

Handling peer pressure: When is private tutoring (not) the answer?

Ora Kwo

The University of Hong Kong



Introduction

- **Continual learning from research & knowledge exchange in community dialogues**

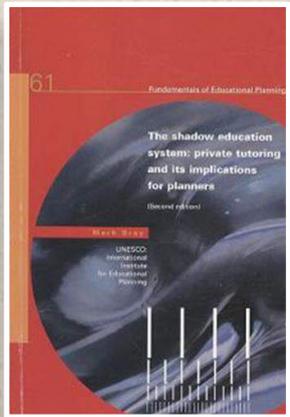


- **Each seminar as a collective inquiry towards public good**

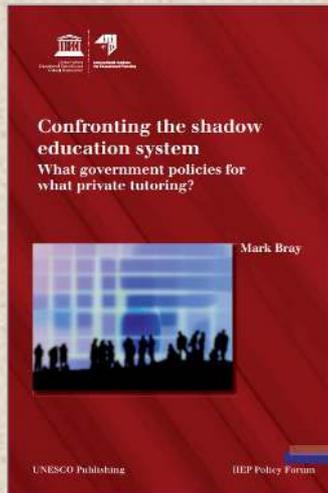


A Developing Research Agenda

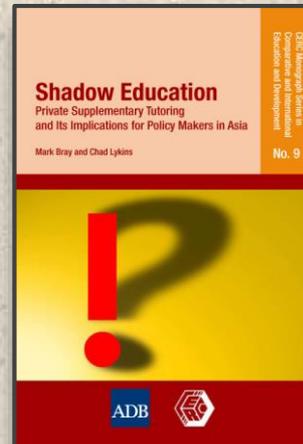
in Comparative Education Research Centre, HKU



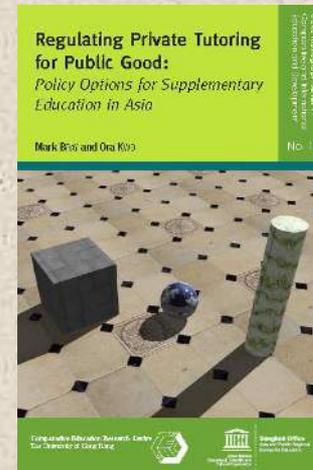
1999



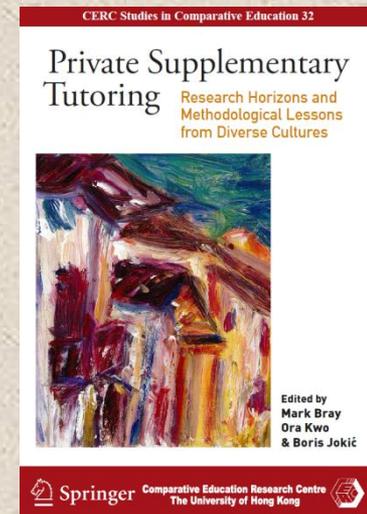
2009



2012



2014



2015

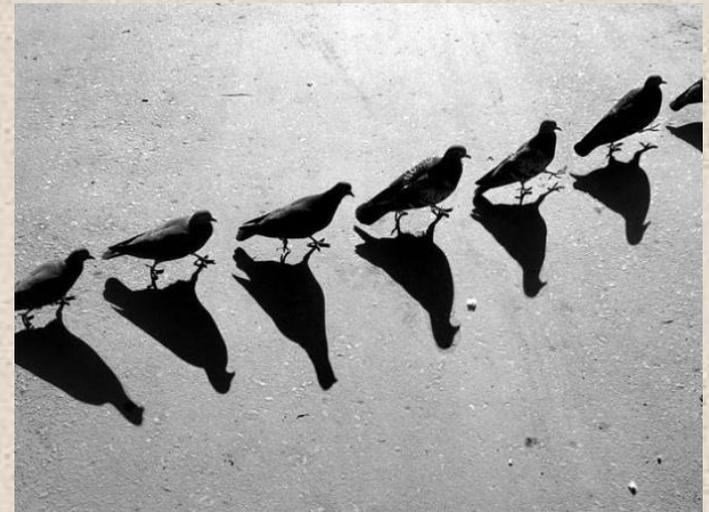
Major Reference

**Kwo, Ora & Bray, Mark (2014).
Relationships between Mainstream
Schooling and Private Supplementary
Tutoring: Patterns and Voices of Hong
Kong Secondary Students.
Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Vol.34,
No.4, 403-416.**

Some parts of private tuition are called shadow education

Why a shadow?

- ▶ The private tutoring only exists because the mainstream exists.
- ▶ As the size and shape of the mainstream changes, so does that of the shadow.





Hong Kong: Curriculum Reform

To empower learners with the ‘capabilities necessary for lifelong learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and innovation for adapting to the rapid changes and demands of society.’

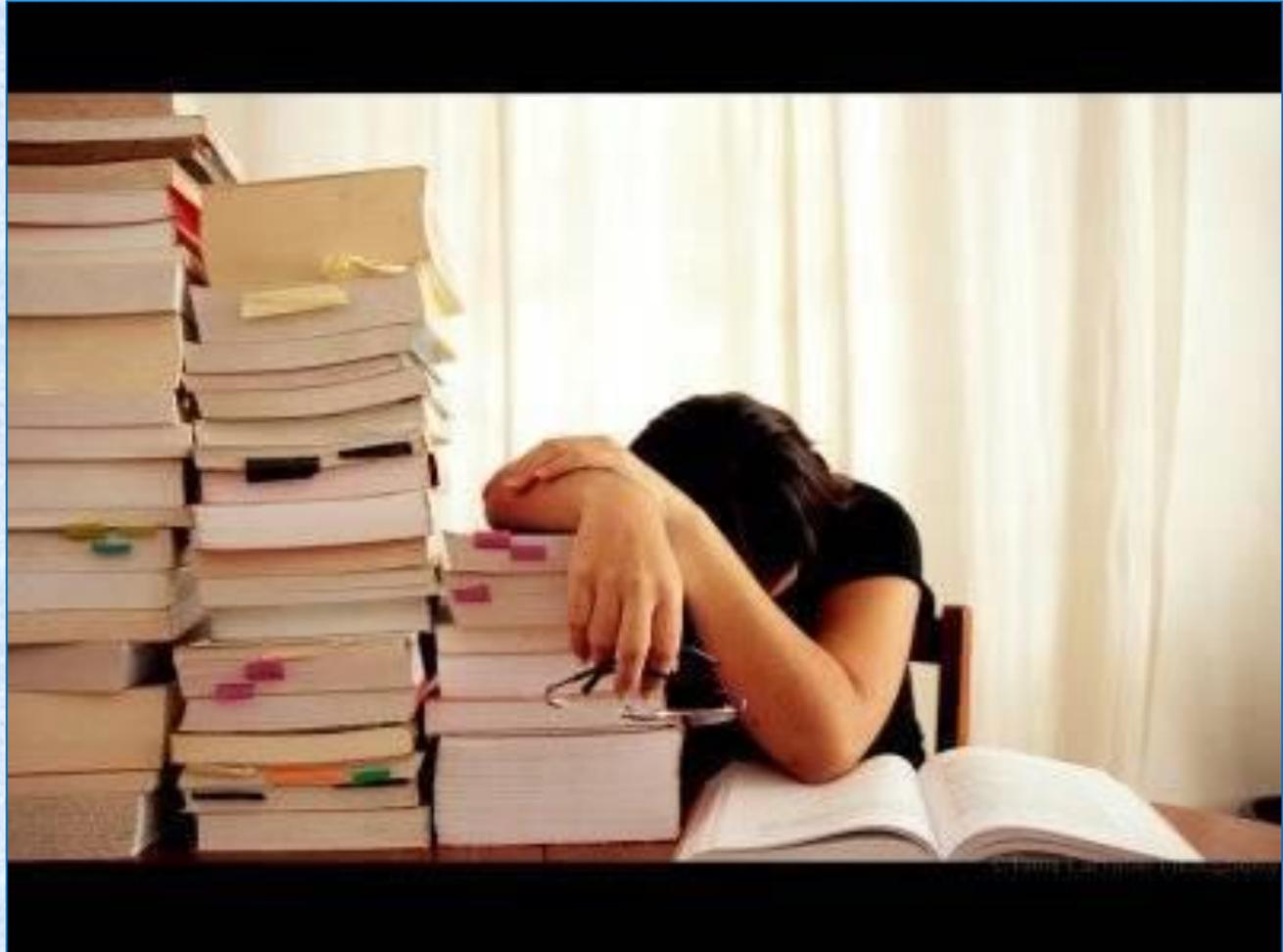
... student-centred, experiential learning, all-round development...



Hong Kong: Curriculum Reform

- ✓ Learning brings enjoyment
- ✓ Learning to learn
- ✓ No loser

Learning brings enjoyment?



Learning to learn?



No loser?



Students in high-performing schools more likely to receive tutoring than students in low-performing schools

A Hong Kong survey

Grades 9 and 12



- 16 schools
- 1,628 student questionnaires
- 105 student interviews
- 160 teacher questionnaires
- 48 teacher interviews

How many students received tutoring?

- 54% in Grade 9
- 72% in Grade 12



Types of Tutoring

	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 12</i>
One-on-one	44%	31%
Small group	53%	29%
Lecture style by tutor (live)	22%	54%
Lecture style (video recording)	8%	62%
Online tutoring	1%	2%

Subjects

	<i>Grade 9</i>	<i>Grade 12</i>
English	58%	72%
Mathematics	68%	36%
Chinese	29%	34%
Sciences	19%	33%
Liberal Studies	6%	13%
Business	5%	14%
Humanities	8%	4%

What are parents buying?

- Enrichment?
- Remedial?
- Peers for their children?
- Child-minding?
- Peace of mind?
- Status? Pride?

Do the parents even know what they want, & whether they get it?

Interview of students: Nexus between two experiences

Qualitative data: initial use of NVivo

- Coding
- Set up nodes structure
- Revise the structure
 - Pedagogic styles
 - Learning orientations

Pedagogic Styles

Teachers

Content

Knowledge

Finish syllabus

Holistic attention

Growth in life

Full concepts

120% for exam

Tutors

Skills for exam

Time management

Key points to memorize

Selective Focus

Exclusive attention

Demonstrate to score

Target 90% for exam

Learning Orientations

School

Comprehensive Coverage

Structure and Routines

Deeper Learning Needs

Tutoring

Remedial Learning

Space and Personal Relationships

Superficial Learning Needs

Encounter and Avoidance of Difficulties

“In school, people think you may sound troublesome if you don’t understand something, and that is why we do not ask questions.”

“In large-class tutoring, the tutor does not answer my questions... I am only buying the skills for exam.”

Reform Aspirations vs Reality:

Assessment for Learning?

Learning for Assessment?

Advocacy for Reform of Mainstream

- interactive
- student-centred
- learner autonomy
- experiential learning
- focus on whole-person development

Practices in Large- Class Tutoring

- direct-teaching
- teacher-centred
- teacher-dependent
- exam paper drilling
- focus on exam results

Teachers' Perspectives

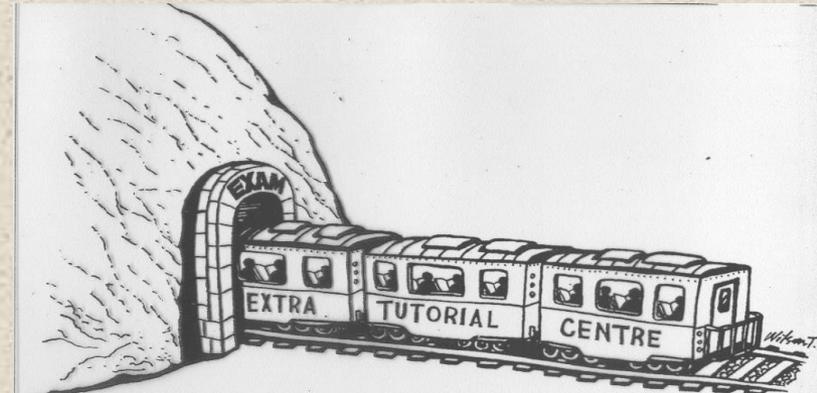
Shift in ecosystem balances

- positive about one-to-one and small group
- negative about market-oriented tutorial centres
- ambivalent at curriculum pace/coverage

Teachers' Perspectives

Perceptions on why students go:

- examination pressure
- advertisements
- peer influence



Teachers' Perspectives

- Intensification of roles?
- Unrealistic expectations of teachers?
- Partnership? Conflict?

Invasive species in ecosystem?



Parents' Perspectives?

Concerns (Zeba Khan, 2016)

- Class size & student-teacher ratio
- Diverse abilities and needs of students
- Self-efficacy in offering help
- School initiative in providing & monitoring support to meet students' needs

Graduates' Perspectives?

Reflections on the 'golden years'...

- Impact of experience of tutoring on adaptation to university life?
- Response to challenges in higher learning (e.g.dissertation)?
- Quality of learning beyond graduation (i.e. confidence & sense of security)?

Alarm: *At what cost?*

- Conflict: standardization vs diversity
- High marks but low capability



Cognitive Psychology

Learning is often associated with impasses, when a student gets stuck, confused...

An impasse can motivate a student for an active role in constructing a better understanding of the targeted subject of learning.



Claims of the Support for self-esteem & achievement

- Promote
 - **Trust**
 - Slow
 - Fast
- What about...
- the induced stance of **dependence** rather than independence?
 - the **illusion** about exam success as coming from exam skills?
 - the confrontation of learning problems from diversified **learning needs**?





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Is academic performance the best indicator of potential for lifelong successes?

Does a high-earning profession necessarily constitute happiness?



**Achievement =
Success +
Happiness?**

Fear & Security? Our Discovery...

Our students have learned since Kindergarten that *the* goal in education is academic achievements in the forms of grades, scores and awards for **standardized exams... The story is all about academic achievement.**

Myth? Those following the norms and meeting the societal expectations are advantaged.

How is the myth making an impact on or the well-being of our young people, our society/world?

Can school achievement lead to success at work place? Can higher flyers in exam contribute to global well-being?



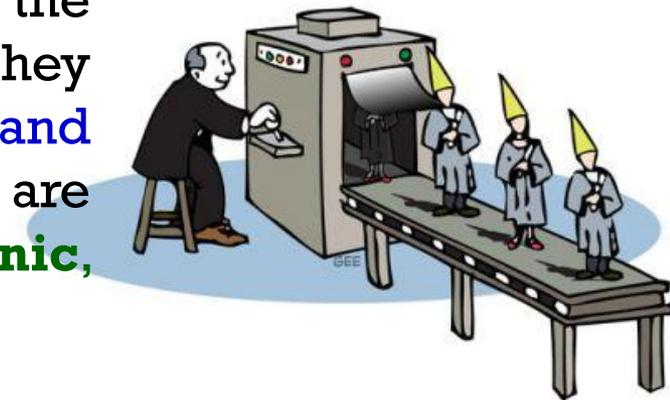
A Vow to Education

Are teachers serving as workers to produce high-scoring students under societal/parental pressures?

Everyone is a unique human-being, not a standardized product.

As teachers, we have to listen to students' voices, and respect their choices by appreciating/supporting them to reach their desired goals.

“Mass systems of public education were developed primarily to meet the needs of the Industrial Revolution ... they mirror the principles of industrial production. They emphasize **linearity, conformity and standardization**. One of the reasons they are NOT working now is that real life is **organic, adaptable and diverse.**” (Ken Robinson)



Aims of Education & Curriculum

South China Morning Post

HK CHINA ASIA WORLD COMMENT BUSINESS TECH LIFE CULTURE SP

829 SHARES



NOW READING

Confessions of a DSE high-scorer: Hong Kong

Confessions of a DSE high-scorer: Hong Kong's education system must nurture all, not the few

Jennifer Qiu says our schools should be a place for the development of inquisitive minds and the free exploration of knowledge, not diploma mills

Nexus...

Responses from Stakeholders?

- **What are the root problems in education and society? What are the issues?**
- **Is examination pressure the real source of pressure for distortion in learning?**
- **As the complexity of the relationship will go on, in what ways can educational stakeholders work together to confront some of the issues?**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sustainable Development Goals

- merge development (MDG 2000-2015) and environment (Rio 1992-) agendas
- 17 goals with 169 targets
- adopted by UN Member States in 2015
- to be achieved by 2030



SDG 4 on education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

- 1 goal with 7 targets and 3 means of implementation
- merges and significantly expands development (MDG 2000-2015) and EFA (Jomtien/Dakar 1990-2015) agendas

Global Education Monitoring Report

- mandated to monitor and report on education progress in SDGs

2016 GEM REPORT: THEMATIC CONTENT



Planet:
environmental
sustainability



Peace:
political participation,
peace and justice



Prosperity:
inclusive and
sustainable
growth



Place:
inclusive and
sustainable cities



People:
inclusive social
development



**Partnerships for
sustainable
development**

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

For education to be transformative in support of the new sustainable development agenda, **'education as usual' will not suffice.**

1. **Collaborate across sectors.**

2. Governments need to view formal and non-formal education and training as key to their efforts to tackle **cross-sector problems.**

3. Education Ministries and Ministries of Labour should **work together to reduce income inequality.**

4. Education systems **need increased and predictable financing.**

5. Improve **equity.**

6. Change the **focus** of education:

a) In developing skills policies, consider both medium- and long-term needs and the **implications of sustainable growth**

b) **Civic, peace and sustainability education programmes** can be important levers for SDG progress

What regulations are:

- **existing**
- **desirable**
- **feasible?**



And for what types of jurisdiction?

Not just regulations

What about:

- guidelines
- codes of practice
- consumer guidance and support

What partnerships?

- different branches of government?
- different levels of government?
- associations of tutoring providers (*self regulation*)?
- teachers unions?
- schools?
- community bodies?
- international agencies?



Directions?

At a micro-level...

- Pursue **harmony** between teaching, learning & assessment.
- Each stakeholder can **make a difference**.

At a macro-level...

- Regulate private tutoring for **public good**.
- Move from blame-defense cycles to cultivation of **joint ownership of problems**.
- Promote research & dialogues for **policy development**.

Learning and Assessment

Learning is not about simplistic successes or failures... but about **an unfailing interest to capture learning insights from what is going on.**

Alignment between learning & assessments?

- set assessments to **reward** learning progress
- involve students in the **ownership of the meaning** of the assessment tasks

More information:

Shadow education website of Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong

<http://cerc.edu.hku.hk>

Ora Kwo wykwo@hku.hk