring?
- Those who does not provide tuition, what are possible reasons behind their decision?

- Is tuition a topic of discussion among teachers in schools or do they prefer to be silent about this topic?
- Do you ever mention tuition in conversation with teachers?

*[RA: ask if school principal is a teacher-tutor. If she/he was a tutor in the past, ask these questions in the past tense]*

#### **Tutoring Experience**

- How long have you been providing private tutoring?
- How many private students do you currently have?
- Are your students from this school or from other schools?
- Compare your teaching style (pedagogy) in school versus in tuition class. What are the things/activities/approaches you do similarly or differently?
- Do you use same textbooks in schools and tuition and follow the same curriculum?
- Do you mostly provide tutoring individually, in small groups or in large groups?

#### **Impact on Schooling**

- Does tuition affect school attendance in Myanmar? *[RA: Ask if students miss classes because of tuition. Especially relevant at Standard 10].*
- In what ways does tuition affect teachers' time and efforts in school?
- What are benefits and challenges that teachers' involvement in tuition brings to school management and leadership?
- In what ways does it affect relationships among teachers?
- In what ways does tuition affect relationships between students and teachers?

#### **Salary**

- The MoE says that it has been gradually increasing teacher salaries. Are the salaries enough for teachers to live?
- If teachers have enough salary from government, would they be still tutors? If so, why.

#### **Tuition Law/Regulations**

- We know that there is a tuition law in Myanmar. Have you ever heard of it? If so, what does that law say?
- Have you ever heard of a teacher being praised or punished because of providing tuition? If so, please tell me what you have heard.
- It seems the law exists on paper but many teachers do not follow the rules. What are the reasons?

- Do you have any school policies on teachers providing tuition or on students receiving tuition? Can you tell me about them? When were the policies created and why?
- Do you have any challenges in implementing the policies?
- In your opinion should tuition be regulated or ignored by the government?
- If you were a policy-maker, what would you do differently?
- What are the risks or benefits of teachers tutoring their own students?

**Future**

- We are about to finish the interview. Based on what we have discussed, could you please summarize major advantages and disadvantages of tuition?
- Concerning future, will demand for tuition increase or decrease? Why do you think so?
- What do you feel about the impact of tuition on the wider society? Do you feel that it is something to be encouraged or discouraged?

*This has been a great experience talking with you. Thank you again. Before we end, is there anything else you would like to comment on?*

[Conclude interview.]

*Appendix 7: Discussion Questions for Policy Seminar, Ministry of Education<sup>2</sup>*

Let us cultivate an inclusive stance of inquiry with receptivity and courage:

1. Assume positive intent.
2. Engage in mutual listening.
3. Pursue deeper inquiry with respect, where a little discomfort is okay.

Report-back: A volunteer should be identified to summarize the outcomes of the group response to share in the open plenary. The facilitator will also help to consolidate this summary. Between them, they can decide who to report back.

The questions have been constructed to stimulate responses to the specifics of the research report in terms of future development for quality and equity, with regard to how regulations can help to bridge the reform-reality gaps. Hopefully, the discussion will inspire further dialogues for shared understanding and commitment to respective responsibilities.

1. *Economics and education*: International experience shows that private tuition will not go away. Indeed with Myanmar's economic development and marketization, it is likely to expand. What should be the role of the private tuition centres? How can their activities be steered, guided and harmonized with wider goals for Myanmar society (i.e. NESP and related)?
2. *Roles and responsibilities*: In some countries, both teachers in schools and tutors in tuition centres have codes of conduct for self-regulation. Do you think that this might be possible and desirable in Myanmar? If so, what might the codes of conduct say (especially in relation to the quality of teaching and learning), and how would the codes be monitored and implemented?
3. *Regulation and policy development*: Concerning the regulations for private supplementary tuition:
  - a) What was the original goal, and how well was that goal achieved?
  - b) What is the current goal, and how well is it being achieved?

Do the regulations need modification, and if so, how? And how can the implementation be ensured?

4. *Regulation and school policy*: The report suggests that different approaches might be taken concerning what teachers are allowed to do. In the light of the findings, should teachers be permitted to provide private tuition to:
  - a) their existing students,
  - b) other students from their schools (but not currently taught by them), and
  - c) students from other schools?

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<sup>2</sup> This event was held on 28 September 2018.

What are the reasons for your suggestion? And what are the implications for monitoring and regulation?

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## Notes on the Authors

**Mark Bray** is UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education and former Director of the Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC) at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Since December 2018 he has also held the position of Distinguished Visiting Professor in East China Normal University (ECNU), Shanghai. Professor Bray joined HKU in 1986, prior to which he taught at the Universities of Edinburgh, Papua New Guinea, and London, and in secondary schools in Kenya and Nigeria. Between 2006 and 2010 he took leave from HKU to work in Paris as Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). He has written extensively in the field of comparative education, with particular focus during the last two decades on shadow education. Email: [mbray@hku.hk](mailto:mbray@hku.hk)

**Magda Nutsa Kobakhidze** is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education and a member of the Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC) at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). Her research interests include private supplementary tutoring in a cross-national perspective, teacher professional development policy, and large-scale international assessments. She has extensive working experience with the Ministry of Education of Georgia, international organisations, and educational institutions. Before moving to Hong Kong in 2012, she served as a national research coordinator of the international study PIRLS in Georgia. In 2018 CERC co-published with Springer her book entitled *Teachers as Tutors: Shadow Education Market Dynamics in Georgia*, which was based on her prize-winning PhD thesis. E-mail: [nutsak@hku.hk](mailto:nutsak@hku.hk).

**Ora Kwo** taught at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) from 1981 to 2016 and retains close links with the University including its Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC). She is now a Visiting Professor in East China Normal University (ECNU), Shanghai. Professor Kwo has also undertaken numerous consultancies for UNESCO and other agencies. She co-authored with Mark Bray a 2014 CERC/UNESCO book entitled *Regulating Private Tutoring for Public Good: Policy Options for Supplementary Education in Asia*. With a special interest in professional development of teachers, she edited the 2010 CERC/Springer book *Teachers as Learners: Critical Discourse on Challenges and Opportunities*. E-mail: [wykwo@hku.hk](mailto:wykwo@hku.hk).

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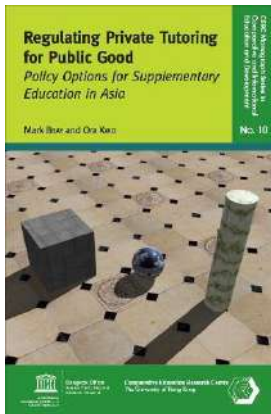
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Comparative Education Research Centre  
Faculty of Education,  
The University of Hong Kong  
Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong, China.

Fax: (852) 2517 4737  
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Mark Bray and Ora Kwo

Publishers: Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC) in collaboration with United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

ISBN 978-988-17852-9-9

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Recent years have brought global expansion of private supplementary tutoring alongside regular school systems. This expansion has far-reaching implications for the nurturing of new generations, for social and economic development, and for the operation of school systems. Some dimensions are positive while other dimensions are problematic.

Supplementary tutoring is especially visible in Asia. The formats of tutoring range from one-to-one provision to large classes. Some tutoring is provided by teachers and by specialist companies, while other tutoring is provided informally by university students and others.

Using a comparative lens, this book examines possible government responses to the expansion of private supplementary tutoring. In general, the book suggests, the sector should be given more attention. The work shows wide diversity in the regulations introduced by governments in the Asian region. It notes not only that these governments can learn much from each other, but also that policy makers in other parts of the world can usefully look at patterns in Asia. The book also stresses the value of partnerships between governments, tutoring providers, schools, teachers' unions, and other bodies.

Mark BRAY is UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong, and is a former Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning.

Ora KWO is an Associate Professor and a member of the Comparative Education Research Centre in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong.

*This book is also available in Chinese and Korean.*

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This book presents the first detailed empirical study in Myanmar of a phenomenon that is of increasing visibility and significance in high-, medium- and low-income countries across the world. Private supplementary tutoring is widely called shadow education because it reflects curriculum changes in schools.

Among the students sampled for this study, over 80% were receiving shadow education; and among the teachers sampled, nearly half were providers. Other tutoring was received from informal providers and through registered companies.

The study exposes the significance of this phenomenon for the lives of students, the work of teachers, and the broader society. It has far-reaching implications for the educational reforms on which the Myanmar government has embarked. The study also has much of interest for international comparative analysis.

**The authors** are members of the Comparative Education Research Centre at the University of Hong Kong. They conducted the research with funding from UNESCO's office in Myanmar and with support from the Yangon University of Education.

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Comparative Education Research Centre  
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Pokfulam, Hong Kong, China  
E-mail: [cerc@hku.hk](mailto:cerc@hku.hk)  
Website: <http://cerc.edu.hku.hk>

