Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia
New opportunities and burdens

Edited by
Iveta Silova
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia
New opportunities and burdens
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia
New opportunities and burdens

Edited by Iveta Silova
The views and opinions expressed in this book are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of UNESCO or the IIEP. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout this review do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO or the IIEP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

The publication costs of this study have been supported by the Open Society Institute – with contribution of the Education Support Program of OSI Budapest.

Published by:
International Institute for Educational Planning
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France
info@iiep.unesco.org
www.iiep.unesco.org

Cover design: IIEP
Cover photo: Shutterstock/Fred Sweet
Typesetting: Linéale Production
Printed in IIEP’s printshop
© UNESCO 2009
FOREWORD

Private tutoring is rarely the object of careful scrutiny by government officials in any part of the world, and Central Asia is no exception. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, governments of the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have been preoccupied with reforming their mainstream education systems, but they have tended to overlook the dynamic growth of private supplementary tutoring. Information on private tutoring in the countries of the former Soviet Union is scarce, and it is practically non-existent as concerns Central Asia. This study sheds light on a phenomenon that deserves considerably greater attention from both policymakers and academics.

This book presents the first investigation into the causes and consequences of private tutoring in Central Asia. Drawing on a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, it examines the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The study examines private tutoring in the context of post-Soviet transformations to determine whether and how structural, methodological and content changes in mainstream schooling have affected private tutoring and how private tutoring, in turn, affects mainstream education. It shows that private tutoring has created new opportunities and placed new burdens on education systems and individuals and invites government officials and other education stakeholders to give serious consideration to the economic, social and educational implications of supplementary private tutoring.

The study is the product of collaboration between professionals from different countries and institutions. First, the study is based on a unique collaborative partnership between researchers and policy analysts in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan who made a commitment to undertake joint research into the private tutoring phenomenon to facilitate international comparison, while accounting for the specifics of their national contexts. Second, this book marks the fruitful co-operation between UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning and the Open Society Institute’s (OSI) Education
Foreword

Support Program, which joined efforts to raise public awareness about private tutoring in the former socialist countries and assist education officials in devising appropriate responses. We trust that this study will provide a public forum for meaningful discussions regarding the role of private tutoring in Central Asia and beyond.

Mark Bray
Director
IIEP

Hugh McLean
Director
Education Support Program, OSI
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is a product of extensive international co-operation among the representatives of all countries participating in this research. The commitment of the staff of the Education Policy Centers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan made this project a reality. We express special thanks to Algirdas Zabulionis from Anglia Assessment Ltd., who managed the international database and made invaluable contributions to the analysis of national and international data. We also acknowledge the valuable contributions of the respondents – first-year university students, education administrators, policymakers and others who openly shared their experiences of private tutoring and their opinions about its nature and implications for education, economy and society in each of the countries. Finally, the participants in the Private Tutoring Monitoring Project in Central Asia thank the managers of Open Society Institute’s (OSI) Education Support Program and officers of UNESCO’s International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) for their thoughtful feedback and ongoing support throughout all stages of the project.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of abbreviations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of tables</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of figures</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About the authors</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes on organizations</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Iveta Silova</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1  Global patterns and post-socialist realities in the private tutoring market: conceptual and methodological considerations</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2  Education and post-socialist transformations in Central Asia</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3  Examining the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4  Private tutoring in Kazakhstan</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5  Private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6  Private tutoring in Tajikistan</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7  Private tutoring and its implications for education in Central Asia: conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAECN</td>
<td>Central Asian Education Co-operation Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTE</td>
<td>Complex Test for Entrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>Education Support Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross national income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIEP</td>
<td>International Institute for Educational Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Monitoring Learning Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoES</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoPE</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEPC</td>
<td>Network of Education Policy Centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NST</td>
<td>National Scholarship Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSI</td>
<td>Open Society Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIRLS</td>
<td>Progress in International Reading Literacy Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Student Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Purchasing Power Parity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEE ECN</td>
<td>South-East Europe Education Co-operation Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIMSS</td>
<td>Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNT</td>
<td>Unified National Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Characteristics of the study sample 45
Table 1.2 Universities participating in the survey by geographical location 45
Table 2.1 Demographic and economic characteristics of Central Asian countries 50
Table 2.2 Educational characteristics of Central Asian countries 50
Table 2.3 Instructional time in hours in Central Asia, Grades 1-9 (1980-2000) 63
Table 2.4 School-leaving and university entrance examination systems in Central Asia 66
Table 3.1 Percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons, according to subject 73
Table 3.2 Percentage of students who reported taking private tutoring lessons individually or in groups 74
Table 3.3 The size of preparatory classes (percentage of students who reported taking preparatory courses, according to group size) 75
Table 3.4 Yearly costs of private tutoring in one subject as a percentage of GDP per capita (2006) 76
Table 3.5 Comparison of private tutoring costs among private tutoring users: private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses 77
Table 3.6 Reasons for taking private tutoring lessons (percentage of surveyed students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements listed) 81
Table 3.7 Schoolteachers working as private tutors (percentage of students whose private tutors were schoolteachers) 88
Table 3.8 Factors influencing the scope of private tutoring 91
Table 4.1 Kazakhstan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students), 103
Table 4.2 Kazakhstan: main reasons for using private tutoring and preparatory courses 108
Table 4.3 Kazakhstan: providers of private tutoring (percentage of students reporting taking private tutoring with different providers) 109
Table 4.4 Kazakhstan: students’ statements regarding corruption-related issues 113
Table 4.5 Kazakhstan: students’ opinions regarding the relationship between private tutoring and socio-economic inequities 114
Table 5.1 Kyrgyzstan: percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons according to subject 131
Table 5.2 Kyrgyzstan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students) 132
Table 5.3 Kyrgyzstan: the size of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students) 133
Table 5.4 Kyrgyzstan: main reasons for taking private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses in secondary schools (according to users) 134
Table 5.5 Kyrgyzstan: perceptions of private tutoring users of the impact of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses on university entrance examinations 138
Table 5.6 Kyrgyzstan: students’ opinions about corruption-related issues 140
Table 6.1 Tajikistan: main reasons for using private tutoring 155
Table 6.2 Tajikistan: users and providers of the private tutoring market 156
Table 6.3 Tajikistan: most common providers of private tutoring in descending order 158
Table 6.4 Tajikistan: students’ attitudes regarding teachers who worked as private tutors 162
Table 6.5 Tajikistan: students’ attitudes regarding access to private tutoring 163
# List of Figures

| Figure 1.1 | Factors driving the demand for private tutoring in the former socialist bloc | 40 |
| Figure 2.1 | Percentage of students at each proficiency level on the science scale | 61 |
| Figure 2.2 | Higher education enrolment rates (1989-2005), Central Asia | 64 |
| Figure 3.1 | Types of private tutoring by country | 70 |
| Figure 3.2 | Percentage of students taking private tutoring | 71 |
| Figure 3.3 | Private tutoring producers (sample mean) | 79 |
| Figure 3.4 | Students’ perceptions of the impact of private tutoring lessons on university entrance examinations (percentage of private tutoring users) | 82 |
| Figure 3.5 | Students’ perceptions of the impact of preparatory courses on university entrance examinations (percentage of private tutoring users) | 82 |
| Figure 3.6 | Private tutoring users by parents’ educational level (with or without higher education experience) | 86 |
| Figure 3.7 | Private tutoring users by geographical location (urban/rural) | 86 |
| Figure 4.1 | Kazakhstan: the scope of private tutoring | 102 |
| Figure 4.2 | Kazakhstan: percentage of students taking private tutoring according to subject and geographic location | 105 |
| Figure 4.3 | Kazakhstan: factors influencing the cost of private tutoring (according to university professors) | 107 |
| Figure 4.4 | Kazakhstan: students’ opinions regarding the impact of private tutoring on achievement in university entrance examinations | 111 |
| Figure 4.5 | Kazakhstan: proportion of national test scores and per capita income by regions (2005) | 116 |
| Figure 5.1 | Kyrgyzstan: enrolment rates in upper secondary and higher education institutions (1989-2005) | 129 |
| Figure 5.2 | Kyrgyzstan: the scope of private tutoring | 130 |
| Figure 5.3 | Kyrgyzstan: providers of private tutoring lessons | 136 |
Figure 5.4  Kyrgyzstan: share of students from urban and rural areas attending preparatory courses organized by different institutions  136
Figure 5.5  Kyrgyzstan: the cost of private tutoring lessons in Kyrgyz soms by rural and urban areas (all subjects)  139
Figure 6.1  Tajikistan: the scope of private tutoring  151
Figure 6.2  Tajikistan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring use  152
Figure 6.3  Tajikistan: percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons by grade  154
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Nodir Amonov** is a psychological scientist and the Head of the Department of Psychology at the Tajik State National University. He has worked as a school psychologist and as Director of the Laboratory of Diagnostics and Education of Gifted Children. He has participated in various international research projects, including the TEMPUS-TACIS project, the Psychological Rehabilitation of Children, the Psychological Foundation of Pedagogical Communication project of the Curriculum Resource Center of the Central European University (as a project director) and the Asian Development Bank’s Regional Technical Assistance project. He is the author of more than 38 academic articles and 2 methodological publications in the area of education.

*Contact information: osi@ersuosi.tajik.net*

**Nina Bagdasarova** holds a PhD in Educational Psychology from the Russian Academy of Education, Moscow. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the Russian-Kyrgyz Slavic University and is a Head of the Invisible College Kyrgyzstan in Bishkek. She also works as an independent expert and participates in the preparation of documents concerning social and educational policy issues, including the National Human Development Reports and the Millennium Development Goals Progress Report. Her recent work is dedicated to the promotion of multicultural education in Kyrgyzstan.

*Contact information: nina_bag@list.ru*

**Alexander Ivanov** is Director of the Education Initiatives Support Foundation, which is one of the largest educational think-tanks in Kyrgyzstan. His work experience includes educational policy projects, as well as initiatives in teacher training development and national curriculum reform. He was one of the most active participants in the establishment of the Central Asian Educational Cooperation Network. Since 2000, he has worked as an expert in various educational projects for the World Bank, USAID and the Open Society Institute.

*Contact information: ialex@soros.kg*

**Saule Kalikova** is Director of the Educational Policy Analysis Center at the Educational Center ‘Bilim–Central Asia’ and former Director of
Shodibeg Kodirov is Director of the Education Reform Support Union Pulse. He is a professional economist/statistician and a professor at the Tajik State National University. Kodirov has participated in various professional development courses, including courses organized by the Aga Khan Foundation (in macro- and micro-economics), the Kazakhstan Institute of Management, Economics and Strategic Research (at the Summer School of Economics) and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (on education policy). He has written textbooks and articles in the areas of economics of education, macro-economic politics, as well as sustainable development and statistics.

Contact information: shodibeg@mail.ru or osi@ersuos.tajik.net

Zhanar Rakhimzhanova has a Master’s of Education in Education Policy and Management from the University of Manchester and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences. She works as a programme co-ordinator in the Education Policy Analysis Center at the Educational Center Bilim, Central Asia. She has participated in several research projects implemented by the centre, including research projects focusing on the issue of dropouts, school budget transparency, monitoring and educational statistics, as well as private tutoring.

Contact information: zrakhimzhanova@bilim.kz

Iveta Silova is Assistant Professor of Comparative and International Education at the College of Education at Lehigh University (Pennsylvania, USA) and editor of a quarterly peer-reviewed journal, European Education: Issues and Studies. She holds a PhD in Comparative Education and Political Sociology from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Columbia University. She has taught as an adjunct professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, as a visiting professor at Baku State University, Kazakhstan Institute of
About the authors

Management, Economics and Strategic Research, and as a lecturer at the University of Latvia. Since 1997, Silova has worked in the Baltics, Central Asia and the Caucasus as a research associate and education adviser for the Open Society Institute/Soros Foundation (OSI), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Her research focuses on issues of globalization and education borrowing, as well as education policy efforts addressing educational inequities in the former socialist bloc.

Contact information: ism207@lehigh.edu

Algirdas Zabulionis works as an independent senior educational consultant at a UK-based consulting company, Anglia Assessment Ltd. (www.anglia-assessment.org). After resigning from the position of Director of National Examination Centre, Lithuania, in 2001, Zabulionis led the Centre for Education Policy at Vilnius University for several years. His working experience ranges from policy analysis and quality monitoring in education to educational statistics and data analysis for policymaking, management of educational assessment and test construction. Since 2005, Zabulionis has worked as a consultant for education assessment institutions in more than 10 countries in Europe and Asia. He also has extensive experience in international surveys of learning achievement, having served as the national co-ordinator of TIMSS, TIMSS-R, TIMSS-TREND and OECD PISA programmes in Lithuania.

Contact information: algiz@mail.lt
NOTES ON ORGANIZATIONS

International Institute for Educational Planning

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is an international centre for advanced training and research in the field of educational planning. It was established by UNESCO in 1963 and is financed by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions from Member States. In recent years the following Member States have provided voluntary contributions to the Institute: Australia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, India, Ireland, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The Institute’s aim is to contribute to the development of education throughout the world, by expanding both knowledge and the supply of competent professionals in the field of educational planning. In this endeavour the Institute co-operates with training and research organizations in Member States. The IIEP Governing Board, which approves the Institute’s programme and budget, consists of a maximum of eight elected members and four members designated by the United Nations Organization and certain of its specialized agencies and institutes.

Contact information: www.iiep.unesco.org

Open Society Institute

The Open Society Institute (OSI) works to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. To achieve its mission, OSI seeks to shape public policies that assure greater fairness in political, legal and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. On a local level, OSI implements a range of initiatives to advance justice, education, public health and independent media. At the same time, OSI builds alliances across borders and continents on issues such as corruption and freedom of information. OSI places a high priority on protecting and improving the lives of marginalized people and communities.

Investor and philanthropist George Soros created OSI in 1993 as a private operating and grant-making foundation to support his foundations in central and eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.
Notes on organizations

Those foundations were established, starting in 1984, to help countries make the transition from communism. OSI has expanded the activities of the Soros foundations network to encompass the United States and more than 60 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Each Soros foundation relies on the expertise of boards composed of eminent citizens who determine individual agendas based on local priorities.

**Contact information:** www.soros.org

**Education Support Program**

OSI’s Education Support Program (ESP) and its network partners support education reform in countries in transition, combining best practice and policy to strengthen open society values. ESP works to facilitate change in education and national policy development. ESP is the organizational hub for a dynamic and growing network of OSI/Soros foundations, education spin-off organizations, cross-national NGOs, regional education co-operation networks, OSI-related professional networks, and independent professionals. ESP provides support in south-eastern Europe, central and eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia.

ESP-supported education monitoring projects to date include: the Report on Gender Issues in Education covering CIS countries, undertaken with the OSI Network Women’s Program; Monitoring School Dropouts and Education in a Hidden Marketplace: Monitoring of Private Tutoring; and Monitoring Education for Roma and the International Comparative Data Set in Roma Education. ESP is currently engaged with the OSI EUMAP programme in a monitoring project on the access of Roma children to quality education. The resource pack/monograph on Religion and Schooling in Open Society also mapped current religious education policy in most of CEE/SEE/NIS, a compilation that had not previously been available and in which there has been significant interest. ESP’s aim is to identify an efficient and effective way to monitor key education concerns, such as the need to provide vulnerable groups with equal access to quality education, including open society values.

**Contact information:** www.soros.org/initiatives/esp
Network of Education Policy Centers

Education Policy Centers from central and eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union contribute to open, democratic and participatory policy processes. They monitor and promote transparent, non-discriminatory, non-selective education for all. The centres have become valuable partners in national policy development by providing alternative sources of information and policy options, in facilitating open public debate, and in raising awareness through advocating policies aimed at equal access to all levels of education. Through global networking, the Education Policy Centers gain new ideas and contacts, plan joint projects and learning events, and build their capacity in education policy analysis and advocacy.

Contact information: www.edupolicy.net/EN.php

Central Asian Education Cooperation Network

The regional Central Asian Education Co-operation Network (CA ECN) seeks to enhance education reform processes through improved co-operation among countries in the region. ESP has built a co-funding partnership with the Asian Development Bank for the project. CA ECN is a new, emerging complex network. Although such an organizational form is increasingly common internationally, there are only a few examples in the Central Asia region. The CA ECN has drawn on the experiences of and established contacts with the South-East Europe Education Co-operation Network (SEE ECN). The CA ECN builds upon the existing achievements of the OSI network and Soros foundation programmes by strengthening collaborative links among individuals, groups and education institutions in the region. Rather than establishing a new structure, the initiative supports the development of a regional network of affiliated national focal points mainly linked through an Internet interface that will lead subsequently to collaborative projects.

The main purpose of the CA ECN is to establish a network of education stakeholders in four Central Asian nations (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), interacting primarily through an Internet interface, with a view to sharing information on education reforms. Such information will include policy statements, project
Notes on organizations

documents, legislative acts and regulations, statistics, analytical reports, research papers, successful education practices, textbooks, methodology guides, a database of experts and consultants and so on. 

Contact information: www.educasia.net
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
The turn of the century has marked a proliferation of studies on private supplementary tutoring in different parts of the world. While initial research gave prominence to Asian societies, more recent studies reveal that private tutoring is growing elsewhere, including in Africa (Paviot, Heinsohn and Korkman, 2008; Sambo, 2001), the United States of America (Davies, 2004; Gordon, Bridglall and Mereoe, 2005), western Europe (Glasman, 2004; Ireson, 2004; Mischo and Haag, 2002), and south-eastern/central Europe and the former Soviet Union (Silova et al., 2006b). In countries as diverse as Japan, Egypt, India, Malta and Poland, more than one third of students regularly receive supplementary private tutoring; in some societies this proportion is considerably higher (Bray, 2003; 2006). As Baker and LeTendre (2005: 55) state, the use of private after-school activities has become “a world megatrend” among families with children in state education.

While private tutoring has penetrated virtually all corners of the world, it has remained a neglected topic for education policy analysis in the former socialist bloc. The lack of official acknowledgement and academic discussion of private tutoring may partly be attributed to the socialist legacy of viewing “school as an ideal institution” (Silova and Bray, 2006: 44). As Murawska and Putkiewicz (2005) explain, Soviet ideology assumed that core segments of the socialist system should function flawlessly – especially the army, police and the education system. Any acknowledgment of the existence of private tutoring could be interpreted as a serious imperfection in the state education system, eroding the socialist myth of free and uniform education for all. In the USSR itself, private tutoring was officially frowned upon as unwarranted, with the government being very reluctant to admit that the society it had built did not give everyone an equal chance (Jacoby, 1974). After the collapse of socialism in the early 1990s, government officials in many countries continued to rely on this logic, avoiding discussion of private tutoring in part because they feared that acknowledgement of the existence of a private tutoring market would be interpreted as an indicator of an ineffective state education system.
As government officials in many countries of south-east/central Europe and the former Soviet Union continued to underplay the prominence of private tutoring during the post-socialist transformation processes, a study of private tutoring in the former socialist bloc – *Education in a hidden marketplace: monitoring of private tutoring* (Silova *et al.*, 2006b) – placed the issue of private tutoring at the centre of education policy debates by confirming that tutoring was, indeed, a reality. The study surveyed nearly 9,000 students in nine countries of the former socialist bloc, namely Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. The findings revealed that the majority of surveyed students used private tutoring in the final grade of secondary school. The scope of private tutoring ranged from approximately 50 per cent in south-east Europe to more than 80 per cent in the Caucasus.

The study highlighted that private tutoring created new educational opportunities for many individuals but also placed heavy burdens on state education systems (Silova *et al.*, 2006b). On the positive side, tutoring provided incomes for the tutors, many of whom had been teachers whose main salaries became inadequate in the context of economic decline that followed the collapse of the socialist bloc. Tutoring also increased learning and human capital, and it provided an out-of-school activity for young people who might otherwise not be constructively engaged. More importantly, private tutoring served as an effective mechanism for many children and young adults to adapt to the new reality and cope with the post-socialist system changes (Murawska and Putkiewicz, 2005). Responding to students’ needs in a more efficient, flexible and prompt manner, private tutoring was often perceived as an important supplement to the rigid mainstream education system, which had been slow to embrace new educational changes after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Silova and Bray, 2006). Importantly, many families embraced private tutoring as a long-awaited opportunity for educational choice, which had been unavailable to many families during the socialist period.

Less positively, private tutoring created new burdens for those involved in the tutoring market: it consumed substantial amounts of a household’s income, it became a heavy burden on low-income families, and it placed unhealthy pressures on young children. Furthermore,
the growth of the private tutoring market reflected the burdens of the
growing consumerism ideology, which (in simplistic terms) dictated that
“we are what we buy” (Wright, 2003: 73). In the post-socialist context,
this meant the crude celebration of consumption in all aspects of human
life, including education. As Silova and Kazimzade (2006) observed,
hiring private tutors became as fashionable as buying cellular phones,
symbolizing students’ intellectual sophistication and economic status
in the post-Soviet context. Such uncontrolled education consumerism
appeared to have other negative implications for schools and societies,
such as exacerbating social inequities, distorting curricula and inviting
corruption in the education systems (Silova and Bray, 2006).

In Education in a hidden marketplace (2006), Silova, Budiene
and Bray uncovered a set of complex tensions in the education sphere
of the former socialist countries. In particular, the book highlighted
an ideological tension between the values of the new market forces
and the socialist legacy of egalitarian education. In particular, the
post-socialist transformation processes marked the emergence of new
values promoting the free-market economy and encouraging private
investment in education to increase education choices. While the market
ideology undoubtedly created new education opportunities for many
children (for example, through opening up access to private schools
and private tutoring), it also produced unequal outcomes in terms of
varying degrees of access to, and quality of, education depending on
the geographical location of schools and the socio-economic status of
families. It is not surprising, therefore, that some critics have insisted
on safeguarding the socialist legacy of a free, equitable education
system – one that would reduce and eventually eliminate the need for
private tutoring. In the context of these ideological tensions, this study
examines the phenomenon of private tutoring in the former Soviet
republics of Central Asia.

Examining private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

This cross-national study continues the monitoring initiative of the
Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute (Silova et al.,
2006b), which examined the nature, scope, factors and impact of private
tutoring in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia,
Lithuania, Mongolia, Slovakia, Poland and Ukraine. This report
extends the geographic scope of the original study to Central Asia. While the borders of Central Asia are subject to multiple definitions, this study focuses on the geographic region comprising the five former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The region is located at the centre of the Eurasian continent, bordering the Russian Federation in the north, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan in the south, and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China in the east.

With a specific focus on the three Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the study aims to examine the complexity of the private tutoring phenomenon in Central Asia, analyse its consequences for the education systems (dynamics of teaching and learning in state schools) and social structures (stability and stratification), as well as identify challenges that confront education stakeholders and policymakers as they decide how to respond to the rapidly spreading and constantly changing phenomenon of private tutoring. More specifically, the study examines:

- the general characteristics of private tutoring (scale, cost, geographic coverage and academic subjects);
- the main factors underlying the demand for private tutoring (such as quality of mainstream education, higher education entrance examinations and education financing);
- the educational, social and economic impact of private tutoring on the education systems (geographic, socio-economic and gender inequalities);
- policy options and alternative approaches.

For the purposes of this study, the focus is on tutoring in academic school subjects (for example, mathematics, history or English), which is provided for financial gain and is supplementary to provisions by mainstream schooling (Bray, 1999; 2003). This definition includes private lessons offered to individuals and small groups (private tutoring lessons), and larger out-of-school classes provided by individuals and organizations (preparatory courses). Drawing on Bray’s (1999; 2003) definition of private tutoring, three aspects of this focus need to be emphasized:
• The study focuses only on academic subjects taught in mainstream schools, such as languages, science and mathematics. The focus does not include extra-curricular subjects such as soccer, ballet or music. While these additional forms of learning are certainly important, they deserve a separate focus.

• Private tutoring only involves services provided by tutors and the companies that employ tutors for financial gain. The study does not examine extra lessons given by mainstream teachers to needy students on a voluntary basis outside school hours. Nor does it examine the voluntary help of family members to other family members. Although these different sources of support by families and communities are of considerable interest, they are not usually included in studies of private tutoring.

• Private tutoring is additional to the provision by mainstream schooling. This definition implies that tutoring is provided outside school hours, mostly in the evenings, at weekends and during vacations. Most of the tutoring is also provided on separate premises, outside the school compounds. However, schools in some countries permit their classrooms to be used for private tutoring. This arrangement is included in the focus if the tutoring is received on a fee-paying basis and is considered additional to the mainstream work of the schools.

The study draws on quantitative data from more than 3,000 first-year university students enrolled in low-, medium- and high-demand study programmes. Quantitative data are supplemented by qualitative data from document analysis and interviews with various education stakeholders in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, including government officials, schoolteachers, students and parents. The quantitative data were used to identify the scope of supplementary private tutoring, while the qualitative data helped to show the characteristics, causes and consequences of private tutoring in Central Asia.

Overview of the study

The study features both international comparative findings and national case studies. Chapter 1 places the study of private tutoring into a broader conceptual framework in order to understand what drives the
demand for private tutoring globally and what factors may be unique to the post-socialist education environment. *Chapter 2* analyses social, economic and political circumstances in the former socialist countries of Central Asia. *Chapter 3* presents a comparative analysis of regional findings of the study. Separate chapters then present the three national case studies of private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia. These case studies analyse the private tutoring phenomenon across a range of settings and emphasize the uniqueness of different education policy contexts in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The final chapter summarizes conclusions and policy recommendations drawn from this study. Although this study does not fully explain the complex issues surrounding the phenomenon of private tutoring, it provides a first insight into the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia.
Before delving into the unique political, economic and social features of the post-socialist education transformation in Central Asia, it is important to place the study of private tutoring in a broader conceptual framework in order to understand what drives the demand for private tutoring globally and what factors may be unique to the post-socialist education environment. A review of various research studies of private tutoring sheds light on a wide variety of factors, which highlight the relationship between private tutoring (or ‘shadow education’) and mainstream education systems (Baker and LeTendre, 2005; Bray, 1999; Stevenson and Baker, 1992). For example, Bray uses metaphors of a ‘shadow’ to describe the relationship between private tutoring and mainstream education systems:

The metaphor of a shadow is appropriate in several ways. First, private supplementary tutoring only exists because the mainstream education exists; second, as the size and shape of the mainstream education change, so do the size and shape of supplementary tutoring; third, in almost all societies much more public attention focuses on the mainstream than on its shadow; and fourth, the features of the shadow system are much less distinct than those of the mainstream system. ... Just as the shadow cast by a sun-dial can tell the observer about the passage of time, so the shadow of an education system can tell the observer about changes in societies. (Bray, 1999: 17)

The metaphor of a shadow is particularly useful in the context of post-Soviet education transformations, where education systems have experienced major changes with regard to organization, content and process since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. How do the changes in mainstream education systems affect the scope and nature
of private tutoring? What can the study of private tutoring tell us about the changing nature of mainstream education systems? Four factors stand out because of their relevance to the post-Soviet context. The first explains private tutoring as a ‘cultural phenomenon’, which is driven by specific national education strategies. The second emerges from the commonly used argument that large-scale shadow education is a product of an ‘enrichment strategy’, which is associated with the increasingly competitive nature of education systems and high-stakes examinations. The third has to do with the ‘remedial nature’ of private tutoring. In addition to these most commonly articulated factors, some studies note that private tutoring may also stem from the deteriorating status of the teaching profession, whereby schoolteachers use private tutoring to supplement their incomes and legitimize their professional identities (Foondun, 2002; Shafiq, 2002; Silova et al., 2006b).

Factors reflecting interaction between shadow education and mainstream schools

Private tutoring as a cultural phenomenon

Some scholars explain the private tutoring phenomenon in terms of cultural factors that account for the perceived role of effort in educational success (Rohlen and LeTendre, 1996; Salili, 1999; Stevenson and Stigler, 1992). For example, these studies explain that many Asian cultures, particularly those influenced by Confucian traditions, place strong emphasis on effort, while European and North American cultures are more likely to emphasize ability. Some studies suggest that supplementary tutoring is especially likely to be widespread in cultures that stress effort (Foondun, 2002; Zeng, 1999). Related to this is the extent to which individual schools – and society more broadly – are competitive. For example, one argument on the use of private tutoring revolves around the notion that some countries (such as Korea, Singapore and Japan) have developed system-wide motivation for national achievement. In this context, the widespread existence of private tutoring could be viewed as a consequence of “an explicit national strategy to foster national achievement” (Baker and LeTendre, 2005: 62). A different dimension of socio-cultural factors driving the demand for private tutoring has been brought out by the political,
economic and social transformations in central and south-eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In these regions, families have increasingly relied on supplementary private tutoring as a mechanism to adapt to the new socio-cultural realities of new democracies and market economies (Murawska and Putkiewicz, 2006).

**Private tutoring as an ‘enrichment strategy’**

According to Baker and LeTendre (2005: 61), one of the most commonly used explanations of the phenomenon of private tutoring emphasizes its function as an ‘enrichment strategy’. This approach suggests that the demand for private tutoring is primarily driven by a competition for future educational opportunities and is associated with the existence of high-stakes examinations (for example, centralized school-leaving or university entrance examinations). For example, the close connection between elite universities and labour market opportunities in Taiwan, the examination-based link between secondary schools and the best universities in Greece, highly competitive higher education entrance examinations in Turkey, and the secondary school selection process in Japan all produce a strong logic for students to use private tutoring (Bray and Kwok, 2003; Stevenson and Baker, 1992; Tansel and Bircan, 2006). In these circumstances, high-stakes examinations serve as “a gate-keeper to education and labour market opportunities” (Baker and LeTendre, 2005: 62). A further variant of the gate-keeping functions of university examinations has been noted in some of the post-Soviet republics. Before the introduction of centralized university entrance examinations in the Republic of Georgia in 2006, for example, lecturers in the most prestigious universities were able to command high prices for tutoring because they knew, or were presumed to know, at least the rough content of the entrance examinations set by their own institutions (MacWilliams, 2002). By contrast, education systems in other countries are less dependent on the examinations set by individual institutions and are thus less dependent on tutoring by individuals who specialize in particular examinations for particular institutions.

Some studies have questioned the link between high-stakes examinations and private tutoring. For example, Aurini and Davis (2004) observed that tutoring businesses were growing substantially in Canada, despite the fact that Canadian universities lacked entrance
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

examinations and were not arrayed in a steep prestige hierarchy, as are universities in other countries such as the United States and Japan. On the basis of a Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) analysis, Baker and LeTendre (2005) argue that the size, prevalence and role of private tutoring are unrelated to whether or not national high-stakes tests exist in a country. Given that the TIMSS study focused on Grade 7 students only, and taking into consideration that in many education systems students start preparing for high-stakes examinations only in the final grades of secondary school (that is, Grades 10 and 11), it is not surprising that a link between private tutoring and high-stakes examinations remained undetected in the analysis by Baker and LeTendre (2005). Clearly, further research is necessary to explore the complex relationship between high-stakes examinations and private tutoring in a global environment where students increasingly view schools as a competitive arena in which they must strive to get ahead.

Private tutoring as a ‘remedial strategy’

Emphasizing the institutional quality of formal schooling, Baker and LeTendre (2005: 62) suggest that private tutoring could be viewed as a ‘remedial strategy’. In particular, they argue that lower public expenditure on education and less-than-full education enrolment lead to increased use of private tutoring, greater intensity of use, and use by high-achieving students. Students make greater use of private tutoring in countries where mass schooling has not been achieved or in nations that spend less than average on education. In this context, private tutoring is used as a remedial strategy to help meet the requirements of what is being taught in mainstream schools (Baker and LeTendre, 2005: 59). In the words of Baker and LeTendre (2005: 64), “the value of schooling is seen beyond, and in spite of, lower access and quality of schooling in particular”. Although in some contexts – especially in the more economically advanced countries included in the TIMSS sample) under-funding and limited access to schooling may explain the use of private tutoring as a complement to mainstream schooling, this argument needs further scrutiny and more evidence. Most countries in the TIMSS sample have already achieved or are very close to achieving the goal of Universal Primary Education (UPE), while this is not the
Global patterns and post-socialist realities in the private tutoring market

case in less economically developed countries where under-funding and limited access to schooling do not lead to private tutoring (for example, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Southern Sudan). The question then becomes, under what circumstances is private tutoring used to complement the quality of and access to mainstream education?

While the argument explaining the use of private tutoring as a remedial strategy needs further exploration, a study of private tutoring in the nine countries of the former socialist bloc (Silova et al., 2006b) revealed that the scope of private tutoring may be related to a public perception of a deteriorating quality of education in mainstream schools. In all sampled countries there was a strong belief that private tutoring was a response to the poor quality of education in mainstream schools. In the total sample, an overwhelming 85 per cent of the respondents (with very small variations by countries) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “the quality of mainstream education system should be such that no one would need private tutoring”. By implication, a decision on the part of students to get private tutoring may indicate their lack of satisfaction with the quality of education in mainstream schools. For example, almost 60 per cent of respondents in Azerbaijan and more than 50 per cent in Georgia – the countries with the largest scope and highest pervasiveness of private tutoring – believed that private tutoring is “the only way to get a high-quality education”. National case studies and official statistics revealed that mainstream education systems in these countries suffered from chronic under-funding during the transformation period, resulting in a deteriorating quality of mainstream education, as reflected in the lack of textbooks and teaching materials, limited professional development opportunities for teachers, deteriorating physical infrastructure of schools and other factors.

Private tutoring as a socio-economic survival strategy

Finally, the economic circumstances of mainstream teachers may be an important educational factor driving the demand for private tutoring. In some countries, teachers are paid so poorly that they and their families would be unable to subsist if they had to depend on official salaries alone. Teachers therefore have to secure additional incomes increasingly provided by fees charged for tutoring services. For example, the study of private tutoring in the former socialist bloc
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

(Silova et al., 2006b) revealed that private tutoring is more widespread in countries suffering from economic difficulties, because it is a mechanism through which teachers can generate additional income in order to supplement their fairly low and irregular salaries. During the post-socialist transition period, teachers’ salaries declined dramatically, no longer providing subsistence for average-sized families. In this context, an advantage of private tutoring is an opportunity for teachers to generate additional income.

While generating considerable employment and strengthening the stability of the teaching force, private tutoring may also raise ethical issues in mainstream education. In Mauritius and Bangladesh, for example, teachers commonly abuse their positions by teaching only half the syllabus during official hours and then declaring that if students want to receive teaching in the second half, then they must come to their after-school tutoring classes (Foondun, 2002; Shafiq, 2002). These teachers are able to exert pressure not only because the students face external competition, but also because the teachers control which students are and are not promoted to higher grades at the end of each academic year.

**Conceptualizing the study of private tutoring in Central Asia**

Most of the studies reviewed here attempt to explain the private tutoring phenomenon in terms of cultural factors, enrichment strategies, remedial mechanisms or economic hardship of teachers. Few other factors are considered to explain the growing demand for private tutoring, and few other studies consider a combination of multiple factors that may explain a variation in the scope of private tutoring among different countries. Given the complexity of post-socialist transformation processes and drawing on the initial analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data on private tutoring from the nine countries of the former socialist bloc (Silova and Bray, 2006), this study suggests that the scope of private tutoring in Central Asia and other socialist countries cannot be explained by one single factor. It is likely that *a combination of multiple factors* explains what makes private tutoring more widespread in some countries than in others.
Figure 1.1 illustrates a combination of factors that may affect the demand for private tutoring in Central Asia and other former socialist countries. These factors are categorized into two groups of macro-level and micro-level factors. At the macro level, it is important to distinguish between three larger groups of factors that highlight different forces driving the demand for private tutoring, including: (1) private tutoring as an enrichment strategy, which reflects system-driven pressure to compete in the education sphere; (2) private tutoring as a remedial strategy, which reflects stakeholder-driven pressure to compensate for the perceived deterioration in the quality of education in mainstream schools; and (3) private tutoring as a socio-economic survival strategy, which reflects a teacher-driven demand for private tutoring to compensate for low salary/prestige. At the micro level, factors may include the different characteristics of individuals, households and communities.

In addition to highlighting possible factors driving the demand for private tutoring, Figure 1.1 provides an initial list of indicators that may provide insight into how exactly these various factors affect the demand for private tutoring in unique post-socialist settings. For example, to understand private tutoring as an enrichment strategy, it is important to look at the education system structures that may create a close linkage between academic performance and future opportunities, such as the existence of high-stakes examinations within education systems. At the same time, it is important to monitor student perceptions of the impact of private tutoring on university entrance examination outcomes. Even if high-stakes examinations do not exist in a country, students may feel themselves under pressure to engage in private tutoring in order to become competitive in the education marketplace.

To understand the function of private tutoring as a remedial strategy, it is necessary to examine student achievement outcomes, which may be available through nationally administered education achievement tests or international studies such as TIMSS, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), or the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Given the fact that only a handful of former socialist countries have participated in international student achievement studies, public perceptions of the quality of education in mainstream schools should be considered. Finally, the level of state investment in...
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

**Figure 1.1 Factors driving the demand for private tutoring in the former socialist bloc**

**Socio-economic survival strategy**
(Teacher-driven demand to compensate for low salaries/prestige)
- Teacher salaries below the national wage average
- Gross national income per capita
- Perception of deteriorating prestige of the teaching profession in mainstream schools

**Enrichment strategy**
(System-driven pressure to compete in the education sphere)
- The existence of high-stakes examinations (for example, centralized university entrance examinations)
- Student perceptions of the impact of tutoring on university entrance examination outcomes

**Remedial strategy**
(Student-driven demand to compensate for education quality in mainstream schools)
- Deteriorating education quality in mainstream schools as expressed in student achievement outcomes
- Public perception of deteriorating education quality in mainstream schools
- Low state investment in education as expressed in education expenditure as a percentage of GDP

**Individual characteristics of private tutoring users**
- Educational background
- Parents’ professional background
- Community characteristics (urban/rural)

*Micro-level factors*
education – as reflected in education expenditure as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) – could be another indicator of the ‘health’ of mainstream education systems. Combined, these various indicators of the remedial nature of private tutoring may help to document the actual and perceived quality of education in mainstream schools, as well as the perceived need among stakeholders to use private tutoring to compensate for the shortcomings of mainstream education.

The teacher-driven demand for private tutoring can be examined by looking at gross national income per capita, teachers’ salaries and teacher status/prestige. For example, gross national income per capita may provide a general picture of the economic conditions in a country, while teachers’ salaries as a percentage of the national average wage may explain whether private tutoring can be used by teachers to generate additional income in order to supplement low salaries. Furthermore, it is important to look at the public perception of the teaching profession to understand what may drive some teachers away from teaching in mainstream schools and into private tutoring. In the age of the ‘outcome-based accountability’ reforms that have swept the former socialist bloc (Steiner-Khamsi, Silova and Johnson, 2006), teachers may seek to offer private tutoring because it provides an opportunity to increase their professionalism through creativity while avoiding the rigidity of state control.

Finally, it is important to account for demographic data of students who receive private tutoring and the factors that may make them more likely to engage in tutoring compared to their counterparts. In particular, it is necessary to consider such individual and household data as household income, parents’ education and professional background, as well as community characteristics such as urban/rural differences. An international overview of various studies on private tutoring by Dang and Rogers (2008) confirms that the variables that most influence attendance at private tutoring classes include household income, parental education and geographic location (whether the household is located in an urban or a rural area). As Dang and Rogers (2008) point out, these variables predict higher student attendance at private tutoring classes, meaning that students from richer, more educated households living in urban areas are more likely to attend and spend more on tutoring classes.
To summarize, this study attempts to highlight the complexity of the private tutoring phenomenon in the post-socialist context. It seeks to account for the variety of factors driving the demand for private tutoring. On the one hand, the study considers institutional features in students’ learning environment (as expressed in students’ perceptions of the quality of education in mainstream schools) as one of the key factors driving the demand for private tutoring. At the same time, the study explores the importance of other factors associated with the demand for private tutoring, such as the existence of high-stakes examinations and academic achievement incentives, as well as the unsatisfactory socio-economic conditions of teachers. In the post-socialist education transformation context, it is likely that a combination of these factors makes private tutoring more widespread in some countries than in others.

The conceptualization of the study of private tutoring presented here – including the suggested list of factors and indicators – is neither complete nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to identify some possible factors that may help to explain the varying scope of private tutoring in different settings. As such, this exercise should be viewed as a work in progress that provides a useful starting point for conceptualizing the complex context within which private tutoring is taking place in Central Asia and in other former socialist countries.

**Methodological considerations**

Given the importance of both micro- and macro-level factors in driving the demand for private tutoring, this study uses multiple units of analysis to examine the phenomenon of private tutoring in Central Asia. As Bray and Thomas (1995) observe, multilevel analysis is valuable in a broader context, because it reveals different facets of a complex phenomenon. While the country is the most visible unit of analysis in this study (as is evident in the country case studies included), the report also looks beyond the country level to consider the Central Asian region itself as a unit of analysis, thus providing an opportunity to compare findings with other geographic regions such as south-east Europe, the Caucasus and the European Union.
At the same time, the study considers many other units of analysis within each country. For example, background information on surveyed students allows data analysis by gender, socio-economic status, geographic location and other factors. Similarly, the study distinguishes between tutors working individually and those employed by institutions. Furthermore, universities and different study programmes within universities are compared with one another, thus adding yet another unit of analysis. In other words, the use of multilevel unit analysis allows the production of a larger picture from a summation of the parts, taking into consideration culture and context. As Crossley (2002: 84) points out, sensitivity to culture and context is also central to “the rationale for differing units of analysis, and to many emergent strategies designed to bridge the gap between research and policy and practice”.

Building on these conceptual and methodological considerations, this study uses both quantitative and qualitative data to explain the complexity of the private tutoring phenomenon in Central Asia. Quantitative data were collected using a survey, which was developed in connection with the education monitoring initiative of the Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC) and the Education Support Program of the Open Society Institute (ESP OSI) in the nine countries of central/south-east Europe and the former Soviet Union (Silova et al., 2006b). The survey was almost identical to the one used in the original monitoring study of private tutoring, with the exception of items addressing the specifics of the education context in Central Asia. The survey consisted of four parts. The first part of the questionnaire focused on background information, including geographic, socio-economic and respondents’ educational characteristics. The second part identified general features of private tutoring lessons (scope, subjects, costs and frequency of use), perceived impact on student achievement, reasons for taking private tutoring lessons and information on the providers of private tutoring lessons. The third part of the questionnaire collected

1. The questionnaire was based on a modified version of a Lithuanian questionnaire designed by the Education Policy Centre at Vilnius University, where it had been pilot-tested and used for the Lithuanian study on private tutoring in 2002/2003. The goal of the 2002/2003 study was to examine the scale, nature and implications of private tutoring. The study was based on a quantitative survey of 2,000 first-year university students from five universities in Lithuania. The study found that approximately 60 per cent of the students surveyed had used the help of private tutors to prepare for the school-leaving/university entrance examination. For more information on the findings of the study, contact the Education Policy Centre at Vilnius University.
the same information on preparatory courses. The fourth part explored student opinions regarding private tutoring.

The survey targeted first-year university students (referred to as the ‘university sample’ in the study). University students were chosen to ensure more forthright student responses about their private tutoring experience in secondary schools. Having just entered higher education institutions, the first-year students had fresh memories of their private tutoring experiences in schools and were less likely to feel intimidated to talk about them. Because the university sample did not represent all students leaving secondary schools in the surveyed countries, the questionnaire also asked the respondents to estimate the scope of private tutoring among their classmates.

As in the original study, the sample included respondents from universities in different geographic regions of each country (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2). Within each university, faculties and study programmes were stratified according to low and high demand, the level of demand being identified by the number of students competing for available spaces. Selected programmes had the highest ratio of number of applicants to number of available places. In some, but not all, countries, these ratios corresponded with the highest/lowest scores achieved by students on centralized university entrance examinations. The number of participants per programme was determined on the basis of the number of students enrolled in each programme in the first undergraduate year. Although selected study programmes varied by country, the high-demand programmes typically included business- and economics-related study programmes (for example, business, economics, finance and management), while the low-demand programmes included pedagogy and natural sciences (biology, physics, chemistry). Medical, pharmaceutical and art programmes were excluded from the sample.
Table 1.1 Characteristics of the study sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>University sample size (total)</th>
<th>University sample By level of programme demand</th>
<th>University sample By geographical location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>1,004</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3,103</td>
<td>1,871</td>
<td>1,232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Kazakhstan the survey was administered in Almaty, which was the capital city until 1997. Although the capital moved to Astana in 1997, most education infrastructure (especially higher education institutions) remained in the former capital, Almaty.

Table 1.2 Universities participating in the survey by geographical location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>University name and location In the capital city*</th>
<th>Outside the capital city</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Kazakhstan National University, named after Al Farabi</td>
<td>South Kazakhstan State University, named after Auezov (Shymkent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kazakhstan National Technical University, named after Satpayev</td>
<td>South Kazakhstan Humanities Institute, named after Saparbayev (Shymkent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kazakhstan National Pedagogical University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kazakhstan State Women’s Pedagogical Institute</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University</td>
<td>Osh State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kyrgyz National University Bishkek Humanities University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>Tajikistan State National University</td>
<td>Kurgan Tube State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russian-Tajik Slavic University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tajikistan State Institute of Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Kazakhstan, the survey was conducted in the former capital Almaty.

The questionnaire was translated from English into the Russian and Tajik languages. Russian-language questionnaires were used in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (that is, the two countries with a predominantly Russian-speaking population), and the Tajik-language questionnaire was used in Tajikistan. All questionnaires were back-translated for verification. In all countries, the survey was administered between November 2005 and January 2006. On
average, completion of the questionnaire took 30-45 minutes. After
data collection, the national data sets were submitted in a format for
processing with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to
the Education Policy Centre (EPC) at Vilnius University, which created
the international database for the study. The EPC checked the data for
inconsistencies, of which all were documented and sent to the national
research teams for clarification. The data-cleaning process consisted
of several steps designed to guarantee the high quality of the data. The
EPC also calculated the weights to be applied to the sample according
to the previously approved sampling design in each country.

Quantitative data were complemented by qualitative data, which
were used to explain the causes and consequences of private tutoring
in each country. The type and amount of qualitative data varied by
country and depended on the available human and financial resources.
Typically, local research teams conducted document analysis, press
and media review, focus group discussions, and individual interviews
with various education stakeholders. For example, interviews and
focus-group discussions were organized for government officials
(for example, ministry of education representatives, local education
authorities), private tutoring providers (for example, private tutors and
representatives of private tutoring agencies), and students in private
tutoring. Interviews and focus groups examined teacher perceptions of
the dynamics of private tutoring, the impact of tutoring on schools,
teachers and students, and positive and negative implications of private
tutoring for mainstream schools. Finally, all country teams conducted
roundtable discussions of their draft reports with major education
stakeholders in their countries and used the results of these public
discussions to formulate conclusions and policy recommendations for
their individual country reports. This study is thus the product of an
intensive and fruitful collaboration within and across the Central Asian
borders.

Any research on private tutoring encounters various obstacles
(Silova, Bray and Zabulionis, 2006), and this study is no exception.
Logistical issues were perhaps the most difficult hurdles to overcome
as each country team needed to secure letters of support from ministries
of education in order to proceed with data collection in educational
institutions. Unfortunately, the study team failed to obtain government
permission to collect data in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, thus missing a unique opportunity to examine the dynamics of the use of private tutoring in some of the most centralized and authoritarian states of Central Asia. In addition, the study encountered several methodological limitations, inherited from the original study design (Silova et al., 2006a). In particular, the study sample was limited to first-year university students who were asked to reflect upon their private tutoring experiences during the last year of secondary school. The decision to focus on first-year university students was based on the assumption that this target group would be more objective and forthright about their private tutoring experiences in secondary school because they were no longer a part of that educational environment. At the time, the study team assumed that their experiences were recent enough for them to recall accurately. While the focus on first-year university students had its merits, the exclusive focus on this target group also meant that the study excluded other important student population groups, who may have used private tutoring but, for various reasons, did not to enter higher education institutions. Undoubtedly, this sampling did not permit a full estimate of the scope and geographic coverage of private tutoring in secondary schools in Central Asia.

Notwithstanding these limitations, this study is unique because it represents the first attempt to examine systematically the nature, scope and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia. Thus, it serves as an important empirical foundation for policymakers and education stakeholders in the region as they begin to examine the implications of the private tutoring phenomenon for education policy and practice in Central Asia.
CHAPTER 2
EDUCATION AND POST-SOCIALIST TRANSFORMATIONS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Iveta Silova

Unlike most of central/south-east Europe and the Baltic states, where post-socialist transformations resulted in the emergence of open, liberal societies at least partly rooted in respect for the rule of law, human rights and economic freedom, Central Asian political transformations took distinctly different political trajectories. While the Kyrgyz Republic attempted to rapidly adopt democratic and market reforms, the other Central Asian republics – Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – could be characterized by a certain degree of authoritarianism, corporatism, cronyism and state involvement in economic life (Karatnycky, 2000). Some Central Asian republics (especially Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan) settled into repressive autocracies, which had little or no space for political opposition groupings and independent civic activism (Freedom House, 2005). Moreover, while four Central Asian republics survived the transition and maintained internal stability, the Tajik regime experienced a civil war (1993-1995), followed by the prolonged period of civil unrest, which ended with the signing of peace accords in 1997.

To various degrees, all Central Asian countries have been affected by rising unemployment, falling wage levels, increased poverty, growing inequality, endemic corruption and the social problems that have accompanied post-Soviet transformations (see Tables 2.1 and 2.2). Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are among the countries with the lowest GDP levels per capita, the highest poverty rates and the greatest fiscal difficulties (UNICEF, 2007). According to the World Bank (2005a), more than 70 per cent of people in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and more than 40 per cent in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan lived below the poverty line in 2003 (that is, on less than US$2.15 per day). In Tajikistan, as well as other countries in the region, child poverty is significantly higher than overall poverty (Baschieri and Falkingham, 2007; UNICEF, 2007). All countries have experienced growing inequality, as a result
Table 2.1  Demographic and economic characteristics of Central Asian countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>0.794 (73) Medium</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>1,978</td>
<td>6,990</td>
<td>2,940</td>
<td>7,120</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.696 (116) Medium</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>1,714</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.673 (122) Medium</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.713 (109) Medium</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>0.702 (113) Medium</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>1,835</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>2,060</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Development Indicators Online (World Bank, 2007).

Notes: \(^a\)Data from the Human Development Report (UNDP, 2007). Data refer to medium-variant projections.

Table 2.2  Educational characteristics of Central Asian countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>104.4</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: \(^a\)Data from ministries of education (2007). \(^e\)Data for all countries from UNICEF Transmonee (2007); \(^d\)Data for Kyrgyzstan from Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (2006); data for Kazakhstan from the State Agency on Statistics for the 2004/2005 academic year (2005); Data for Tajikistan from Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan (2007).

Source: UNESCO (2005), unless otherwise indicated.
of a combination of the growth of the private sector, the collapse of government revenue, and the transfer of previously publicly owned assets to private individuals and companies (UNICEF, 2007). The Gini index in Table 2.1 reflects this condition in the countries reviewed.

The countries with the highest poverty rates (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) are also those with the highest proportion of people unable to afford the private costs of education, and they are at risk of not achieving some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For example, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are at risk of not achieving MDG-2, which aims to ensure UPE completion by 2015 (UNESCO, 2007; World Bank, 2005b). In Tajikistan, survey data show that one child in five might not be attending primary school and that dropping out of school is a growing problem (Open Society Institute, 2007; World Bank, 2005b). As MDG targets are being redefined to expand universal enrolment to upper secondary education in some of the former socialist countries (often referred to as the MDG-plus agenda), Central Asian republics have some of the lowest upper secondary enrolment in the former socialist region, below 50 per cent in most Central Asian countries, including Kyrgyzstan (45 per cent), Tajikistan (29 per cent) and Turkmenistan (28 per cent). By contrast, most former socialist countries have fairly high net enrolment ratios in secondary education, with most of them over 60 per cent and half over 80 per cent (World Bank, 2005b). Tajikistan has also failed to achieve the first milestone of MDG-3, which aimed to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005.

**Education and post-Soviet transformation processes in Central Asia**

To understand the complex impact of post-socialist transformation processes on education in Central Asia, it is important to examine the political, economic and educational changes in the region since the collapse of the Soviet Union. To some extent, a combination of these system changes may have triggered the rise of private tutoring in the region, bringing new learning opportunities for many young people.

---

2. The second goal of MDG states that “all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling” by 2015 (United Nations, 2008).

3. With most of the countries of south-east/central Europe and the former Soviet Union are well on their way to achieving UPE, some are focusing on universal completion of secondary education, which is referred to as the MDG-plus agenda (World Bank, 2005b).
while restricting educational prospects for many others (Silova et al., 2006b). In particular, it is important to examine the following changes in education brought about by the post-Soviet transformation processes in Central Asia: (1) declining state expenditure on education coupled with increasing private spending on education; (2) the deteriorating status of the teaching profession; (3) a stagnating education environment; (4) the declining quality of education; (5) increasing demand for higher education; and (6) the changing nature of examination systems.

**Decreasing state education expenditures and increasing private spending on education**

Economic decline has had a direct impact on education spending, which decreased rapidly across all Central Asian countries during the post-Soviet transformation period. The decline in national incomes, the lack of central subsidies, and shifting budget priorities have led to steadily decreasing education expenditure across the region. By 2000, the percentage of GDP spent on education had been halved in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in comparison to pre-independence levels. Among Central Asian countries, Tajikistan had the lowest education expenditure as a percentage of GDP at the turn of the century. In 2000, Tajikistan contributed 2.3 per cent of its GDP for education expenditure, compared to 3.2 per cent in Kazakhstan and 3.7 per cent in Kyrgyzstan (Silova, Johnson and Heyneman, 2007). Allocations to education in the region improved over the next few years but remained lower than the average of 4-6 per cent in OECD countries. In Tajikistan, for example, educational spending increased from 2.8 per cent of the GDP in 2004, to 3.2 per cent in 2005 and 3.6 per cent in 2006 (UNICEF Transmonee, 2007), and in Kyrgyzstan it reached 4.7 per cent in 2005 (see Table 2.1). Uzbekistan remains a regional exception, with its

---

4. See, for example, the regional comparison of public expenditures on education as a percentage of GDP presented by Anderson and Heyneman (2005: 5).

5. One of the main reasons for low education financing in Tajikistan was not necessarily low state expenditure on education but, rather, large foreign debt. About 15-16 per cent of state expenditure was concentrated in the education sector, while the average level in OECD countries was 13 per cent. The relative share of public funds allocated to education varies widely in OECD countries. For example, in Greece (8.8 per cent), Germany (9.9 per cent), Italy (10 per cent) and the Netherlands (10.7 per cent) education received the lowest share of total government budgets, compared to Mexico (23.6 per cent), South Korea (17.6 per cent) and Norway (16.2 per cent) (see OECD, 2003: 225). Differences in the share of total government budgets allocated to education reflect differences among countries as concerns education financing by the public and private sectors. In some countries, such as the USA and Japan, some 20-25 per cent of education funding comes from private sources.
revenue themselves (Burnett and Cnobloch, 2003). Some of this revenue comes from the charging of tuition fees and some from generating income from other sources. In Tajikistan, for instance, schools have been granted land plots that they can rent out for agriculture. These revenues are normally included in the institutions’ budgets. In addition to income generation initiated by schools, households have incurred increasing direct costs of education, including: (1) formal fees for private schools, universities and non-compulsory levels of education; (2) community contributions towards the financing of local schools (for example, school maintenance and repairs); (3) payments for textbooks, school meals and extracurricular activities; (4) payments for complementary requisites such as uniforms, shoes and transportation; and (5) informal payments to state schools (for example, payments for private tutoring and bribes to obtain good examination results). These new direct costs of education have become commonplace across Central Asia, with the vast majority of households making some type of contribution towards the education of their children. The proportion of primary school parents making payments in the Kyrgyz Republic, for example, rose from 15 per cent in 1993 to 95 per cent in 1997 (Burnett and Cnobloch, 2003). While most households incur increasing direct costs of education, such rising costs imply that student access and learning achievement will increasingly depend on household income levels in the future.

Declining professional legitimacy of teachers

Since the transformation period, the decline in public spending on education has resulted in decreasing salaries, deteriorating social status and declining authority of teachers. All the privileges teachers had enjoyed during the socialist period, such as stable jobs, regular professional development opportunities, and a respected social status, began to be eroded as values related to profit replaced the high value
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

placed on education. This trend has severely affected teachers as a professional group, resulting in multiple financial, professional and social losses, as teachers’ salaries declined dramatically and could no longer provide for average-sized families. In all countries of Central Asia, teacher salaries were significantly below the national wage average in 2005. For example, teacher salaries amounted to 62 per cent of the national average salary in Kyrgyzstan, 63 per cent in Kazakhstan, and 70 per cent in Tajikistan (see Table 2.2). Furthermore, teacher salaries were actually below the minimum subsistence level in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (see Table 2.2). Not surprisingly, a teacher interviewed for an ethnographic study in Kyrgyzstan bleakly stated that “their wages were so miserable as to be only ‘symbolic’” (quoted in DeYoung, Reeves and Valyaeva, 2006: 204).

Low public servant salaries are a common concern across the entire post-socialist region. For example, Chapman, Weidman, Cohen and Mercer (2005) found in their research on education development in Azerbaijan and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) that teacher salaries were below the poverty line in many countries in the region. Furthermore, they expected no major improvement in the near future. In most countries of Central Asia, governments have visibly increased the salaries of public and civil servants over the past decade, yet the salaries of teachers have remained below or only slightly above the national average wage (Berryman, 2000). In Tajikistan, for example, teacher salaries were raised significantly between 2003 and 2007, with a 472 per cent salary increase for Grade 5-11 teachers, who receive the lowest base salary, and a 517 per cent increase for teachers with the highest base salary (Steiner-Khamsi, 2007; World Bank, 2005c). Teacher salaries increased by 75 per cent between 2004 and 2008 in Kazakhstan and by 70 per cent between 2003 and 2006 in Kyrgyzstan (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2008; Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2008). Despite these impressive salary increases, the current base salary of teachers and school staff still fails to match the national average wage level in the country.

Teachers’ declining economic, social and professional status has led to a growing migration of teachers to better-paying jobs in
other sectors of the economy. Teacher shortages have been common in all Central Asian countries, to varying degrees. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, 66 per cent of schools were short of the necessary number of teachers in 2006 (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2007). According to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (2007), 2,580 teacher vacancies were documented in the 2006/2007 academic year. In Tajikistan, the official data estimated a 6-10 per cent shortage of teachers, amounting to approximately 6,000-10,000 teachers (Briller, 2007; Steiner-Khamsi, 2007; United Nations Tajikistan, 2003). This unprecedented shortage of teachers in schools means that many teachers have to cover subjects outside their specialities, manage crowded classrooms, or teach groups of students with widely varying levels of competency, leading many families to question teacher professionalism (Johnson, 2008). For example, Steiner-Khamsi (2007) reports that it is common in Tajikistan for teachers of upper grades (Grades 5-11) to teach several subjects in which they have not been trained. This is particularly the case for teachers in subjects with small allocations of instructional time (for example, biology, art and sports) or for teachers employed by small, usually rural and/or mountain schools. For the majority of teachers, multi-subject teaching is the rule, not the exception. However, pre-service teacher education institutions have not adjusted their curricula to meet the urgent need of preparing teachers for multi-subject teaching.

In addition to triggering an exodus of teachers from schools, the low salaries and declining status of the teaching profession have resulted in a failure to attract new teachers into the profession. According to the Tajik Ministry of Education (quoted in Briller, 2007), about 50 per cent of the 6,000 teachers who graduate annually do not go to work as teachers. This has contributed to teacher shortages in mathematics, science and foreign languages, especially in rural areas. The situation is similar in Kyrgyzstan, where only 49 per cent of all graduates of teacher education programmes actually entered the teaching profession in 2003 (Brunner and Tillett, 2007). In most countries of the region, the teaching force is aging. In Tajikistan, for example, approximately 30 per cent of teachers have served more than 20 years, and half of all teachers have served more than 17 years in the profession (Steiner-Khamsi, 2007). Similarly, the age structure of teachers in Kyrgyzstan is
skewed towards the older age groups, with approximately 5 per cent of teachers reaching retirement age (59 years and older) and 57.4 per cent representing the age group of 37 years and older (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2008).

Despite the dire conditions of low pay, declining morale and deteriorating professional status, many teachers have remained dedicated to the profession and have stayed at schools. These teachers are usually forced to teach more than one teaching load and engage in other income-generating activities to supplement their income. In some of the poorest countries of the region (for example, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), many teachers have placed personal survival over their professional responsibility to educate children. UNICEF (2001: 80-81) reports that many teachers in Central Asia have been surviving by engaging in petty trading, farming and teaching in more than one school, and/or taking other jobs in addition to mainstream schooling. In their ethnographic study of teaching in Kyrgyzstan, DeYoung et al. (2006) discuss how teachers (especially in rural areas), in addition to carrying out their teaching responsibilities, raise cows, calves and goats to sell at the local market because they need money. They quote one mid-career Kyrgyz teacher who has had to combine several careers to make ends meet:

About family, I have my husband and four kids: two girls and two boys. Besides school, I have another occupation. I have my small business at home: I sew dresses and sell them. Also, I have a small yard next to the house, where in the summer we grow vegetables. We also have a small plot of land that was given to us [when the local state farm dissolved]. We grow sugar beets there. This year I collected a good harvest. I got 30 tons per hectare, which I sold for good money. ... (DeYoung et al., 2006: 85)

Alternatively, some teachers have eagerly adopted the logic of ‘service provision’, seeking various income-generating activities within the field of education. For example, several studies highlight the low salaries of teachers as the primary reason for them engaging in private tutoring (Silova et al., 2006b; UNICEF, 2007). Using the language of the market, many teachers view their students as customers,
which may easily prompt corrupt practices whereby teachers charge parents unofficial fees, impose private tutoring or engage in other shadow economic activities to boost their salaries. More positively, however, Popa and Acedo (2006) argue that private tutoring is not all about business but, rather, about “the very notion of professionalism”, whereby private tutoring empowers teachers as professional group and provides alternative ways for education professionals to demonstrate “a commitment to service ethic and autonomy in planning and implementing their practice” (Popa and Acedo, 2006: 98). In this respect, private tutoring has become part of a solution to the problems teachers faced during the transformation period, counterbalancing their economic hardships and, in some ways, restoring their professional legitimacy.

Stagnating school environments and resistance to change

Compared to other former socialist countries in eastern/central Europe where education reforms have been introduced swiftly and forcefully over the last two decades, the education systems of the Central Asian republics have been under so much economic strain and have experienced so much political instability that policymakers have become more concerned with their ability to maintain Soviet education achievements than to undertake any fundamental reform of the national education systems (Silova et al., 2007). Apart from a few “islands of innovation” (Niyozov, 2006: 224), often funded by international development agencies, most schools have struggled to survive, let alone actively engage in education change during the turbulent times of post-Soviet transition, as the UNICEF report (2007: 41) explains:

The unchanging classroom has become a symbol of calm and stability, often presided over by teachers tired of mandates without resources, who see their first duty as not to innovate but to safeguard the children, and the certainties embedded in traditional curricula and textbooks. The past remains to a large extent the present.

Various studies document that traditional teaching methods – that is, teacher-led instruction such as lecturing – continue to dominate classrooms, and student-centred learning processes are rarely observed
in Central Asian schools (Johnson, 2004; Niyozov, 2006; Silova, 2002; Silova et al., 2007; UNICEF, 2007). Classroom observation and focus group discussions reveal that school curricula have remained centralized, fact-based and overloaded. The emphasis is primarily on memorization rather than on development of independent judgement and critical thinking. However, the lack of education reform and innovation during the post-Soviet period is not so much about the unwillingness of education stakeholders to embrace new education ideas as it is a result of a complex combination of socio-economic factors. UNICEF (2007: 48) summarizes it very succinctly:

Active learning is not an option in a small classroom where children are crammed three to every two-seater desk and the teacher has barely enough space to stand near a scratchy blackboard. Self-directed, project-based learning is not an option in a school without an atlas, a dictionary, an encyclopedia or room for children to work, or where homes have no books. Where two or even three shifts a day share the same classroom, teachers cannot display work on walls and children cannot store work in progress in their desks. Where large numbers of teachers are unqualified, underpaid, unmotivated or absent, exhortations to ‘innovate’ or ‘include’ will be resented and resisted. Where efforts to slim down an overloaded curriculum result in fewer hours on the compulsory timetable, teachers will fear a loss of income or status. Where ministers and their agendas change every six months, where several parallel reform projects descend on schools at once, where some prestigious schools are declared ‘pilot’ or ‘model’ schools and receive computers or science labs while others have no running water, reform becomes no more than externally imposed, piecemeal change, a source of fear and unfairness, rather than renewal and opportunity.

In addition to socio-economic factors, education reform efforts in two of the most authoritarian countries in the region – Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – have been stalled by a high level of ideological control and political indoctrination in schools. In Uzbekistan, for example, President Islam Karimov’s numerous books are part of the secondary and higher education curriculum and must be recited to enter university and pass graduation examinations (Ashrafi, 2008). In Turkmenistan, the
The personality cult of President Saparmurat Niyazov was, until his death in December 2006, strictly imposed in schools via the compulsory and almost exclusive study of his book the *Rukhnama* (Dailey and Silova, 2008). In these countries, many parents have actively sought private tutoring for their children to compensate for the strictly imposed ideological indoctrination that has dominated school curricula and left students without the basic knowledge and skills necessary to survive in the post-Soviet context. During the Niyazov rule in Turkmenistan (1991-2006), for example, a shadow education system evolved, consisting of underground unofficial/unregistered classes that operated in parallel to the mainstream school system. According to Clement (2006), it consisted of private tutorials in teachers’ homes and involved a majority of teachers offering some kind of classes after school and on weekends for minor fees (usually US$2-US$5 per hour, depending on the subject). Interestingly, private tutoring was most popular in the basic subjects – mathematics, spelling and reading – highlighting the failure of mainstream schools to teach basic knowledge and skills. The large number of private tutorials may be taken as an indication that state schools were not meeting the students’ needs and clearly reveal “the tenacity of parents who so highly value education and are concerned with their children’s futures that they eagerly seek out private tutorials” (Clement, 2006: 30).

**The deteriorating quality of education in mainstream schools**

The difficulties of the transformation period have resulted in a deterioration in the quality of education in mainstream schools across the region. While no comparative data were available to document student achievement in the 1990s, several cross-national studies were conducted in the 2000s, including a series of Monitoring of Learning Achievement (MLA) studies in Kazakhstan (1999, 2005), Kyrgyzstan (2000, 2002, 2005), and Tajikistan (2002, 2006), as well as OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Kyrgyzstan (2006). Two countries of the region – Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – have not participated in any cross-national student achievement studies. Collectively, these cross-national studies of student achievement confirmed what most education stakeholders feared the most: that the
majority of students in the region were failing to meet the required state performance standards (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005; Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a; UNICEF, 2007). For example, the MLA study in Kyrgyzstan (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005) showed that only 44.2 per cent of all surveyed 4th graders passed the minimum literacy test and 58.5 per cent passed the mathematics tests. In Tajikistan, the same study showed that only 36.9 per cent of all surveyed students passed the literacy test and 50.0 per cent passed numeracy tests (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a).

The PISA 2006 findings confirm the severity of education deterioration in the region. Kyrgyzstan in particular was ranked the lowest-performing country in the study, as measured by student achievements in science, mathematics and reading. Not only did Kyrgyz students score the lowest on PISA tests, but Kyrgyzstan also had the largest percentage of students performing at the lowest levels (that is, Level 1 and below) and the smallest percentage of students performing at the highest levels (Levels 4, 5 and 6).6 More specifically, 58.2 per cent of 15 year old students performed below level one in science, which means that students were “unable to demonstrate science competencies in situations required by the easiest PISA tasks” (OECD, 2007: 42). By comparison, the OECD average for students performing below Level 1 was only 5.2 per cent (see Figure 2.1). Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan had the smallest percentage of students performing at the highest levels (Levels 4, 5 and 6), with less than 1 per cent of 15 year olds reaching Level 4 and none reaching Levels 5 and 6, compared to an OECD average of 20.3 per cent of students performing at Level 4, 7.7 per cent at Level 5, and 1.3 per cent at Level 6. As OECD (2007: 42)

---

6. The PISA study groups student science scores into six proficiency levels, with Level 6 representing the highest scores (and hence the most difficult tasks) and Level 1 the lowest scores (and hence the easiest tasks). At Level 1, for example, “students have such a limited scientific knowledge that it can only be applied to a few, familiar situations. They can present scientific explanations that are obvious and that follow explicitly from given evidence” (OECD, 2007: 43). At Level 6, “students can consistently identify, explain and apply scientific knowledge and knowledge about science in a variety of complex life situations. They can link different information sources and explanations and use evidence from those sources to justify decisions. They clearly and consistently demonstrate advanced scientific thinking and reasoning, and they demonstrate willingness to use their scientific understanding in support of solutions to unfamiliar scientific and technological situations. Students at this level can use scientific knowledge and develop arguments in support of recommendations and decisions that centre on personal, social or global situations” (OECD, 2007: 43).
concluded, such a low level of science competency among the vast majority of surveyed students in Kyrgyzstan can be regarded as putting students at a “serious disadvantage for full participation in society and the economy”.

Figure 2.1  Percentage of students at each proficiency level on the science scale


MLA studies in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan revealed significant variations in student achievement by geographic (rural/urban) location of schools and language instruction. Students from urban areas in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan scored the highest, while students from the remote rural areas scored the lowest (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005; Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a; UNESCO, 2007). Furthermore, students attending Russian-language schools scored significantly higher than students in state-language schools. In Tajikistan, for example, students from Tajik-language schools performed the worst (with 72.3 per cent of the surveyed students failing the literacy test), while students from Uzbek- and Russian-
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

language schools performed better (39.4 per cent and 22.5 per cent failing the test, respectively) (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a: 17). In Kyrgyzstan, students attending Russian-language schools scored significantly higher than students attending Kyrgyz schools (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005).

As the MLA reports explained, learning achievement was negatively affected by such factors as insufficient teacher qualifications, lack of appropriate textbooks and teaching/learning materials, inappropriate teaching/learning methods and a lack of support for education at home. For example, MLA findings in Kazakhstan revealed that the lowest performing schools (that is, schools in rural areas and schools with Kazakh language instruction) also had teachers with lower qualifications (half as many with university education), a less friendly school environment and lower family income (UNICEF, 2007). In Kyrgyzstan, underachievement was attributed to teachers having to work double hours because of low salaries, as well as to the lack of basic equipment in schools, such as toilets, heating, lighting and electricity (UNICEF, 2007). Similarly, the PISA study (OECD, 2007) concluded that shortfalls in educational resources hindered instruction. In particular, Kyrgyzstan was among the countries with the highest percentage of students in schools whose principals reported shortfalls in educational resources as hindering instruction, including shortage or inadequacy of audio-visual resources (93 per cent), library materials (90 per cent), computer software for instruction (94 per cent), Internet connectivity (95 per cent), computers for instruction (90 per cent), instructional materials such as textbooks (95 per cent) and science laboratory equipment (93 per cent) (OECD, 2007).

Finally, the quality of education may also be undermined by structural legacies inherited from the Soviet education system. In particular, it appears that students in Central Asia spend significantly less time in school than do students in the countries of western Europe and other parts of the world (see Table 2.3). Whereas students in western Europe and the USA receive an average of 7,751 hours of instructional time throughout their experience in basic education (Grades 1-9), students in Central Asia spend only 6,537 hours at school during the first nine years. In Tajikistan, the number of instructional hours is lower
than in any other country in the world, including the Central Asia and central/eastern Europe regions, as well as East Asia and the Pacific region. Furthermore, the school year in Tajikistan is 34 weeks per year, as opposed to 38-42 weeks in most countries of the Central Asian region and eastern/central Europe (Steiner-Khamsi, 2007). Undoubtedly, the fact that Central Asian students spend less time in school than do their international counterparts raises serious questions regarding the quality of education in Tajikistan and other Central Asian republics. It is not surprising, therefore, that many students are actively seeking additional learning opportunities (often through private tutoring) to compensate for the deteriorating quality of education in mainstream schools.

Table 2.3 Instructional time in hours in Central Asia, Grades 1-9 (1980-2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>School grade</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>7th</th>
<th>8th</th>
<th>9th</th>
<th>1-9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td></td>
<td>545</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>6,251</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td></td>
<td>545</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>918</td>
<td>6,871</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td></td>
<td>367</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>5,882</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td></td>
<td>630</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>7,219</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td></td>
<td>495</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>6,463</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td>516</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>6,537</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Europe &amp; USA</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>7,751</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; the Pacific</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>7,620</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South &amp; West Asia</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>882</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>7,296</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: UNESCO-IBE (2007) for all countries/regions with the exception of Tajikistan; Steiner-Khamsi (2007) for Tajikistan. For a more detailed description of the methodology and analysis used to examine intended instructional time in a global perspective see Benavot (2005).

Increasing demand for higher education

Private tutoring has become particularly important in the context of the increasing demand for higher education during the transformation period. Between 1989 and 2005, higher education enrolment doubled in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, rocketing from 18.1 per cent to 44.7 per cent in Kazakhstan and from 13.2 per cent to 37.2 per cent in Kyrgyzstan (see Figure 2.2). Higher education enrolment also increased in Tajikistan, although more modestly (see Figure 2.2). In Uzbekistan
and Turkmenistan, higher education enrolment actually decreased during the initial post-Soviet period, with a shocking 3.2 per cent enrolment in the 2004/2005 academic year in Turkmenistan. In these countries, decreasing higher education enrolment may reflect strong state control over universities and a fear that a large body of students may unite in mass protests, threatening the regime. Thus, state policies were aimed at keeping the higher education student population to a minimum.

**Figure 2.2 Higher education enrolment rates (1989-2005), Central Asia**


Despite, or perhaps because of, the relatively high unemployment that plagued Central Asia during the post-Soviet period, higher education has been increasingly seen as an important means of improving employment opportunities. Consistent with this reasoning, rates of return to education increased during the transition from socialism to a market system (Boeri and Terrell, 2002; Newell and Reilly, 1999). In fact, some scholars have argued that the link between higher education and employment opportunities may have a larger impact on the societal structure in countries undergoing transformation than in more economically advanced countries (Ammermüller, Heijke and Wößmann, 2003). The ‘rate of return to education’ logic has been
eagerly embraced by students in the former socialist countries of central/south-eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, as they have faced rapidly deteriorating economies and increasing unemployment during the transformation period of the 1990s. Viewing education as one way to escape the hardships of the transformation period, many families invest in private tutoring in the hope that their children will successfully enter higher education institutions and have access to better paying jobs in the future (Silova et al., 2006b). In Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, some families invest in private tutoring to prepare their children for entering higher education institutions abroad (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia), where access to higher education is more readily available.

Growing pressure around school-leaving and university entrance examinations

Given a rising demand for higher education across the region, access to university has become increasingly competitive. While Tajikistan’s higher education admission procedures remain almost unchanged (with the exception of several universities that introduced standardized testing to replace traditional oral and written university entrance examinations), Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan introduced centralized school-leaving and/or university examinations (see Table 2.4). In 2004, Kazakhstan introduced a centralized Unified National Test (UNT), which is a combination of school-leaving and university entrance examinations. The results of the UNT serve as the basis for university admissions, which are determined by each university. In 2002, Kyrgyzstan introduced a centralized National Scholarship Test (NST), which determines government-funded higher education placements, while each university organizes its own university entrance examinations for students paying tuition fees.
### Table 2.4 School-leaving and university entrance examination systems in Central Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>School-leaving examinations</th>
<th>University entrance examinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Two options: (1) Traditional school-leaving examination, offered at each school through decentralized written and oral examinations. Suitable for students not wishing to enter higher education institutions, as well as students who graduated from schools with Uigur, Uzbek, or Tajik languages of instruction. (2) UNT, which is a centralized examination administered by a National Testing Center. It is a new model of school-leaving and university entrance examinations, introduced in 2004. The UNT consists of 120 questions in four subjects (30 questions in each subject), including three compulsory subjects (Kazakh/Russian languages, mathematics, and Kazakhstan's history) and one elective subject.</td>
<td>Two ways of entering higher education institutions, both centralized and administered by the National Testing Center. (1) Based on the results of the UNT (see school-leaving examinations for more information). (2) Based on the results of the Complex Test for Entrants (CTE) for students who graduated from secondary school earlier, as well as for graduates from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and from schools with Uigur, Uzbek, or Tajik languages of instruction. Enrolment to higher education institutions is determined by admissions offices of each university based on the results of the state certificate, which includes UNT or CTE scores. Minimum passing score for admission is 50 points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>All state-licensed schools organize decentralized school-leaving examinations based on the standards of the Ministry of Education. On the basis of the results of the school-leaving examinations, students receive an Attestat (school-leaving document), which is necessary to continue education in higher education institutions.</td>
<td>All higher education institutions organize entrance examinations for fee-based placements. Since 2002, students have been able to enter higher education institutions by taking a centralized NST, which determines government-funded higher education placements. Explicitly aimed at equalizing rural-urban educational opportunities and introducing a modern assessment culture, the NST is the only criterion used in determining the government allotment of highly valued university scholarships. This high-stakes test is offered in Kyrgyz, Russian, and Uzbek languages and uses modern question construction, computerized scoring, and rigorous methods aimed at fairness, transparency, and accountability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School-leaving examinations are held at the end of the final grade (i.e. Grade 11) of secondary school. Students who do not pass school-leaving examinations in at least one subject do not receive the secondary education certificate and can re-take school-leaving examinations the following year. The best students (those with the highest marks in all subjects) receive the certificate *cum laude* (referred to as ‘gold medal’), which gives privileges in higher education admissions. For example, ‘gold medallists’ can enter pre-service teacher education programmes without taking university entrance examinations. To enter other higher education study programmes, ‘gold medallists’ need pass one university entrance examination. The winners of republican ‘Olympiads’ receive similar privileges and are allotted higher education placements in specific study programmes without taking university entrance examinations.

The Ministry of Education issues general principles for higher education admissions, which guide the organization of university entrance examinations each year. Lacking a unified system of university admissions, Tajikistan’s higher education institutions have a certain autonomy in the methodology and content of entrance examinations and the outcomes of student selection. Some universities organize multiple-choice tests, others rely on the traditional oral and written examinations typical of the Soviet period. University entrance examinations are generally developed by faculty members. In 2005, the Ministry of Education required that all higher education institutions introduce a new compulsory entrance examination in the Tajik language.

---

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (1995) and the Law on Education (1999), students have to take their school-leaving examination in the language of instruction of the secondary school from which they are graduating.
The combination of an increasing demand for higher education and a limited number of state-financed study places available in higher education institutions creates increasing pressure around school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations in all countries studied. Students fear that poor results of school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations may limit their chances of entering prestigious higher education institutions and of being able to compete for state-funded higher education study places. Across the region, students often choose to invest in private tutoring in order to increase their chances of receiving state scholarships and avoid having to pay for higher education for the following four years.

This overview of political, economic and education changes in Central Asia suggests that private tutoring cannot be examined independent of multitude of contextual factors and that some dimensions in its scope and nature may be a direct response to the complex changes brought about by the post-socialist transformation period. A combination of widespread poverty, declining education funding, deteriorating education infrastructure and the falling prestige of the teaching profession have made the issues of access to and equity in education more pronounced: the quality of education has significantly deteriorated, rural areas have become more marginalized and students from low socio-economic levels have been under greater threat. More importantly, the data that have been summarized here illustrate that educational deterioration has eroded the professional credibility and capacity of education systems in Central Asia in a variety of ways (Silova et al., 2007). As a consequence, many families are seeking education opportunities outside the mainstream education system. They seek institutions that are recognized by foreign agencies and make efforts to flee their local circumstances in search of private education opportunities. It is within this complex context that the nature, scope and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia are discussed in the following chapters.
As in other countries of south-east/central Europe and the former Soviet Union, private tutoring has become a vast enterprise in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. The findings of the cross-national study reveal that private tutoring is widespread in all the countries examined, with more than half of the student population receiving some type of private tutoring in the final year of secondary school. This chapter outlines the general characteristics of private tutoring, profiles the main actors involved in the tutoring process, examines different factors driving the demand for tutoring and discusses the educational, social and economic impact of tutoring on the education systems in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

**General characteristics of private tutoring**

The general characteristics of private tutoring include its scale, types, pervasiveness, academic subjects and costs at a secondary education level. These domains are examined here in turn.

**The scope of supplementary private tutoring**

The majority (59.1 per cent) of all students surveyed reported having received some type of supplementary private tutoring during the final grade of secondary school. The scope of private tutoring varied by country, with 64.8 per cent of all students surveyed receiving tutoring in Kazakhstan, 60.0 per cent in Tajikistan, and 52.5 per cent in Kyrgyzstan. While the overall scope of private tutoring in Central Asia is lower than in the Caucasus (over 80 per cent in Azerbaijan and Georgia), it exceeds the scope in south-east/central Europe (below 60 per cent of sampled students in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovakia) (Silova et al., 2006b).
Types of private tutoring

In the countries studied, two types of supplementary private tutoring are prevalent: private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses. The study revealed that 25.9 per cent of all respondents received private tutoring lessons, 9.6 per cent preparatory courses, and 23.6 per cent both types of private tutoring – that is, both lessons and courses. While individual private tutoring lessons tend to be more popular than preparatory courses in all countries studied, the scope of different private tutoring types varies by country. The percentage of students receiving only private tutoring lessons ranges between 25 per cent and 28 per cent, while the percentage of students taking only preparatory courses is the highest in Kazakhstan (15.0 per cent), followed by Kyrgyzstan (8.1 per cent) and Tajikistan (5.7 per cent) (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Types of private tutoring by country

![Bar chart showing the percentage of students receiving only private tutoring lessons, only preparatory courses, and both types of tutoring in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.]

The prevalence of private tutoring

The prevalence of supplementary private tutoring varies widely across the region in terms of the number of academic hours, subjects
and the perceived regularity of use among students. The majority of all private tutoring users in Central Asia (51.6 per cent) spent more than three academic hours per week taking private tutoring lessons; this is less intensive than the use of private tutoring in the Caucasus (over 75 per cent), but considerably more intensive than in other countries of central/southern Europe (less than 25 per cent). The largest percentage of students took private tutoring lessons in one subject (22.1 per cent) and only 9.0 per cent took private tutoring lessons in three or more subjects (see Figure 3.2). This is considerably lower than in the Caucasus (79.0 per cent in Azerbaijan and 24.1 per cent in Georgia) and similar to other former Soviet republics (13.8 per cent in Ukraine and 11.1 per cent in Lithuania) (Silova et al., 2006b). Of the Central Asian republics, Kazakhstan had the largest percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons in three or more subjects (13.9 per cent), followed by Tajikistan (7.3 per cent) and Kyrgyzstan (5.6 per cent).

**Figure 3.2 Percentage of students taking private tutoring**

- **Sample mean**: 9, 14, 22.1, 54.9
- **Tajikistan**: 7.3, 12.1, 21.3, 59.3
- **Kyrgyzstan**: 5.6, 14.5, 24.2, 55.6
- **Kazakhstan**: 13.9, 15.2, 20.6, 50.2

Approximately 40 per cent of the surveyed students—43.2 per cent of students in Kazakhstan, 40.5 per cent in Kyrgyzstan, and 35.9 per cent
in Tajikistan – took private tutoring lessons on a regular basis throughout the school year. While the perceived pervasiveness of private tutoring use is below the international average in the former socialist bloc (50.1 per cent), it is significantly higher than in south-east Europe (11.0 per cent in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 11.6 per cent in Croatia) and about the same as in Ukraine (46.3 per cent). Approximately 21.5 per cent of all surveyed students in Central Asia had private tutoring lessons just before examinations, and 17.5 per cent had lessons occasionally throughout the school year. The dynamics of the pervasiveness of private tutoring use provide interesting insights into the different purposes of private tutoring. Given that the largest percentage of students take private tutoring lessons intensively throughout the year, it is likely that private tutoring is used not only to achieve short-term results (such as to prepare for examinations), but also to deal with more long-term education-related issues (such as to compensate for the shortcomings of the mainstream education system).

**Academic subjects**

Generally, the subjects commonly addressed most in private tutoring are those most needed for educational and therefore socio-economic advancement. In the countries of the former Soviet Union, this usually means subjects included in school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations. Given the contextual nature of examination systems (that is, general rules of centralized examinations in different countries, admission rules of individual universities, requirements of specific study programmes, and so forth) and the limitations of the study sample (that is, cross-national variations of the study programmes included in the sample), the choice of subjects for private tutoring varies widely across the region (see Table 3.1). In most Central Asian countries, however, mathematics and foreign languages seem to be among the most popular choices for private tutoring lessons.

The national case studies highlight connections between the choice of private tutoring subjects and examination systems in each country. In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the subjects given most attention in private tutoring are those included in the centralized university entrance examinations for the surveyed study programmes. In Kazakhstan, for example, all students wishing to attend higher education institutions...
(regardless of the field of study) have to take examinations in mathematics, history and the state language. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, economics and management are among the most popular higher education study programmes, and they require an entrance examination in mathematics. In the surveyed countries, many students choose to take supplementary private tutoring lessons in mathematics in order to increase their chances of entering these competitive study programmes. In addition, country case studies highlight that some students are tutored privately to compensate for the low quality of education in mainstream schools, including developmentally inappropriate curricula, overloaded curricula, and lower quality of teaching due to shortages of teachers or inadequately qualified teaching staff.

Table 3.1 Percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons, according to subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Mathematics</th>
<th>Physics</th>
<th>History</th>
<th>State language</th>
<th>Russian language</th>
<th>Foreign language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample mean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(weighted)</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to students’ concerns for academic quality in mainstream schools and their competitiveness in the transition from secondary to higher education, the choice of private tutoring subjects also reflects the new socio-economic realities of the post-Soviet countries. In particular, foreign languages are in great demand among most employers seeking to expand their economic markets beyond the post-Soviet economic region, and private tutoring lessons in foreign languages (especially English, German, French and Turkish) seem to be increasingly popular among young people. In Tajikistan, private tutoring lessons in the Russian language are fairly popular (see Table 3.1), which confirms that there is both a need for Russian-language skills for labour migration (especially among Tajik populations migrating to the Russian Federation) and an ongoing trend among Tajik citizens to seek higher education opportunities in Russia and in other former republics of the Soviet Union.
The size of private tutoring groups

The largest percentage of those receiving private tutoring in Central Asia (42.2 per cent) took individual private tutoring lessons, with 44.8 per cent of students receiving one-on-one instruction in Kazakhstan, 44.1 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and 37.9 per cent in Tajikistan. However, in Central Asia the majority of those receiving private tutoring took private tutoring lessons in groups, including 22.4 per cent of students studying in groups of two to three students and 35.4 per cent of students studying in groups of four or more students. Of the Central Asian republics reviewed, Tajikistan had the smallest percentage of students studying individually with a tutor and the largest percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons in larger groups (see Table 3.2). Compared to central/south-east Europe, where most students take one-on-one private tutoring lessons (over 60 per cent in Croatia, Poland and Slovakia), the majority of students in Central Asia take private tutoring lessons in larger groups. The larger size of private tutoring lessons in Central Asian countries may be dictated by harsher economic conditions. It is likely that students in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (the three countries with the lowest per capita GNI) simply cannot afford one-on-one private tutoring instruction and therefore opt to study in larger groups.

Table 3.2 Percentage of students who reported taking private tutoring lessons individually or in groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Individually</th>
<th>2-3 students</th>
<th>4-5 students</th>
<th>More than 5 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to central/south-east European countries, preparatory courses in Central Asia were offered in considerably smaller classes. For example, 38.2 per cent of students in the Central Asian sample (including over 40 per cent of students in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) reported attending preparatory courses organized for groups of up to five students, and 37.9 per cent attended preparatory courses organized
for groups of six to fifteen students (see Table 3.3). This is comparable to other former Soviet republics (for example, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Lithuania), where over 60 per cent of students attended preparatory courses organized for groups of up to 15 students. However, such groups are much smaller than preparatory classes in some central/south-east European countries, where more than 40 per cent of students attended preparatory courses for 16-30 students (for example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Poland and Slovakia) and more than 40 per cent attended preparatory courses for more than 30 students (for example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia). The smaller size of preparatory classes in Central Asia could be explained by the less developed economic markets and the inability of public and private institutions offering preparatory courses to market their courses effectively in order to reach out to a wider clientele.

Table 3.3 The size of preparatory classes (percentage of students who reported taking preparatory courses, according to group size)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Up to 5 students</th>
<th>6-15 students</th>
<th>16-30 students</th>
<th>More than 30 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia sample mean (weighted)</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The costs of private tutoring

Private tutoring costs varied widely across Central Asia, with the surveyed students in Kazakhstan spending more on private tutoring in one subject per year than students in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. For example, the median amount of money spent yearly on private tutoring in one subject in Kazakhstan was US$100, compared to US$36 in Kyrgyzstan and US$31 in Tajikistan. However, students in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan reported spending higher proportions of their incomes on private tutoring lessons in one subject as a percentage of GDP per capita based on US$ purchasing power parity (PPP). For example, an average private tutoring user in Tajikistan was reported to spend
2.6 per cent of GDP per capita based on PPP compared to 1.3 per cent in Kazakhstan and 1.8 per cent in Kyrgyzstan (see Table 3.4).

**Table 3.4 Yearly costs of private tutoring in one subject as a percentage of GDP per capita (2006)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Yearly costs of private tutoring in one subject</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equivalent of total costs in US$</td>
<td>As % of GDP per capita (PPP US$)</td>
<td>Equivalent of total costs in US$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>212.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>63.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Private tutoring costs were converted from local currencies into US$ using the exchange rate at the time of data collection (1 January 2006). Because of a wide spread in the data and the existence of significant anomalous outliers, median calculations are used in addition to mean calculations to compare spending on private tutoring in the participating countries.*

Although private tutoring costs varied across the Central Asian republics, individual private tutoring lessons were generally more costly than preparatory courses (see Table 3.5). In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the mean cost of private tutoring lessons in one subject was at least double the cost of preparatory courses, and in Kazakhstan, the mean cost of private tutoring lessons was actually three times higher than the cost of preparatory courses. In most cases, the greatest components of these figures were the fees paid to tutors and educational institutions. The work of educational institutions offering preparatory courses was regulated by the state and taxed. However, private tutoring lessons offered by individuals were unregulated in all countries, with all of the revenue received by tutors remaining beyond the reach of government tax collectors, thus forming a growing shadow activity in Central Asia.
Examining the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia

Table 3.5  Comparison of private tutoring costs among private tutoring users: private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Median (US$)</th>
<th>Mean (US$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Private lessons</td>
<td>Preparatory courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Private tutoring costs were calculated from local currencies into US$ using the exchange rate at the time of the data collection (1 January 2006).

The private tutoring market: producers and consumers

In many settings, the supply of private tutoring creates demand. In these circumstances, tutoring exists because the producers make it available and recommend (and sometimes pressure) students to take advantage of the availability of the private tutoring market. In addition, some students choose to get private tutoring simply because it is available, even though they might otherwise not have demanded it. For these reasons, the examination of the profiles of the main actors involved in private tutoring begins here with the producers.

The producers: who offers private tutoring?

Unlike in other countries of the former socialist bloc, schoolteachers constitute the largest group of private tutoring providers in Central Asia, with some variation across countries. For example, teachers constitute on average the vast majority of tutors offering private lessons (69.5 per cent), with 73.1 per cent of all private tutoring users reporting taking private tutoring lessons from schoolteachers in Tajikistan, 70.4 per cent in Kazakhstan and 62.5 per cent in Kyrgyzstan. Only 17.1 per cent of the surveyed students reported taking private lessons from professors/lecturers of higher education institutions, with the largest number of students taking private tutoring lessons from professors/lecturers in Kazakhstan (20.2 per cent) and the lowest in Tajikistan (12.7 per cent).
In Central Asia, the demand for private tutoring is largely created by schoolteachers themselves, who offer private tutoring services and/or recommend the tutoring services of other teachers to their own students. For example, 44.5 per cent of the surveyed students reported that their schoolteachers provided assistance in identifying private tutors: 24.2 per cent of private tutoring users reported that their teachers had offered private tutoring services to them, and 20.3 per cent explained that their teachers had recommended the services of another tutor. Approximately one quarter of all surveyed students relied on their parents to find a suitable private tutor, while 20.6 per cent followed their friends’ recommendations. Only 7.4 per cent of all surveyed students found private tutors through advertisements.

Similar to individual private tutoring lessons, preparatory courses are predominantly offered by schoolteachers (see Figure 3.3). Of all students taking preparatory courses in the countries reviewed, 42.8 per cent reported studying with schoolteachers, with the majority of students in Kazakhstan attending preparatory courses offered by schoolteachers (55.5 per cent), followed by students in Tajikistan (37.2 per cent) and Kyrgyzstan (35.8 per cent). Unlike other countries in the former socialist countries, where preparatory courses are generally offered by university professors and lecturers (Silova et al., 2006b), the Central Asian preparatory course market is dominated by schoolteachers. Non-university preparatory courses in Central Asia are particularly widespread in rural areas, where students do not have access to preparatory courses organized by higher education institutions, which are usually located in large cities. In these cases, preparatory courses are organized by schools and private agencies, offering a good alternative for students to prepare for higher education entrance examinations, as well as providing additional employment opportunities for schoolteachers.

The consumers: who receives private tutoring?

Although casual observers often assume that the main consumers of private tutoring comprise students with weak academic performances who need remedial assistance, the findings suggest that this is not necessarily the case in the former socialist countries, including those of Central Asia. In fact, over 90 per cent of the private tutoring users considered their academic achievement in secondary school as excellent.
or good. With no significant variations between countries, the data suggest that it is generally good students who receive private tutoring in Central Asia. The findings of the study reveal that private tutoring is more widespread among students from urban areas, as well as among students whose parents attended higher education institutions. For example, private tutoring users constituted 60.6 per cent of all surveyed students in urban areas and only 45.1 per cent of students in rural areas (a difference of 15.5 per cent). Furthermore, private tutoring lessons were used by 47.6 per cent of students whose parents had some higher education experience, compared to 28.1 per cent of students whose parents had secondary or incomplete secondary education. All country studies reported rough gender parity in private tutoring use.

**Figure 3.3 Private tutoring producers (sample mean)**

Of equal importance is information on those students who did not use private tutoring. Of all non-users of private tutoring lessons, 57.7 per cent were confident that they could do well without private tutoring, with the highest proportion being in Tajikistan (70.7 per cent), followed by Kyrgyzstan (46.9 per cent) and Kazakhstan (55.5 per cent). Furthermore, 26.8 per cent of all non-users of private tutoring believed that they could pass university entrance examinations without supplementary private tutoring. Approximately 29.0 per cent of non-users mentioned that private tutoring was too expensive for them, the highest proportion being in Tajikistan (35.2 per cent), followed by Kazakhstan (26.6 per cent) and Kyrgyzstan (25.6 per cent). Finally, 18.8 per cent of
non-users explained that they did not use private tutoring because their friends helped them free of charge.

**Factors driving the demand for private tutoring**

Among a wide variety of factors driving demand for private tutoring in Central Asia, three stand out. The first emerges from the commonly used argument that large-scale private tutoring is a product of the ‘enrichment strategy’ that is associated with the increasingly competitive nature of education systems and high-stakes examinations. The second has to do with student perceptions of the quality of mainstream education and the use of private tutoring as a ‘compensatory mechanism’ for the perceived deterioration in the quality of education in mainstream schools. The third factor stems from the difficult socio-economic conditions of teachers who use private tutoring to supplement their income. While each of these factors determines the scope and nature of private tutoring in Central Asia, it is a combination of all three factors that explains why private tutoring is more widespread in some Central Asian republics than in others.

**Private tutoring as an ‘enrichment strategy’**

In Central Asia, private tutoring is commonly used as an ‘enrichment strategy’ to help students to increase their competitive edge in the educational market. The majority of the respondents in the total sample (66.0 per cent) believed that “students use private tutoring to increase their chances to enter university” (see Table 3.6). Similarly, approximately half of all respondents (48.7 per cent) indicated that taking private tutoring was “the only way to pass university entrance examinations”. Furthermore, the majority of private tutoring users reported that they opted for private tutoring because they wanted to learn more (72.0 per cent) and because school curricula did not cover everything required for university entrance examinations (58.5 per cent). The highest proportions of students indicating the importance of private tutoring in their preparation for higher education entrance examinations were in Kyrgyzstan (see Table 3.6). Even though the structure of education examination systems varies across the region (see Table 2.4), qualitative data suggest that there is a general awareness among students that higher education is imperative for succeeding in
the labour market. In this context, students use private tutoring as an enrichment strategy to improve their academic performance on major education examinations, which are often perceived as gateways to further education and labour market opportunities.

### Table 3.6 Reasons for taking private tutoring lessons

(percentage of surveyed students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements listed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Kazakhstan</th>
<th>Kyrgyzstan</th>
<th>Tajikistan</th>
<th>Total sample (weighted)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It increases chances of entering university*</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is the only way to pass university entrance examinations**</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school curriculum does not cover everything required for university entrance examinations</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school curriculum is overloaded</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students want to learn more</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better prepare for university entrance examinations only</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill a knowledge gap</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To remember and systematize topics learnt earlier</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better learn topics taught at schools</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents made me take private tutoring</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because other students take private tutoring</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentage of the total sample; **Percentage of private tutoring users.

Given that one of the main reasons for taking private tutoring is in preparation for examinations, it is important to examine students’ perceptions of the impact of private tutoring on their examination outcomes.\(^7\) Survey results revealed that the vast majority of users of

---

\(^7\) Generally, international assessment of the impact of private tutoring on student achievement is difficult because of the variety of factors involved and the lack of uniformity in students’ characteristics. Given these methodological difficulties and the limitations of this study, the researchers examined students’ perceptions of the impact (rather than the actual impact) of private tutoring on students’ examination outcomes. In particular, the surveyed students (that is, private tutoring users) were asked to estimate to what extent the outcomes of school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations depended on the use of private tutoring (both private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses).
private tutoring thought that private tutoring lessons had either some (49.6 per cent) or a great (32.6 per cent) impact on their examination results (see Figure 3.4). Surprisingly, students’ perceptions of the impact of preparatory courses on examination outcomes was more enthusiastic than their assessment of private tutoring lessons, with 33.0 per cent of all private tutoring users indicating that preparatory courses had a great impact and 55.0 per cent indicating that it had some impact (see Figure 3.5).

**Figure 3.4** Students’ perceptions of the impact of private tutoring lessons on university entrance examinations (percentage of private tutoring users)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>It did not help at all</th>
<th>It had some impact</th>
<th>It had great impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample mean</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.5** Students’ perceptions of the impact of preparatory courses on university entrance examinations (percentage of private tutoring users)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>It did not help at all</th>
<th>It had some impact</th>
<th>It had great impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample mean</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compensatory function of private tutoring

To a large extent, the scope and frequency of private tutoring usage by students and their families may reflect their perceptions of overall educational quality in mainstream schools. In all sampled countries there was a strong belief that private tutoring was a response to the poor quality of education in mainstream schools. In the total sample, an overwhelming 78.7 per cent of the respondents (with minimal variations by country) agreed or strongly agreed that the quality of the mainstream education system should be such that no one should need private tutoring. By implication, the decision of students to get private tutoring may indicate their lack of satisfaction with the quality of education in mainstream schools. As one experienced private tutor from Kazakhstan explained, the quality of education is the main factor driving the demand for private tutoring:

I have been working as a private tutor for the last 15 years and have observed an ongoing demand for private tutoring during this period. The main reason for private tutoring is a poor quality of education in [mainstream] schools. Many teachers do not know their subject well, they often get ill, and change jobs frequently. Those students who would like to ensure a consistently high level of education feel the need to hire private tutors (from an interview with an English language private tutor in Kazakhstan, which took place on 15 August 2006).

The data from this survey confirm that the public perception of deteriorating quality in mainstream schools creates a demand for private tutoring. For example, approximately 50 per cent of respondents in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan believed that private tutoring is the only way to get a high-quality education. In particular, the majority of the respondents highlighted the factors related to the quality of education that drive the demand for private tutoring. For example, the majority of the respondents believed that private tutoring exists because the school curriculum is overloaded (61.0 per cent), because the school curriculum does not cover all subjects required for university entrance examinations (58.5 per cent), and because teachers do not explain the subject matter thoroughly (56.8 per cent). The national case studies and official statistics revealed that mainstream education systems in these countries
Private supplementary tutoring in Central Asia

had suffered from chronic under-funding during the transformation period, resulting in a deteriorating quality of mainstream education, as reflected in the lack of textbooks and teaching materials, limited professional development opportunities for teachers, deteriorating physical infrastructure of schools and other factors.

Private tutoring as an income-generating activity for teachers

In Central Asia, the rise of private tutoring has been at least partially triggered by the declining socio-economic status of teachers. During the initial transition period, teacher salaries declined dramatically, no longer providing subsistence for average-sized families. In all countries studied, teacher salaries in 2005 were either below the national wage average or around the minimum subsistence level. In this context, private tutoring creates an opportunity for teachers to generate additional income. Some of them (for example, as teachers in mainstream schools) already have other sources of income, but others (for example, retired teachers) have no alternative sources of income. The majority of the respondents in the total sample (59.6 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that one of the main reasons for offering private tutoring was to receive an additional financial income. One of the experts from Tajikistan explained:

Private tutoring has become one of the new forms of economic recognition of teachers’ work. While this is only my individual opinion, it is worth considering it at this time of post-Soviet transformation when teachers have been consistently losing their professional and social status. (From a roundtable discussion on 11 November 2006)

Educational, social and economic impact of private tutoring

Supplementary private tutoring may have far-reaching educational, social and economic implications. This section examines the impact of private tutoring on (1) mainstream schooling; (2) social inequalities; and (3) corruption in schools.
Private tutoring and its impact on mainstream schools

Private tutoring affects mainstream schools in a variety of ways. On a positive side, it may increase students’ motivation to learn by offering more innovative and individualized learning opportunities compared to the ones available in mainstream schools. The findings of this study suggest that the majority of the respondents in the total sample (over 70 per cent) believed that students opt for private tutoring in order to learn more. Qualitative data show that private tutoring can help students to better understand their mainstream classes and to learn more outside the school curriculum. Furthermore, private tutoring presents an opportunity for more innovative and individualized learning than that available in mainstream schools. Several national case studies included in this volume highlight other positive aspects of private tutoring, including the fact that it builds students’ self-esteem, develops their talents and narrows the existing educational achievement gaps. On a more negative side, private tutoring may upset the complex dynamics of teaching and learning in mainstream schools and may disrupt the school curriculum.

Private tutoring and social inequities

The findings of the study suggest that private tutoring is not accessible to all students. The data show that private tutoring is more widespread among students whose parents have some higher education experience (that is, higher education degrees or an incomplete higher education) and among students who have graduated from schools in urban areas. Private tutoring users constituted approximately half (47.6 per cent) of all students whose parents had a higher education qualification and only 28.1 per cent of all students whose parents had no higher education experience (a difference of almost 20 per cent). While the difference between parents’ education levels among private tutoring users was the smallest in Kyrgyzstan (10 per cent), it considerably exceeded the sample mean in Tajikistan (see Figure 3.6). Similar to other countries of the former socialist bloc, it is likely that better educated parents recognize the potential benefits of investments in private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses, urging their children to attend supplementary private tutoring lessons and/or preparatory courses.
In addition, the data reveal that private tutoring is more widespread among students in urban areas: private tutoring users constituted 60.6 per cent of all students surveyed in urban areas and only 45.1 per cent of students in rural areas (a difference of approximately 15 per cent). The urban/rural divide was the smallest in Tajikistan (9 per cent), and most pronounced in Kyrgyzstan, where the proportion of private tutoring users from urban areas exceeds the number of students from rural areas by approximately 24 percentage points (see Figure 3.7).

**Private tutoring and corruption in education systems**

When teachers are under pressure to secure sufficient financial resources to survive and provide for their families, they may be tempted to engage in unethical behaviour. The existence of a wage differential and the fact that classroom teaching can only be imperfectly monitored...
are likely to encourage schoolteachers to teach school lessons poorly in order to create a demand for paid private tutoring after-school hours (Biswal, 1999). While there were many cases of corruption in the education area during the socialist period, the unethical use of private tutoring as an income-generating activity among teachers is a new phenomenon of the post-socialist transformation period (Silova et al., 2006b). An overview of qualitative data on private tutoring practices in Central Asia reveals that the unethical use of private tutoring involves teachers pressuring (and sometimes blackmailing) their own students to take supplementary private tutoring lessons with them after school hours, often threatening to give them lower marks if they refuse. Compared to central/south-east Europe, Central Asian countries have the largest proportions of students tutored by their own class teachers, including 51.2 per cent of students in Tajikistan, 39.6 per cent in Kazakhstan, and 39.3 per cent in Kyrgyzstan. By contrast, the percentage of students tutored by their own teachers is less than 10 per cent in Croatia and Poland, and less than 20 per cent in Lithuania, Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia and Ukraine (Silova et al., 2006b).

The incidence of teachers tutoring their own students may be partially explained by such factors as the lack of tutors in small towns and rural areas. Indeed, the data indicate that the percentage of schoolteachers tutoring their own students is higher in rural areas (over 50 per cent) than in urban areas (33.5 per cent in Kazakhstan, 34.5 per cent in Kyrgyzstan and 42.2 per cent in Tajikistan). However, in Central Asia the incidence of schoolteachers tutoring their own students in both urban and rural areas is much higher than in other former socialist countries of central/south-eastern Europe (Table 3.7), with less than 15 per cent of private tutoring users being tutored by their own teachers in central Europe (Croatia, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia) and less than 20 per cent in other countries of the former Soviet Union (Lithuania, Ukraine and Georgia) (Silova et al., 2006b). A pervasive incidence of schoolteachers tutoring their own students in Central Asia is a clear indication of unethical behaviour among some teachers. In these countries, it is not only the lack of availability of tutors in rural areas that has forced students to take private tutoring lessons from their own teachers but possibly also widespread corruption in the country in general and the education system in particular. According to
the *Corruption Perception Index* (Transparency International, 2006), the former Soviet republics of Central Asia are at the bottom of the international corruption perception ranking, with all three countries included in this study (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) ranking 150 out of 180 countries, with higher ranking indicating higher perceived corruption by citizens and observers of that country.

**Table 3.7 Schoolteachers working as private tutors (percentage of students whose private tutors were schoolteachers)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Your class teacher</th>
<th>Other teacher from your school</th>
<th>Teacher from another school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample mean (weighted)</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, students do not seem to associate possible instances of teacher corruption with teacher professionalism. As Johnson (2008) explains, students tend to blame factors like the economy and the government rather than teachers themselves for such corruption. Data from this study confirm that only a quarter of all surveyed students (25.7 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that teachers should not be allowed to offer private tutoring lessons to their own students. The number of students agreeing (or strongly agreeing) with this statement was the lowest in Kazakhstan (16.7 per cent) and the highest in Kyrgyzstan (32.9 per cent). The majority of the surveyed students did not see any possible conflict of interest involved in taking private tutoring lessons from their own teachers.

**Conclusions**

Private tutoring has emerged as a major phenomenon in Central Asia. While the overall scope of private tutoring in Central Asia is lower than in the Caucasus (more than 80 per cent in Azerbaijan and Georgia), it is higher than in south-east/central Europe (less than 60 per cent of sampled students in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovakia) (Silova *et al.*, 2006b). Of all the Central Asian countries reviewed, the scope of private tutoring was found to be highest in Kazakhstan (64.8 per cent), followed by Tajikistan (60.0 per cent).
Kyrgyzstan presents an interesting case, revealing the lowest scope of private tutoring (52.2 per cent) not only in the Central Asian sample, but also in the rest of the countries of the region that participated in the initial study (Silova et al., 2006b).

Having examined the survey data, the questions arise of why private tutoring is more prevalent in some countries than in others, and what factors drive the demand for tutoring. The initial analysis of the first study of private tutoring in the nine countries of the former socialist bloc (Silova et al., 2006b) and the data presented here suggest that both supply and demand for tutoring are driven by multiple factors. At a macro-level, private tutoring is frequently used as an enrichment strategy (system-driven), a remedial strategy (student-driven), and/or a socio-economic survival strategy (teacher-driven). Furthermore, private tutoring seems to be used most intensively in countries where all factors are present: that is, countries that have high-stakes examinations (for example, centralized school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations), a lack of public trust in state education, and difficult socio-economic conditions of the teaching force. For example, Azerbaijan is among the countries with the greatest scope and pervasiveness of private tutoring. It is also where public trust in mainstream education it at its lowest (as measured by the percentage of students who believe that high-quality education cannot be attained without tutoring) and where teacher salaries are the lowest (as a percentage of minimum subsistence levels), and it has a highly competitive system of high-stakes examinations (centralized university entrance examinations). Similarly, most of these factors are present in Georgia, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. While the scale of private tutoring significantly exceeds the sample mean in Georgia and Ukraine, it is comparatively lower in Kyrgyzstan (approximately 52.5 per cent) and Tajikistan (60.0 per cent). This may be explained by the inability of the majority of the population in these two countries to pay for tutoring because of extremely high levels of poverty (that is, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have the lowest GNI per capita in the sample).

By contrast, the scale of private tutoring is the lowest in countries that do not have high-stakes examinations, where public satisfaction with mainstream education is reportedly high, and where teachers are paid comparatively well. These characteristics are commonly present,
for example, in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovakia – the countries with the lowest amount of private tutoring. For example, Croatia has the lowest amount of private tutoring of all countries in the study. It also stands out as a country that has no high-stakes examinations, with a comparatively small proportion of respondents who do not trust the mainstream education system (for example, 19 per cent in Croatia compared to 60 per cent in Azerbaijan). Furthermore, Croatia boasts of comparatively advantageous socio-economic conditions for teachers compared to other countries in the sample (for example, the highest GNI per capita and one of the highest teacher salaries as a percentage of the national average). By comparison, Kazakhstan has comparatively low teacher salaries and few high-stakes examinations, yet it has some of the highest levels of public trust in the mainstream education system, with only 22.4 per cent of all surveyed students agreeing that private tutoring is the only way to get a high-quality education (see Table 3.8).
Table 3.8  Factors influencing the scope of private tutoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Scale of private tutoring (percentage of students using private tutoring)</th>
<th>Private tutoring as an enrichment strategy</th>
<th>Private tutoring as a compensatory strategy</th>
<th>Socio-economic conditions of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The existence of high-stakes exams</td>
<td>Student perceptions of the impact of tutoring on university admissions (percentage of sampled students believing that those receiving tutoring have better chances of entering universities)</td>
<td>Student perception of education quality in mainstream schools (percentage of sample students believing that private tutoring is the only way of receiving quality education)</td>
<td>Teacher salaries as a percentage of national average salaries (2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Asia sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern/central Europe and former Soviet Union sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azerbaijan</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes.** Shaded boxes represent survey data that may suggest a higher likelihood of private tutoring use, because the data are significantly above/below the sample mean. * Represents teacher salary as a percentage of minimum subsistence level.
Clearly, the data from this study provide new insights into the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in the post-socialist region, but they do not provide a full explanation for why private tutoring is more prevalent in some countries than in others. It is likely that a more in-depth examination of specific contextual factors would provide a more complete and nuanced account of the dynamics of private tutoring in different post-socialist settings. The individual country chapters that follow discuss these issues in greater detail, accounting for specific historical, political, economic and social contexts that make private tutoring more prevalent in some countries than in others.
CHAPTER 4
PRIVATE TUTORING IN KAZAKHSTAN

Saule Kalikova and Zhanar Rakhimzhanova

Private tutoring is not a new phenomenon in Kazakhstan’s education history. It existed during the Soviet period (1920-1991), but to a considerably lesser extent compared to the post-independence period (1991 to the present). Since Kazakhstan gained independence in 1991, private tutoring has become more widespread, though its scope is difficult to define due to the lack of reliable, statistical data about the private tutoring market. The need for monitoring private tutoring has become increasingly urgent during the post-Soviet transformation period, which has witnessed major changes in the economy, politics and education that all influence the private tutoring market. The private tutoring phenomenon is becoming increasingly controversial among education stakeholders in Kazakhstan. On the one hand, it provides an opportunity for many children to improve the quality of their education and for teachers to receive additional income. On the other hand, it contradicts the principles of free and equitable access to secondary education and puts into question teachers’ ethics.

Kazakhstan’s private tutoring market offers a wide variety of education services, spanning different levels of education. At the preschool level, private tutoring is used to prepare children for entry into elementary school. At the basic education level, private tutoring is used for remediation purposes or to increase students’ academic competitiveness. At the high school (upper secondary education) level, students use private tutoring to improve their academic achievement on tests and examinations. This study focuses on the private tutoring market at the point of transition from secondary to higher education and includes an examination of private tutoring lessons (offered by individuals) and preparatory courses (offered by institutions). Our hypothesis is that private tutoring is in greater demand among high school graduates who use tutoring to prepare for entrance to increasingly competitive higher education institutions.
More specifically, this study examines the private tutoring market in Kazakhstan, including factors influencing the development of private tutoring, its scope and nature, as well as the educational, economic and ethical implications of private tutoring (for example, private tutoring in the context of equal access to education and corruption-related issues). The findings of this study are based on a survey of 1,004 first-year university students from the six largest state universities in the cities of Almaty and Shymkent, namely Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (Almaty), Satpaev Kazakh National Technical University (Almaty), Kazakh National Teacher Training University (Almaty), Kazakh State Women’s Teacher Training Institute (Almaty), Muhtar Auezov South Kazakhstan State University (Shymkent), and Saparbaev South Kazakhstan Humanities Institute (Shymkent). The sample included students in what are considered both low- and high-demand programmes: namely teaching (low-demand programme), and economics, law, information technologies, biotechnologies, oil and gas (high-demand programmes). In addition to quantitative data, the study included interviews with 37 university professors from the same universities.

**Background: legislative, educational and socio-economic factors**

**Legislative factors**

A number of legislative acts legalize the delivery of paid supplementary educational services in Kazakhstan. The *Law on Education* (1999) provides a broad framework for supplementary education service provision, including paid education services for individual students (see Article 45). On 22 September 1999, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan issued a decree (#1438), which provides more specific regulations regarding the delivery of supplementary education services by state education institutions. In this document, private tutoring is defined as the provision of additional classes in subjects to students on an individual basis in addition to the academic hours prescribed by the state curriculum. In addition to private tutoring, the decree stipulates that schools can offer such education services as supplementary education programmes, special courses and series of disciplines, as well as in-depth supplementary study of subjects by students (beyond the state educational standards). The decree also dictates that specific terms of supplementary education
provision (including education goals, payment and timeframe) should be established on an individual basis through a contract signed by students, parents and service providers.

Although the state legislation envisages a delivery of supplementary tutoring by schools, its precise functioning scheme is not in place. The curricula for paid supplementary tutoring should be written and submitted to the state education departments at the beginning of the year, a condition that limits flexibility of tutoring services and tutors’ ability to respond to students’ needs on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, the existing legislation does not envisage short-term tutoring for those students who fall behind and need tutoring only to catch up with the rest of their class. Teachers receive 120 tenge per hour (approximately US$1) from tutoring, an amount that is substantially below the market price for the same types of tutoring services. Importantly, many schools do not have the necessary bank accounts for payments related to supplementary tutoring. Finally, taxation legislation is not conducive to private tutoring. In order to legally offer private tutoring, a tutor needs to register as a private or individual entrepreneur, buy a license, and pay taxes. Such a procedure is rather complex and does not justify costs because of the irregular and seasonal character of private tutoring. Therefore, teachers are not interested in a legalization of their additional income.

**Educational factors**

*The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1995* (Article 30, Paragraph 1) and the *Law on Education* (1999, Article 24, Paragraph 1) guarantee free secondary education in state educational institutions for all citizens. The *Law on Education* (1999) stipulates the following education levels: preschool education, secondary education, higher professional education, and post-graduate professional education. Secondary education is mandatory and includes general secondary education, basic professional education and secondary professional education. General secondary education is provided by general education schools in three stages, including elementary (Grades 1-4), basic (Grades 5-9), and secondary (Grades 10-11/12). Children enrol in Grade 1 at the age of 6 or 7.
Kazakhstan has over 8,000 schools, 75 per cent of which are located in rural areas. The total number of students enrolled in schools amounts to almost 3 million. Despite the predominance of rural schools, the majority of school students are concentrated in urban areas, including 53 per cent of students enrolled in urban schools and 47 per cent in rural schools. With its vast territory and a total population of 15 million, Kazakhstan has an average population density of 5.5 persons per square kilometre. Given such a low population density, approximately 69 per cent of rural schools have multi-grade classrooms. The private education sector is very small, constituting less than 2 per cent of all schools and enrolling less than 1 per cent of all students in the country.

Kazakhstan is a multi-ethnic country, with Kazakh-, Russian-, Tajik, Uzbek- and Uigur-language schools. In addition, there are schools with mixed languages of instruction, where children study in Turkish, German and English. The majority of students (96 per cent) study in Kazakh (56 per cent) and Russian (40 per cent), while 3 per cent study in Uzbek and approximately 1 per cent in the Uigur and Tajik languages (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2005a).

According to education legislation, state schools enrol students on a non-competitive basis. However, there are some exceptions. Approximately one third of all schools (31 per cent) have the special status of gymnasia or lyceums, offering specialized, in-depth study of specific academic disciplines (mathematics, arts, languages, and so on). These schools are usually more competitive than mainstream schools, and they commonly base their enrolment on achievement in school entrance examinations. In addition, some mainstream schools offer specialized classes where students have an opportunity to study some academic subjects in more depth. Increasingly, mainstream schools create academic selection mechanisms within schools by streaming students into high- and low-performer groups. Typically, the introduction of such selection mechanisms within the education system compels many parents to hire private tutors in order to give their children a more competitive edge and ensure their enrolment in the best schools.
School-leaving and university entrance examinations

Upon completion of basic and general secondary education programmes, school graduates have to take final examinations. Those students who pass school-leaving examinations receive a state certificate confirming their completion of the respective levels of education. School graduates have two options of taking final examinations, including a UNT, which is a centralized school-leaving university entrance examination, or a traditional school-leaving examination, which is offered at each school through decentralized written and oral examinations.

The UNT was introduced in 2004 and is administered by a National Testing Centre. It is offered in the Kazakh and Russian languages and is designed for those students who would like to continue their studies in higher education institutions. The UNT is mandatory for those students who wish to study at the next education levels. It is a subject-oriented examination, where students are examined in four subject areas, including three mandatory subjects (Russian or Kazakh language, mathematics, and the history of Kazakhstan) and one subject depending on their selected study programme. Selection of the fourth subject is regulated by the Standard University Admission Rules, which are issued by the Ministry of Education. Depending on their area of concentration, school graduates may select one of the following school subjects: world history, physics, chemistry, geography, biology, literature or a foreign language (English, German or French).

Those students who have graduated from schools where the language of instruction was other than Russian or Kazakh (for example, Uigur-, Uzbek- or Tajik-medium schools) and/or who do not wish to pursue higher education in Kazakhstan, or are willing to work, enlist in the army, or enter elementary professional education institutions, have the option of taking a traditional school-leaving examination, which is offered at each school in the form of decentralized written and oral examinations. This type of school-leaving examination consists of four mandatory subjects, which include two written examinations on the native language/literature (depending on the language of instruction of

---

the school)⁹ and algebra/basic analysis, as well as two oral examinations in the native language (depending on the language of instruction of the school) and in the history of Kazakhstan.

University admission is centralized and is based on the results of the UNT and the University Applicants’ Comprehensive Test (CT), which is designed for students who are unable to take the UNT, including school graduates from Kazakhstan from previous years, students from Uigur-, Uzbek- and Tajik-medium schools, as well as graduates from the CIS countries. The UNT and the CT use the same methodology and are merged into one database to create a unified list of applicants, which compete for state scholarships in higher education study programmes. Undoubtedly, the introduction of centralized examinations has made access to university more competitive, and the private tutoring market has been quick to take advantage of this situation. Many private tutors have begun to purposefully train students for the test, and an increasing number of students are seeking the assistance of private tutors to better their performance in the test.

**Socio-economic status of teachers**

The post-Soviet transformation period has witnessed a decreasing status of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan’s schools. During the first years of independence, the education system suffered from a tremendous outflow of teachers from schools, which could be partially explained by low and irregularly paid teacher salaries. Although teacher status has gradually improved in the 2000s due to salary increases and timely payments, the prestige of the teaching profession has remained low. Teachers’ pay is regulated by the decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 11 January 2002, #41, “On the pay to workers of state organizations who are not public servants”. Depending on work experience, professional qualifications and workload, teachers earn, on average, 12,000 Kazakh tenge per month (about US$100) or more. Teacher’s salaries constitute approximately 60 per cent of the national wage average. Compared to other lines of work, teacher salaries are among the lowest, only slightly higher than those of health care professionals, and workers in agriculture, hunting and forestry.

---

⁹. Usually in a form of an essay for secondary school graduates and a dictation for basic school graduates.
Low teacher salaries are particularly unattractive for young education specialists, which explains the outflow of young professionals from the teaching force and the overall aging of the teaching staff in Kazakhstan. About 15 per cent of teachers in Kazakhstan are over 50 years old, 2 per cent are retirees, and over 80 per cent are women.

Given the deteriorating status of the teaching profession, state officials have made some efforts to improve the situation. The draft of the new Law on Education, which was being discussed at the time of writing, plans to introduce a separate section devoted to teachers’ status, including a number of measures aimed to improve the socio-economic conditions of teachers. In 2004, a group of members of Parliament initiated a draft of the Law on Teacher Status. Although the law was not adopted, it is evidence that the state recognizes the seriousness of the problem. The government is also making serious efforts to resolve the problem of teacher shortages and professional training. In 2006, for example, the state authorities reserved over 30 per cent of state higher education scholarships for the study of the teaching profession (that is, 9,000 out of the total 31,000 scholarships). However, these measures do not necessarily cause the desired outcome, because the teaching profession is in low demand and state scholarships are allotted to university applicants with comparatively low scores on the national test. It is a vicious circle – teacher status and teacher salaries are still low, and state scholarships are often allotted to students who would be unable to enrol in more prestigious higher education programmes. As a result, universities produce specialists with low motivation, who are unlikely to contribute to raising the status and prestige of the teaching profession. Meanwhile, many teachers attempt to improve their teaching status and supplement their low salaries through private tutoring, which forms a growing shadow economy in the country.

**Curriculum and teaching**

The demand for private tutoring is driven by a variety of factors, including an increasing teaching/learning load at schools and the prevalence of out-of-date teaching methods (such as rote memorization of factual information). Mainstream education is focused on the best-performing students who are able to cope with the state curriculum. Those students who are unable to cope with the state curriculum due
to lack of learning ability or insufficient motivation fall behind their peers and thus become potential users of private tutoring. In addition to those students who use private tutoring for remedial purposes, there are students who wish to improve their academic performance in order to fill knowledge gaps and to prepare for the UNT or Olympiads (academic competitions in specific subject areas). Importantly, academic Olympiads are becoming increasingly popular among students, because they provide a unique competitive advantage to those students who achieve the best results at national and international competitions. For example, the *Law on Education* (1999) states that the winners of national and international Olympiads are granted free entrance to the higher education institution of their choice, without having to take centralized state examinations (Article 13, Paragraph 3). Undoubtedly, the existing reward structure motivates many students to invest in private tutoring during their high school years in order to maximize their chances of entering the most prestigious higher education study programmes.

**Increasing demand for higher education**

Higher education has always been prestigious in Kazakhstan. Since independence, however, higher education enrolments have witnessed an unprecedented growth. The desire to attain a higher education degree has been dictated by market demands. Most employers require job applicants to have a higher education degree, regardless of the specifics of a job vacancy. Furthermore, there is a trend among young professionals to obtain a second higher education degree to increase their competitiveness in the labour market.

The dynamics of higher education enrolments over the past 10 years reveal that the number of university students has tripled, from 275,300 students in the 1994/1995 academic year to 747,100 students in the 2004/2005 academic year. In 2006, there were 510 higher education students per 10,000 of the population (Agency of Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2006). The number of higher education institutions increased from 101 to 181 during the same period. Importantly, the number of private universities also increased. Between the 1994/1995 and 2004/2005, the number of private higher education institutions grew from 32 to 130, thus contributing to the commercialization of higher education. Given the increasing demand
for higher education and steadily growing higher education tuition fees (currently ranging from US$1,000 to US$8,000 per year), many students aspire to get the highest possible points on the UNT in order to receive state scholarships for higher education. This, in turn, increases the demand for private tutoring, which is used by many students to increase their competitive advantage on university entrance examinations.

**Socio-economic and socio-cultural factors**

While the main factors driving the demand for private tutoring are educational, it is important to acknowledge the impact of socio-economic and socio-cultural factors on the private tutoring market in Kazakhstan. Post-Soviet transformation towards a free-market economy has triggered the commercialization of education, which has both positive and negative implications for society. For families with high and stable incomes, the free-market economy has opened up new opportunities for investment in the education of their children through various channels, including private schools, supplementary tutoring, study abroad, or a combination of the above. Depending on their values, this group of private tutoring users could be subdivided into those who view tutoring as an important investment for their children and those who see it merely as an attribute of prestige. For families with a low socio-economic status, the emergence of a free-market economy has a number of negative implications, including the growing divide between the ‘have’ and ‘have nots’ in the education area, as well as the realization that reliance on the mainstream education system alone may not necessarily be enough for competitive advancement in the education and labour markets.

**Private tutoring in Kazakhstan: scope, nature and implications**

Based on the data from quantitative and qualitative research, this section examines the general characteristics of private tutoring and the educational, social and economic impact of private tutoring on the mainstream education system.
General characteristics of private tutoring and preparatory courses

The general characteristics of private tutoring include its scale, academic subjects, pervasiveness, dynamics, group size, and costs. These domains are each considered here in turn with reference to different types of private tutoring (both private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses) used by students in the final grade of secondary schools.

Scope

The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents (64.8 per cent) had used some type of private tutoring, 25.0 per cent used private tutoring lessons, 15.0 per cent attended preparatory courses, and 24.8 per cent used both (see Figure 4.1). The respondents were also asked about the scope of private tutoring among their classmates. Almost all respondents (99.4 per cent) replied that, on average, 37 per cent of their classmates used some type of private tutoring.

Figure 4.1 Kazakhstan: the scope of private tutoring
Pervasiveness of private tutoring use

Of all private tutoring users, 20.6 per cent hired a tutor in one subject, 15.2 per cent in two subjects and 13.9 per cent in three and more subjects. Approximately one half of all students attending preparatory courses were tutored in all subjects included on university entrance examinations, 27.5 per cent were tutored in almost all subjects included in university entrance examinations, and 22.3 per cent were tutored in one subject only.

Of all students attending private tutoring lessons, 43.2 per cent had private tutoring on a regular basis throughout the school year, 25.0 per cent just before examinations, 13.8 per cent took private tutoring lessons occasionally throughout the school year, and 18.0 per cent occasionally throughout the final semester (see Table 4.1). Most of the respondents (almost 70 per cent) spent two to four hours per week in private tutoring lessons, 21.4 per cent spent more than four hours per week, and 9 per cent spent only one hour per week in such lessons. Students attending preparatory courses reported that one course lasted on average 107 hours.

Table 4.1  Kazakhstan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Students (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regularly throughout the year</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally throughout the year</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally in the final semester</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just before examinations</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic subjects

The largest number of respondents took private tutoring lessons in mathematics (67.2 per cent), followed by history (36.2 per cent), physics (36.0 per cent), and the state language and literature (17.8 per cent). Importantly, three of these most popular subjects (that is, mathematics, history and the state language) are compulsory subjects in the UNT. The popularity of physics can be explained by state efforts to support and increase the prestige of the technical sciences in the country (for example, one third of all state scholarships are allocated to the study
of technical sciences). Given the incentives provided by the state and the fact that physics is the fourth elective subject included in the UNT for numerous technical departments, it is not surprising that physics is among the most popular subjects for which students seek private tutoring.

Students in urban areas had private tutoring lessons in mathematics more frequently than did students in rural areas, with 79.5 per cent of respondents living in small cities and 72.7 per cent in large cities, with 54.8 per cent of students in rural areas taking private tutoring lessons in mathematics (see Figure 4.2). Physics was studied privately by approximately the same share of the respondents in large cities, small towns and rural areas. History was most frequently studied by students from small towns, while state language and literature were more frequently studied by students from small towns and rural areas (see Figure 4.2). Private tutoring in foreign languages was more popular among students from urban areas, which may be an indication that there are less foreign language teachers in rural areas.

**Dynamics of private tutoring use**

The majority of those receiving private tuition (73.2 per cent) began taking private tutoring lessons in the final year of secondary school. Only 16.0 per cent of the respondents took private tutoring lessons in Grade 10, 6.8 per cent in the Grade 9, and 4.0 per cent in the Grade 8 or earlier. The majority of the students attending preparatory courses reported enrolling in the courses six months before university entrance examinations, with almost half of the respondents (48.3 per cent) attending preparatory courses three to six months prior to university entrance examinations, 11.3 per cent two months prior to examinations, and 4.0 per cent in the last month running up to the examinations. Approximately one third of all respondents (36.5 per cent) began attending preparatory courses one year prior to university entrance examinations or earlier. These findings indicate that private tutoring is primarily used for preparation for state centralized examinations, thus reflecting the changing examination structure in Kazakhstan.
**Private tutoring in Kazakhstan**

Figure 4.2   **Kazakhstan: percentage of students taking private tutoring according to subject and geographic location**

Size of private tutoring groups

Almost half of the respondents taking private tutoring lessons (44.8 per cent) studied individually with a tutor, 23.6 per cent studied in groups of two or three people, and 31.6 per cent studied in groups of four or more. The size of preparatory courses varied widely, with 28.8 per cent studying in groups of five people, 42.5 per cent in groups of six to fifteen people, 24.5 per cent in groups of sixteen to thirty people, and only 4.3 per cent in relatively large groups of more than thirty students.

Costs

The findings of the study revealed that preparatory courses were considerably cheaper than private tutoring lessons: 53.5 per cent of the respondents attending preparatory courses reported that they spent approximately US$135 per year on one subject, while students attending
private tutoring lessons reported spending about US$220 per year on private tutoring in one subject. A survey of university professors revealed that one hour of private tutoring lessons costs, on average, US$5. Those university professors who offer private tutoring lessons reported that it costs approximately US$400 per year for students to prepare for university entrance examinations. Thus, the surveyed students and university professors gave similar estimations of the costs of private tutoring lessons. Given that an average private tutoring user spends approximately US$390 per year on private tuition in all subjects, and that approximately half of all students admitted to universities used private tutoring (over 107,000 were admitted to universities in the 2004/2005 academic year), the country-wide costs of private tutoring are likely to be in excess of US$20 million. Because most individual and small-group tutoring is a shadow activity – one that is not legalized), the revenue received by these tutors is beyond the reach of government tax collectors.

University professors were also asked about the factors influencing the cost of private tutoring (see Figure 4.3). According to them, the cost of private tutoring was primarily determined by the academic/professional qualifications of a tutor (56.7 per cent of the respondents), followed by such factors as students’ knowledge level (43.2 per cent), the prestige of a university and/or higher education programme where the potential applicant wishes to study (24.3 per cent), and the potential of the country in terms of higher education studies (24.3 per cent). As Zoya Semenova, a private tutor in mathematics and English language, explained:

Private tutoring costs are the lowest for students in lower grades, while they are the highest for school graduates. A strong tutor in mathematics who is helping a student to prepare for entering a very prestigious higher education programme in mathematics, for example, may charge up to US$30 per hour. As a rule, those are university professors who value their efforts highly. (Semykina, 2006)
Consumers of private tutoring: who is receiving private tutoring and why?

Of all students receiving private tutoring, 57.6 per cent were young men, and 42.4 per cent were young women. Most of the private tutoring users in the sample included school graduates from Kazakhstan (97.7 per cent), while some had graduated from schools in Uzbekistan (1.2 per cent), Kyrgyzstan (0.6 per cent), China (0.2 per cent), and other countries (for example, Mongolia and Russia). More than half of private tutoring users (52.6 per cent) had graduated from secondary schools in urban areas (that is, cities with a population of more than 100,000 people), 32.6 per cent attended schools in rural areas, and 14.9 per cent attended schools in provincial centres. The majority of private tutoring users (69.4 per cent) graduated from comprehensive secondary schools, 27.4 per cent graduated from gymnasia or lyceums, and 0.8 per cent from technical colleges or vocational schools. The majority of private tutoring users (89.4 per cent) graduated from secondary schools in 2005, 9.2 per cent graduated from schools in 2004 and the remaining 1.4 per cent graduated earlier than 2004. More than half of private tutoring users in the sample (55.9 per cent) reported paying for higher education tuition themselves, while 44.1 per cent were exempt from paying tuition fees (that is, received state scholarships for studying in higher education institutions). Approximately 55 per cent of all students...
surveyed who received state scholarships for their higher education studies used private tutoring. The number of private tutoring users was lower among those students who paid their tuition fees themselves (approximately 45 per cent).

The largest number of students taking private tutoring lessons reported that they used tutoring to prepare for university entrance examinations (42.0 per cent). In addition, the surveyed students mentioned other reasons for taking private tutoring lessons, including to improve their understanding of the subjects taught at schools (31.6 per cent), to fill knowledge gaps (26.0 per cent), to memorize and systematize subjects learnt earlier (18.0 per cent), to compensate for the low quality of education in mainstream schools (10.6 per cent) and other reasons (see Table 4.2). The reasons for taking preparatory courses were similar to those for using private tuition. The majority of students (56.0 per cent) reported that they attended preparatory courses to obtain in-depth knowledge in subjects in which they would take university entrance examinations. Approximately one quarter of all students attending preparatory courses (24.0 per cent) reported that the main reason was to fill a knowledge gap, and the same number of students (24.0 per cent) referred to the need to remember and systematize information learnt earlier. Ten per cent of the respondents were of the view that preparatory courses were necessary to compensate for the low quality of education in mainstream schools (see Table 4.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for private tutoring use</th>
<th>Private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Preparatory courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To prepare better for examinations</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have a better understanding of subjects taught at school</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill knowledge gaps</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To memorize and systematize topics learnt earlier</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system does not give the required knowledge/skills, therefore it is necessary to use private tutoring</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents made me take private tutoring</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other students used private tutoring, therefore I decided to do the same</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Providers of private tutoring: who is offering private tutoring and why?

The vast majority (70.4 per cent) of students taking private tutoring lessons reported that their tutors were schoolteachers. Of these, 39.6 per cent of students took private tutoring lessons from their own class teachers, 8.8 per cent from other teachers in their schools, and 22.0 per cent from teachers from other schools. One fifth of all students (20.2 per cent) took private tutoring lessons from university professors, 7.6 per cent from other professionals in the field, and only two per cent from university students (see Table 4.3). Similar to private tutoring lessons, schoolteachers constitute the majority of preparatory course providers. Among the surveyed students attending preparatory courses, 47.5 per cent reported that these courses were organized by schools, which explains why teachers constitute the majority of tutors offering preparatory courses: 55.5 per cent of all students attending preparatory courses reported that the courses were taught by schoolteachers, 31.0 per cent were reported to be taught by university professors, 13.0 per cent by professionals in the field of study, and 1.5 per cent by university students (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3  Kazakhstan: providers of private tutoring (percentage of students reporting taking private tutoring with different providers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private tutoring providers</th>
<th>Private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Preparatory courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schoolteacher</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University professor</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University student</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist in this subject (who is not employed by official educational institutions)</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do students find tutors? According to the findings of the study, private tutoring is frequently initiated by the teachers themselves. Of the surveyed students, 28.2 per cent reported that their teachers had offered their services to students, and 19.4 per cent claimed that teachers had recommended private tutoring to them. In addition, 26.2 per cent of all students taking private tutoring lessons reported that their parents had found a private tutor for them, and 17.8 per cent stated that their friends had recommended a tutor. Only 5.0 per cent of all students surveyed
reported that they had found a tutor through advertising. Since most private tutors do not legalize their status, it is not surprising that they rely on word of mouth to find potential consumers instead of publicly advertising their services in newspapers, journals and other sources.

**Educational, ethical and social implications of private tutoring**

Private tutoring is a complex phenomenon that has multiple effects on society and education. This section examines the impact of private tutoring on mainstream schools, as well as exploring the connections between private tutoring, corruption and social inequities in Kazakhstan.

**Private tutoring and the quality of mainstream education**

The findings of this study reveal that the demand for private tutoring is driven by a variety of educational factors, including preparation for university entrance examinations and students’ perception that mainstream education provided is of low quality: 56.9 per cent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the main reason for taking private tutoring was to increase their chances of entering higher education institutions. Furthermore, 50.2 per cent of the respondents stated that the school curriculum did not cover everything required for university entrance examinations, and 81.0 per cent thought that teachers did not explain subject matter thoroughly. Approximately one half of all surveyed students (44.5 per cent) thought that taking private tutoring was the only way to pass university entrance examinations, and an overwhelming majority (84.6 per cent) thought that students using private tutoring were more likely to enter university than students of equal abilities who did not use private tutoring.

Thus, the surveyed students perceived that there was a gap between the requirements of school curricula and university entrance examinations. When asked directly whether the knowledge and skills acquired at school were enough to pass the university entrance examinations, only 46.2 per cent of the respondents gave an affirmative answer, while 36.6 per cent thought that school did not prepare them for university entrance examinations, and 17.1 per cent could not answer the question. Similarly, 38.0 per cent of the higher education professors
surveyed thought that schools did not prepare students for university entrance examinations. Furthermore, some respondents argued that not only did schools short-change students with regard to university entrance examinations, they also failed to equip them with the basic skills necessary for the academic and labour market in the post-Soviet context:

[The] private tutoring market is driven not only by students who would like to better prepare for university entrance examinations. It is also driven by those students who would like new skills and competencies. If we analyse the reasons for private tutoring, we will see parents often intuitively feel that the knowledge transmitted in schools does not meet the requirements of the new labour market – students need to learn not only to remember facts, but to be able to analyse and structure arguments. ... (Roundtable discussion conducted in Almaty on 29 October 2005)

**Figure 4.4 Kazakhstan: students’ opinions regarding the impact of private tutoring on achievement in university entrance examinations**

![Bar chart showing student opinions on the impact of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses](image)

An analysis of student opinions regarding the impact of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses reveals that a vast majority...
of private tuition users believe that private tutoring had some or a
great impact on the results of their university entrance examinations
(see Figure 4.4). The surveyed students positively assessed the impact
of both private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses on the results
of their university entrance examinations: 51.8 per cent of users of
private tutoring and 53.5 per cent of users of preparatory courses said
that tutoring had some impact on their results, while 38.6 per cent of
students using private tutoring lessons and 39.8 per cent of students
attending preparatory courses said that it had a major impact on their
results. Nevertheless, private lessons were judged most effective.

**Ethical issues and corruption**

The findings of this study echo other research on private tutoring
(for example, Silova et al., 2006b) by highlighting an emerging
connection between private tutoring and corruption in secondary
schools. Corruption is correlated to the existing low wages in the
education sector, making poorly paid teachers more susceptible
than well-paid teachers to teach below their capacity while offering
supplementary private tutoring to gain extra income. As was revealed
also by focus group discussions and interviews with students’ parents,
the majority of the respondents (56.9 per cent) believed that this is the
main reason for the existence of private tutoring. In order to make ends
meet, many teachers artificially create demands for tutoring through
lowering students’ marks. One participant in a focus group explained:

> My friend’s children go to school and teachers are expecting
money from them. If parents do not hire teachers as their
children’s private tutors, the children are getting only satisfactory
or good marks and their achievements are never assessed as
excellent. The children’s teacher offers private tutoring lessons
for her students, charging 250 tenge (approximately US$2)
per each lesson, and she is collecting the pay for one month or
even two months in advance. As soon as my friend started paying
the teacher for private tutoring lessons, his children were given
excellent marks. Everyone only whispers about this problem,
but I think that this problem should be discussed openly. (Focus
group conducted in Almaty on 29 October 2005)
Given that Kazakhstan’s private tutoring market is primarily manipulated by employees of the education system themselves (that is, schoolteachers and university professors), it is likely that teachers will engage in unethical behaviour to create a demand for private tutoring among their students. Since approximately 40 per cent of all surveyed students use their own teachers as tutors, it is likely that corruption is a widespread phenomenon in the education system of Kazakhstan. The majority of the surveyed students admitted that it was common for students to ask their own teachers to provide private tutoring lessons after school hours (78.5 per cent) and that teachers encouraged their own students to take private tutoring lessons (65.7 per cent) (see Table 4.4). This may suggest that teachers deliberately fail to cover the entire curriculum in order to increase the demand for private tutoring after school hours and thus secure additional income. In fact, the majority of the surveyed students (81.9 per cent) believed that students opted for private tutoring because teachers did not explain their subject matter thoroughly. A significant 42.8 per cent of the surveyed students believed that teachers treated students who opted for private tutoring better than students who did not.

Table 4.4  Kazakhstan: students’ statements regarding corruption-related issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corruption-related statements</th>
<th>Respondents who somewhat/strongly agreed (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schoolteachers are better tutors than university professors.</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is common for a student to ask his/her class teacher for private lessons.</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class teachers encourage students who have problems with a subject matter to take private lessons.</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the main reasons for private tutoring is so that teachers can receive an additional financial income.</td>
<td>56.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers treat students who receive private tutoring from them better than students who do not.</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should not be allowed to offer private tutoring to their own students.</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nevertheless, only 16.7 per cent of the surveyed students believed that teachers should be prohibited from tutoring their own students. This may indicate that people are becoming accustomed to corruption.
in the education system and other spheres, perceiving it as a normal phenomenon of everyday life in Kazakhstan. As Rogov, Mami and Bychkova (2004: 20) observed, “corruption in the CIS countries is first of all a tool for the proper performance of legal services and attainment of socially accepted goals”, and the education sector in Kazakhstan is not an exception.

**Private tutoring and socio-economic inequities**

The findings of the study reveal that private tutoring is not accessible to all students. *Table 4.5* summarizes students’ opinions regarding the impact of socio-economic factors on access to private tutoring. The vast majority of the students surveyed (73.5 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that private tutoring lessons are expensive (60.0 per cent and 13.5 per cent, respectively). Similarly, the majority of students (73.1 per cent) believed that children from wealthy families could hire better tutors (52.7 per cent agreeing and 20.4 per cent strongly agreeing). Furthermore, 41.9 per cent of the surveyed students believed that private tutors are affordable only for children from rich families.

**Table 4.5** Kazakhstan: students’ opinions regarding the relationship between private tutoring and socio-economic inequities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corruption-related statements</th>
<th>Respondents who somewhat/strongly agreed (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only students from wealthy families can afford private tutoring.</td>
<td>41.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, private tutoring lessons are expensive.</td>
<td>73.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students from wealthy families can hire better tutors.</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings of this study confirmed that access to private tutoring is affected by the social status and educational level of students’ parents, the economic welfare of students’ families, as well as geographical location. For example, the majority of private tutoring users reported that their parents held professional/academic positions with a high social status, such as scientific-technical intelligentsia (38.7 per cent of mothers and 28.6 per cent of fathers), managers (9.0 per cent of mothers and 15.8 per cent of fathers), and public servants (13.0 per cent of mothers and 8.7 per cent of fathers). Similarly, private tutoring users
constituted more than half (54.3 per cent) of all students whose parents had a higher education and only 32.7 per cent of all students whose parents had no higher education experience (a difference of more than 20 per cent). Not surprisingly, students who attended private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses considered their family welfare to be high (40.6 per cent considered it to be high and 11.6 per cent very high). Almost half (46.9 per cent) of private tutoring users considered their family income to be mediocre, and only 0.6 per cent considered it poor.

In addition, the study revealed unequal access to private tutoring among students from different geographic areas. While more than 55 per cent of the surveyed students in Almaty (the former capital of Kazakhstan) used private tutoring, only about 30 per cent of the surveyed students in the southern city of Shymkent used private tutoring. This suggests that private tutoring may be more accessible to the residents of urban areas who have higher income levels compared to the residents of rural areas. This is also confirmed by a World Bank study (2002), which revealed that approximately 17 per cent of students from the richest part of the population study at universities, while only 5 per cent of students from middle-income families and 4 per cent of students from the poorest part of the population study in higher education institutions (World Bank, 2002). As seen in Figure 4.5, the bottom left quadrant and the top right quadrant reveal that the higher the per capita income level in the region, the better the test scores, and vice versa. This might be explained by the fact that in the high-per-capita-income parts of the country (for example, Almaty and Astana) people can afford to pay for private tutors, which results in higher scores on national university entrance examinations.10

10. The only exceptions are the Atyrau and Mangistau regions, where high incomes are generated due to oil extraction. However, these regions also have the largest share of the poor population in Kazakhstan. In 2004, for example, poor people constituted 29 per cent of the population in Atyrau, and 21 per cent in Magistau, while the average rate for the country was 16 per cent (Agency of Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2005).
Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this study reveal that private tutoring has become an important part of the education market in Kazakhstan. It is a dynamically developing market, which operates mainly in the shadow economy. The demand for private tutoring is primarily driven by the inefficiencies of the mainstream education system, which does not meet the challenges and demands of its users. Public perception of a decline in the quality of education and increasing discrepancies between the school curriculum and university admission requirements create an increasing demand for private tutoring among the students of secondary schools. In addition, the demand for private tutoring is partially driven by underpaid teachers, who use private tutoring as an income-generation activity to supplement their official incomes.

While private tutoring has a number of positive features (such as being an income-generating activity for teachers and bringing about investments in human capital for high-income families), the findings of this study reveal that there are also a number of negative consequences. In particular, private tutoring may exacerbate social inequalities and raise questions about the state’s commitment to provide quality education for all students. Furthermore, private tutoring raises the question of pedagogical ethics, further worsening the deteriorating status of the teaching profession in Kazakhstan. More alarmingly, the scope and
pervasiveness of the private tutoring market suggest that it is forming a parallel education process in the final grades of secondary schools, which may eventually replace the mainstream education system. To alleviate the negative aspects of private tutoring, it is important to consider the following recommendations:

- **Monitor the private tutoring market regularly and systematically.** Monitoring of private tutoring should take place every two years, along with an analysis of the changing dynamics of the scope and types of private tutoring and its providers, as well as the equity implications of tutoring at different educational levels. Accurate data will be necessary in order to make informed decisions and take action to decrease the negative impact of private tutoring on schools, society and the economy. Importantly, the findings would provide important data for the annual report on the status of public education in Kazakhstan.

- **Undertake a systematic analysis of the legal aspects of private tutoring.** Such an analysis is necessary to propose clear, simple, transparent mechanisms for the effective functioning of the private tutoring market, including mechanisms for introducing simple payment schemes and a taxation mechanism to legalize teachers’ incomes earned through private tutoring.

- **Raise public awareness about private tutoring.** Given the highly sensitive nature of the issue, it is important to inform the general public about the positive and negative implications of private tutoring. This can be achieved by discussing the complexity of the phenomenon with students, parents, school administrators and teachers.

- **Improve the economic and social status of the teaching profession.** Some negative implications of private tutoring (such as unethical teacher behaviour) can be addressed by improving the economic and social status of teachers by raising teacher salaries, improving social guarantees, and introducing a flexible pay system to stimulate and reward innovative approaches to teaching/learning.

- **Ensure transparency of private tutoring by developing a code of ethics for teachers.** Teacher unions/associations should take on the responsibility of developing a code of ethics, which would
address the ethical implications of private tutoring and discourage teachers from tutoring their own students.

- **Raise educational quality in mainstream schools.** Given that private tutoring is primarily driven by the ineffectiveness of the mainstream education system, it is necessary to introduce a range of reforms aimed at improving the quality of education. Some of the key components of the reform would include curriculum revision, innovative approaches to in-service teacher education, introduction of individualized teaching/learning and student-centred teaching/learning methods and a more flexible (and authentic) assessment of students’ learning outcomes.

- **Increase opportunities for young people to enter higher education institutions.** This can be achieved through a variety of strategies at the state level (for example, introducing flexible tuition payment schemes and grants) and at individual higher education institution level (for example, securing grants and scholarships from the business sector and from international organizations and charities).
CHAPTER 5
PRIVATE TUTORING IN KYRGYZSTAN

Nina Bagdasarova and Alexander Ivanov

Kyrgyzstan’s initial encounter with private tutoring dates back to the Soviet period, when the Soviet Government introduced compulsory mass schooling throughout the country. While the state guaranteed (at least rhetorically) equal education opportunities for all students at the compulsory education level (Grades 1-10), many students faced serious problems when they moved up to higher education. In this context, private tutoring served a very specific function – it prepared the elite for entrance into higher education institutions. While many students were able to enter higher education institutions without supplementary tutoring, it was usually the elite who had the means to engage private tutors in order to increase their chances. Given that many tutors were university professors, private tutoring was often associated with corruption in university admissions. Some tutors served on university admission committees and had direct access to the content of university entrance examinations. Even though many tutors may not have taken bribes overtly, they were expected to provide their students with detailed information about entrance examination requirements and thus guarantee their entrance into higher education institutions.

The collapse of the Soviet Union has dramatically changed the dynamics of private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan by opening up the market to the masses. Private tutoring is no longer limited to the elite wishing to study in higher education institutions, but has spread to the mainstream compulsory education system itself. In part, the increasing demand for private tutoring was an indirect response to a widespread perception of the deteriorating quality of education during the transition period of the 1990s, which was accompanied by a massive decline in national income and public revenue and by periods of high inflation. These economic setbacks had major implications for the education sector. Since the early 1990s, the number of qualified schoolteachers declined, while the average age of the teaching corps increased. A significant number of teachers became concentrated in a few prestigious schools,
while many schools faced serious teacher shortages. In-service teacher training became irregular, irrelevant and ineffective. With the exception of a few elite schools in large cities, most schools (including virtually all rural schools) became impoverished through budgetary neglect, deterioration of facilities, depletion of teaching and learning materials and demoralization of teachers earning salaries below the absolute poverty level (World Bank, 2005d). As a result, the quality of education declined, revealing learning achievement gaps between students from urban and rural schools.

In this context, private tutoring became one of the mechanisms used to compensate for the declining quality of education. Teachers from more prestigious schools began recruiting groups of students from other schools to reduce the gap in education quality in certain subject areas or to provide tutoring in subjects not taught in school. Increasingly, students from prestigious schools began to take private tutoring lessons, because performance requirements in these schools increased and many students were unable to cope due to their individual learning abilities. Furthermore, the nature of private tutoring changed with the introduction of a centralized high-stakes examination for university entrance (the NST), which aimed to reduce corruption-related risks in university admission procedures. Undoubtedly, the introduction of this high-stakes examination created opportunities for more transparent university entrance procedures and enhanced opportunities for students from rural areas to enter higher education institutions. At the same time, however, the introduction of the high-stakes examination increased the demand for private tutoring as many students used tutors to increase their success rates in university entrance examinations.

This study examines the scope and nature of private tutoring, and analyses key factors causing the demand for private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan. The research is based on quantitative data, which were collected in the autumn of 2005. A total of 1,100 first-year university students were surveyed in five different universities of Kyrgyzstan: Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, Kyrgyz National University, Bishkek Humanities University, Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University and Osh State University. The university sample was designed to cover different geographical locations, including students from the capital city Bishkek (70.9 per cent) and southern Kyrgyzstan’s largest city
Osh (29.1 per cent). The sample included 58.1 per cent of students from high-demand study programmes (for example, economics and management, law and international relations) and 41.9 per cent from low-demand study programmes (for example, education, engineering) (see Chapter 1 for a more detailed description of the university sample).

**Background: educational, economic and social factors**

The transformation period brought major challenges to the education system of Kyrgyzstan, which may have contributed to the rise in private tutoring. The main factors causing the demand for private tutoring include: (1) educational factors (such as the introduction of centralized university entrance examinations and the deteriorating quality of education in mainstream schools); (2) economic factors (such as declining education expenditures and the decreasing socio-economic status of teachers); and (3) socio-cultural factors (such as the increasing social value of education).

**Educational factors**

The Kyrgyz education system comprises preschool education for children between 1 and 6 years of age, basic primary education (Grades 1-9), complete secondary education (Grades 10-11), vocational/technical schools and higher education. Compulsory basic education is free of charge and covers Grades 1 to 9. Students can continue their education in complete secondary schools, which cover Grades 10-11. Complete secondary education is offered by state schools and a small number of private schools, which include schools founded by foreign investors and which use international programmes (for example, Turkish lyceums, Aga Khan schools, European schools). In 2006, there were 38 private and private- and state-owned schools, which constituted less than 2 per cent of all schools in the Kyrgyz Republic (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2006). State-funded schools offering innovative curricula have a chance to obtain the status of a gymnasium or lyceum, which provides wider opportunities for financial management and organization of the teaching/learning processes at school. These new types of schools are eligible to apply for additional funding from the national budget. Admission to
these schools often depends on family income rather than the student’s academic abilities, as many gymnasia and lyceums require additional fees. Compared to regular state-owned schools, gymnasia and lyceums generally provide a better quality education, increasing students’ chances of entering prestigious higher education institutions. In 2006, there were 160 gymnasia and lyceums, which constituted approximately 8 per cent of all schools. Most of these educational institutions are located in urban areas, thus limiting opportunities for students from rural areas to attend a good school (Huttova et al., 2002).

The state curriculum and state school-leaving examinations are implemented in all schools in the country, including private educational institutions, gymnasia and lyceums. Upon successful completion of secondary education, students receive an *Attestat* or a general certificate of education, which is necessary to continue education in higher education institutions. For admission to the latter, students can take either examinations organized by individual universities or the NST, which allows students to compete fairly for state-funded higher education placements. Several educational factors relate directly to the size, shape and nature of private tutoring. In Kyrgyzstan, these factors include the introduction of the NST for university admissions, the deteriorating quality of education in mainstream schools, and the deteriorating socio-economic status of the teaching profession.

*Introduction of the NST*

Until 2002, all higher education institutions organized their own entrance examinations, which could be taken by any student with an *Attestat* from secondary school. These examinations were based primarily on Soviet pedagogical practices, assessing mastery of information and recall ability. University-controlled admissions remained corrupt, with many university rectors offering public university placements (that is, scholarships) to the highest bidders, often regardless of academic merit (Drummond and DeYoung, 2004). The introduction of the NST in 2002 attempted to address both of these problems: that is, assessing students’ abilities related to knowledge application instead of fact memorization and linking achieved scores to the allocation of government-funded education scholarships (Drummond and DeYoung, 2004). The NST is run by an independent agency, the Education and Teaching Methods
Assessment Centre. Between 2002 and 2004, over 100,000 students sat the examinations. University applicants receiving the highest 50 scores are entitled to choose a university and a department among the higher education institutions that recognize the NST as equal to the entrance examinations.\textsuperscript{11}

Explicitly aimed at equalizing rural and urban educational opportunities and introducing a modern culture of assessment, the NST is the only criterion used in determining the government allotment of highly valued university scholarships, which constitute 15 per cent of all higher education placements. This makes the NST a high-stakes examination, leading many students to get private tutoring in order to increase their chances of passing the test and winning limited state-funded higher education scholarships. Importantly, the NST is built upon the measurement of students’ aptitude for learning, while state education standards and school programmes generally focus on memorizing facts and acquiring specific knowledge and information. The inconsistency between the NST requirements and traditional school curricula creates further demand for private tutoring as students seek to increase their competitive advantage for the university entrance examination.

\textit{The deteriorating quality of education}

Although there are no time series data to track changes in the quality of education during the transition period (except for Monitoring Learning Achievement studies that were conducted in 2002 and 2005 – see Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005 and Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002\textsuperscript{a}), there is a consensus on the part of teachers, students and parents that the quality of education in Kyrgyzstan has deteriorated seriously over the past decade in all but a few well-endowed elite urban schools (Mertaugh, 2004). Among the main factors affecting education quality are: (1) outdated, overloaded and teacher-centred curricula, and (2) poor learning environments (as marked by shortages of textbooks, reading

\textsuperscript{11} The results of the NST are recognized by all universities in the country with exception of the American University in Central Asia (AUCA). Although AUCA does not use NST as the only criterion of student admission, it takes NST results into consideration during the selection and admission of scholarship winners.
Curriculum overloading was a common criticism of Soviet schooling, and one that has been directly transferred to the post-Soviet context (DeYoung et al., 2006; Pitt and Pavlova, 2001). As new knowledge and skills became desirable during the post-Soviet period, new subjects were added to the existing curricula without revising previous curricular content (DeYoung et al., 2006). As a result, curricula became overloaded with a large number of subjects. Furthermore, the national school curriculum remains largely scientific and subject-driven, with the primary focus on teaching facts rather than on developing skills that allow students to apply knowledge in various situations. Students in upper grades of secondary school lack opportunities for specialization and are required to study all subjects in-depth, which results in a learning load of over 49 hours a week. Taking into consideration the fact that many students take elective courses and private tutoring lessons in addition to their regular school studies, study overload may lead to physical exhaustion among students. At the same time, curriculum overload (especially in schools that do not have gymnasium status) is likely to reduce students’ motivation to learn, with many students refusing to spend time studying subjects they believe are unnecessary and irrelevant.

In addition to overloaded curricula, the quality of the general learning environment has deteriorated considerably in most schools in Kyrgyzstan, contributing to inadequate learning outcomes, declining attendance and poorly trained secondary-school graduates. A recent study of monitoring of learning achievement (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005) showed that only 44 per cent of all surveyed fourth-graders passed the minimum literacy test and only 58 per cent passed the mathematics tests. Declining results, mainly due to budgetary neglect, have led to a deterioration of physical facilities, a lack of access to textbooks and reading materials and a shortage of basic teaching and learning materials and equipment. According to the World Bank (2005e), school infrastructure is decaying – 41 per cent of schools have serious problems with heating, over 70 per cent of schools either have problems with or do not even have a water supply, and 20 per cent of schools have no toilets. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan (2005) reports
that most school buildings need repairs, library collections are poor, and the textbook borrowing system, with all its strengths, does not supply all students with the required literature. Furthermore, learning achievement has been negatively affected by such factors as insufficient teacher qualifications and a lack of support for education at home.

The quality of education is inconsistent across the country, with rural schools facing more serious shortages of educational materials and having poorer physical facilities. This results in a growing gap in education quality between schools in the large cities (Bishkek and Osh) and those in the rest of the country (especially rural areas). NST results show that of the 200 highest scorers, less than 20 per cent were from rural schools and small towns. Taking into consideration that rural schools constitute over 80 per cent of all schools in Kyrgyzstan, this figure suggests that students in these areas may not receive the same quality of education as students in urban schools. This is confirmed by the results of the MLA studies (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005; Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a), which also indicate that students from rural areas perform considerably worse than students from urban areas. For example, there is a significant learning achievement gap in literacy, with 55 per cent of students in urban areas and 40 per cent of students in rural areas passing the literacy test. In mathematics, the urban/rural divide is even higher, with a 73 per cent pass rate in urban areas and only a 54 per cent pass rate in rural areas (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2005). Finally, a previous MLA study (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002a) revealed the disturbing fact that more than 90 per cent of Grade 8 students in the Talas and Naryn oblasts (regions) failed the science test and more than 65 per cent of students in Osh and Batken oblast failed the mathematics test.

Decreasing status of the teaching profession

During the transition period, teachers lost all the privileges that they had enjoyed during the Soviet period, such as stable jobs, regular professional development opportunities, and a respected social status. As Kyrgyzstan’s President Bakiyev acknowledged, a lack of teachers and their very low salaries were among the main education problems in
Kyrgyzstan (quoted in DeYoung et al., 2006). Despite regular increases in teacher salaries in the 2000s (up to 15-20 per cent per year), teacher salaries constituted approximately a third of the average salaries in the production sphere and a half of the average salaries on a country-wide level in the early 2000s (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2006). As DeYoung et al. (2006) noted, teachers perceive their salaries to be so paltry that they are merely “symbolic” (DeYoung et al., 2006: 204). The extraordinarily low level of teacher salaries has driven the best teachers into private schools and gymnasia, which guarantee higher salaries and a more creative working environment for teachers. Teaching in regular state-funded schools is no longer considered attractive. The number of young teachers is steadily falling, and the average age of teachers is constantly increasing. In 2005, women of pre-retirement and retirement age constituted the majority of teachers (78 per cent) in the country (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2006).

Although the government has made some attempts to address this problem (for example, by granting certain privileges to university graduates to entice them to work in rural schools on a competitive basis), these attempts have not yet solved the problem of deteriorating teacher morale. As DeYoung et al. (2006) note, many young teachers enter the teaching profession never intending to teach for long. There is a general feeling that younger teachers are less committed to the profession and that this is reflected in their quality and limited professionalism. Those teachers who decide to stay in the profession have to take on additional jobs in order to survive, creating incentives for unethical behaviour such as tutoring their own students or offering higher marks in exchange for payments from students (DeYoung et al., 2006; Mertaugh, 2004). As Drummond explained,

Private tutoring here is a real issue and one that needs researching. The link to corruption is especially frightening as it is alleged in many schools that teachers have simply stopped working for the students who don’t pay for extra tutoring. In other words,

12. For example, the government initiated a special programme aimed at providing financial incentives for young graduates to work in rural schools. The Young Teacher’s Deposit programme provides an additional US$50 to the basic salary of each teacher per month over three years (DeYoung et al., 2006).
Private tutoring has in effect become the only education in some cases. (quoted in Johnson, 2008: 39)

**Economic factors**

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the expanded role of competition since Kyrgyzstan’s independence have led to pervasive changes in the structure and performance of the Kyrgyz economy. National output declined by 50 per cent between 1990 and 1995 and recovered only very slowly thereafter. By 2000, real GDP per capita was just 64 per cent of its level in 1990 (World Bank, 2005). In addition to the total decline in GDP, there was a decline in government education expenditure as a percentage of GDP, which fell from 7.0 per cent in 1993 to 4.6 per cent in 2005 (National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2006). In 2000, education expenditure as a percentage of GDP reached its lowest level of 3.5 per cent (UNICEF Transmonee, 2005). Although education spending as a percentage of total public expenditure remained constant throughout the 1990s and 2000s (constituting over 20 per cent of total public expenditure), public expenditure on education expressed in real terms fell even more sharply – to just one third of its 1990 level, reflecting the combined effect of the smaller public sector and the sharp decline in GDP (Mertaugh, 2004).

The dramatic decrease of central budget support for schools has led to increasing reliance on unevenly available local financing, parental contributions, as well as supplementary financing through the rental of school premises for non-educational activities. The school budget does not include funds for the development of schools and is only sufficient to cover utilities and salaries for teachers and school staff. On average, 35 per cent of the reported expenditures of primary schools in urban areas and 25 per cent of reported expenditures of rural schools come from non-budgetary sources (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, 2002). Parental contributions became an important source of financing for school maintenance, fuel, library collections, equipment and other necessities. These expenses constitute a significant share of household expenditures in Kyrgyzstan. Expressed in real terms, parental contributions are higher for economically better-off families, but they constitute a larger proportion of family incomes in poorer families – 20 per cent for very poor families, versus
9 per cent for families that are not poor (World Bank, 2005e). In urban schools, parental contributions often function as informal fees for attending the most prestigious schools, averaging US$100 per year in most schools in Bishkek and amounting to over US$500 per year in the most prestigious schools (Mertaugh, 2004). Parents also contribute to schools in rural areas, but widespread poverty means that income from this source in rural areas is very limited. The increasing reliance on these non-budgetary sources has become a source of increasingly unequal access to quality education, especially between urban and rural areas.

Social factors

Since Kyrgyzstan’s independence, higher education enrolment rates have tripled (from 12 per cent in 1991 to 37.2 per cent in 2005), while upper secondary enrolment rates in general and in vocational/technical schools have declined (from 87.9 per cent in 1991 to 61.0 per cent in 2005) (UNICEF Transmonee, 2005) (Figure 5.1). The decreasing demand for vocational/technical education could be explained by the fact that vocational training no longer satisfies the present needs of the labour market. At the same time, increasing demand for higher education reveals that education continues to be an important social value in Kyrgyz society and a key mechanism for coping with the challenges of post-Soviet transformation. Even though higher education degrees do not guarantee employment, many believe that more education is a good investment for young people and one that will allow them to access better paid jobs in the future. Compared to the Soviet period, the introduction of fee-based enrolment has made higher education more accessible to young people throughout the country.

Private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan: survey findings

This report is based on the findings of a survey administered to first-year students from different universities in Kyrgyzstan. Most of the respondents (89.5 per cent) entered universities immediately following graduation from secondary school. Most respondents (70.9 per cent) were enrolled in universities in the capital city, while the rest came from universities in other regions of the country. While the majority of the respondents (70.1 per cent) hoped to enter state-financed higher
education programmes, only 23.5 per cent were enrolled in state-budget groups, with all of their tuition costs covered by the state budget. Approximately 40 per cent of the surveyed university students were graduates of rural schools. The gender structure of the sample reflects the present prevalence of female students in the overall student body (66.4 per cent). The majority of the surveyed students (78.1 per cent) use Russian as the main language of instruction, while 21.9 per cent study in the official Kyrgyz language.

**Figure 5.1** Kyrgyzstan: enrolment rates in upper secondary and higher education institutions (1989-2005)


**General characteristics of private tutoring**

The general characteristics of private tutoring include its scope, types, academic subjects, pervasiveness and costs at a secondary education level. Throughout the study, a distinction is made between private tutoring lessons (offered by individuals) and preparatory courses (offered by institutions).

**The scope of private tutoring**

Approximately half of all surveyed students in Kyrgyzstan (52.5 per cent) opted for some type of private tutoring during their final year of secondary school. Private tutoring users include
25.0 per cent of students using private tutoring lessons, 8.1 per cent using preparatory courses, and 19.4 per cent using both in one or more subjects (see Figure 5.2). However, the respondents estimated a smaller scope of private tutoring lessons among their classmates (an average of 32.0 per cent). Of all the surveyed students, only 27.4 per cent reported that none of their classmates used private tutoring lessons, while 7.1 per cent reported that all of their classmates used private tutoring in the final year of secondary school.

**Figure 5.2  Kyrgyzstan: the scope of private tutoring**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of private tutoring use among students in Kyrgyzstan.]

- **47.5%** Private tutoring lessons
- **25.0%** Preparatory courses
- **19.4%** Both
- **8.1%** None

**Academic subjects**

Of all private tutoring users, the largest number of students took private tutoring lessons in foreign languages (45.7 per cent) and in mathematics (24.2 per cent). These two subjects are the most popular not only because they are included on university entrance examinations and the NST for some of the higher education programmes surveyed (for example, economics and management), but also because they may be taught inadequately in schools due to the deteriorating quality of education. The use of private tutoring in the sciences is less widespread, with only 5 per cent of all students taking private tutoring lessons in chemistry and 2 per cent in physics (see Table 5.1). This could be explained by the fact that the survey did not target students from higher education programmes that include science subjects on university entrance examinations.
Table 5.1  Kyrgyzstan: percentage of students taking private tutoring lessons according to subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects studied with the private tutor</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian language</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official language and literature</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pervasiveness of the use of private tutoring

The largest proportion of students (40.5 per cent) took private tutoring lessons on a regular basis throughout the school year, which suggests that private tutoring may be used primarily to compensate for the declining quality of education in mainstream schools. At the same time, 19.1 per cent of students took private tutoring lessons on a regular basis during their final semester in school, and 12.3 per cent took private tutoring lessons right before examinations, which suggests that private tutoring could also be used to increase student competitiveness in school-leaving and university entrance examinations (see Table 5.2). Similarly, attendance of preparatory courses revolved around university entrance examinations, with 36.9 per cent of the surveyed students attending preparatory courses one year before examinations or earlier and 30.2 per cent three to six months prior to examinations. A smaller percentage of students (20.9 per cent) attended preparatory courses immediately before examinations – that is, one or two months before the school-leaving and/or before university entrance examinations.
Table 5.2  Kyrgyzstan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pervasiveness of private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Students (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regularly throughout the year</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally throughout the year</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regularly in the final semester</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally in the final semester</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just before examinations</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data suggest that the pervasiveness of private tutoring increases in the upper grades of secondary schools, with approximately half of all private tutoring users (48.4 per cent) taking up tutoring lessons in the final grade (Grade 11) of secondary school, 21.8 per cent in Grade 10, 17.5 per cent in Grade 9, and 12.3 per cent in Grade 8 or earlier. The majority of the students (57.1 per cent) spent one or two hours per week with a private tutor, 16.9 per cent of whom spent one hour per week and 40.2 per cent spent two hours per week with a private tutor. However, 42.9 per cent of the students studied more intensively, spending on average three or more hours per week with a private tutor.

The size of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses

As a rule, students took private tutoring lessons individually (44.1 per cent) or in small groups consisting of two or three students (20.3 per cent). However, approximately one quarter of all students (24.6 per cent) were tutored in groups of more than five students, which is typical for private tutoring lessons in foreign languages (see Table 5.3). The size of preparatory courses is generally small. The largest proportion of students (42.5 per cent) attending preparatory courses studied in small groups of up to five students, and 37.5 per cent studied in groups of six to fifteen students. Only 20.1 per cent of all students attending preparatory courses studied in larger groups, with 11.1 per cent studying in groups of sixteen to thirty students and 8.7 per cent studying in groups larger than thirty students.
Table 5.3 Kyrgyzstan: the size of private tutoring lessons (percentage of students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The size of private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Students (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual lessons (one-on-one)</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons organized for a group of 2-3 students</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons organized for a group of 4-5 students</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons organized for a group larger than 5 students</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The costs of private tutoring

The costs of private tutoring varied widely among the surveyed students in Kyrgyzstan. On average, students reported spending US$63.8 per year for private tutoring in one subject and US$88.1 for all subjects. The majority of the students (72.0 per cent) spent less than US$50 on private tutoring in one subject, but some students reported spending over US$1,000 per year on private tutoring in one subject. Individual private tutoring lessons were generally more costly than preparatory courses. In Kyrgyzstan, the mean cost of private tutoring lessons in one subject was double the cost of all preparatory courses (US$63.8 for private tutoring lessons compared to US$36.3 for preparatory courses).

Private tutoring users: who is taking private tutoring and why?

The vast majority of private tutoring users were good students, with 96.3 per cent of them reporting receiving the highest marks at schools (for example, 36.5 per cent receiving excellent marks and 59.8 per cent receiving good marks). This contradicts the general assumption that private tutoring is a form of remedial assistance for weak students. In fact, over 65.2 per cent of the students surveyed disagreed with the statement that “only low achieving students take private tutoring”. In the context of Kyrgyzstan, it is good students who find it necessary to use supplementary private tutoring in order to compensate for the shortcomings of the education system and prepare for university entrance examinations.

The main reasons for taking private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses are almost the same, highlighting the connection between the use of private tutoring and the deteriorating quality of
education in schools (see Table 5.4). The largest proportion of students (46.4 per cent) indicated that they took private tutoring lessons “to better understand the subject taught at school”, followed by “to fill in gaps in knowledge” (24.0 per cent). Furthermore, 21.4 per cent of the respondents stated that “the education system does not provide the necessary knowledge and skills”, and 20.1 per cent explained that they opted for private tutoring to “prepare for examinations only”. A very small percentage of private tutoring users reported that they opted for private tutoring following their friends’ example (1.8 per cent) or as a result of parental pressure (1.6 per cent).

Table 5.4 Kyrgyzstan: main reasons for taking private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses in secondary schools (according to users)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for taking private tutoring lessons</th>
<th>Private tutoring lessons (%)</th>
<th>Preparatory courses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To better understand the subjects taught at school</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill in gaps in knowledge</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education system does not provide the necessary knowledge</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better prepare for examinations</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To memorize and systematize themes learnt earlier</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents forced me to take private tutoring</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following example of other students</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all students using private tutoring lessons, two thirds (65.4 per cent) were female students. Most of the students had graduated from schools in urban areas (61.9 per cent), and 37.7 per cent had attended schools in rural areas. Approximately two thirds of the students taking private tutoring lessons had grown up in well-educated families, with 65-70 per cent reporting that at least one of their parents had a university degree. Most of the students estimated the welfare of their families as good (47.7 per cent) and mediocre (32.3 per cent); only 0.8 per cent considered their family welfare as poor.

Preparatory courses were generally attended by students from urban areas: the share of students in urban areas attending preparatory courses constituted 67.8 per cent, while the share of students in rural areas was only 16.2 per cent. This could be explained by the fact that
Private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan

most preparatory courses are organized by universities, which are generally located in urban areas. Students from rural areas have more difficulty accessing these courses because of geographical distance. Preparatory courses were particularly popular among female students (67.9 per cent), with male students constituting less than one third of this group. Most of the students attending preparatory courses also came from well-educated families, with approximately 70 per cent of the respondents reporting that their parents had graduated from higher education institutions. Most of the students considered their family welfare as good (52.3 per cent) and mediocre (31.1 per cent), and only 0.7 per cent of them considered their family welfare as poor.

Providers: who is offering private tutoring and why?

Secondary schoolteachers are among the most common providers of private tutoring in lessons and preparatory courses. According to the survey, 62.5 per cent of the respondents took private tutoring lessons with schoolteachers, including 39.3 per cent with their own class teachers, 8.6 per cent with other teachers from their schools, and 14.6 per cent with teachers from other schools. Only 18.5 per cent of the surveyed students took private tutoring lessons with higher education professors and 16.9 per cent with professionals in the field of study (see Figure 5.3). Retired teachers are increasingly entering the private tutoring market. Following their retirement, they are able to spend more time and energy on private tutoring, which provides an additional income to supplement their meagre pensions. This means that for many teachers retirement may be more profitable economically than teaching at school.

Preparatory courses are organized not only by universities (37.1 per cent), but also by secondary schools (35.4 per cent) and private agencies (17.5 per cent). Preparatory courses organized by universities are more popular among students from urban areas (for example, 51.5 per cent of students in the capital city take preparatory courses organized by universities, and only 16.9 per cent attend courses organized by schools), while preparatory courses offered by schools are more widespread among students from small towns and rural areas (for example, 57.1 per cent take courses organized by schools and 22.9 per cent by universities). This could be explained by the fact
that students from rural areas and small towns have more difficulty accessing preparatory courses organized by universities because of the geographical distance. Finally, the number of students attending preparatory courses organized by private agencies is twice as large in urban than in rural areas (see Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.3** Kyrgyzstan: providers of private tutoring lessons

**Figure 5.4** Kyrgyzstan: share of students from urban and rural areas attending preparatory courses organized by different institutions
Private tutoring is a complex phenomenon, and it has major educational, social and economic implications for Kyrgyz society. This section examines the impact of private tutoring on mainstream schools, social inequalities and the economic sphere.

The educational, social and economic impact of private tutoring

Private tutoring and the quality of education in mainstream schools

The pervasiveness of private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan might be an indication of the low quality of education in mainstream schools. For example, 75.5 per cent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that students opt for private tutoring because they would like to learn more, and 51.2 per cent thought that private tutoring was necessary to cope with the overloaded school curriculum. Alarmingly, almost half of all the surveyed students (48.9 per cent) stated that private tutoring was the only way to receive quality education, and 60.8 per cent thought that the low quality of teaching in mainstream schools was the main reason for taking private tutoring. Furthermore, the vast majority (76.0 per cent) stated that the education system should be such that no one should need private tutoring. Finally, the surveyed students stated other reasons for taking private tutoring, which pointed to the inconsistency between school curricula and university entrance examinations. Well over half (65.6 per cent) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that students use private tutoring because the school curriculum does not cover everything required for university entrance examinations, and approximately half of all the surveyed students (53.1 per cent) thought that private tutoring was the only way to pass university entrance examinations.

Given that one of the main reasons for seeking private tutoring is to compensate for the poor quality of education acquired in mainstream schools and to increase one’s competitive advantage in university entrance examinations, it is important to examine the impact of private tutoring on examination outcomes. The vast majority (78.2 per cent) of the surveyed students thought that private tutoring had impacted somewhat (57.1 per cent) or greatly (24.1 per cent) on the results of their university entrance examinations. Only 7.8 per cent stated that
private tutoring lessons did not have any impact. Private tutoring users had an equally positive perception of the impact of preparatory courses on university entrance examinations. Of all the students attending preparatory courses, 28.6 per cent thought that they had a great impact, and 62.1 per cent thought that they had some impact on university entrance examinations. Only 3.3 per cent were of the opinion that they were ineffective, and 6.0 per cent did not know (see Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Kyrgyzstan: perceptions of private tutoring users of the impact of private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses on university entrance examinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived impact of private tutoring</th>
<th>Private tutoring lessons (%)</th>
<th>Preparatory courses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great impact</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some impact</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>62.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No impact at all</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot estimate</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Equity issues**

While the majority of the surveyed students (58.2 per cent) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that private tutoring is affordable only for students from wealthy families, the findings of the survey revealed some disparities arising from the geographic location and socio-economic status of families – namely, that private tutoring is more widespread in urban areas and among students from better educated families. For example, private tutoring lessons were more widespread in urban areas, with 61.9 per cent of students from the capital city and only 37.7 per cent of students from villages using private tutoring lessons. Furthermore, students from rural areas spent considerably less on supplementary private tutoring than did their peers from urban areas. For example, the number of students spending the least on private tutoring – less than 1,000 soms (about US$25) – was twice as high in rural areas as in the capital city (Figure 5.5). Finally, private tutoring lessons were more popular among students whose parents had attended higher education institutions (46.1 per cent) than among students whose parents had no higher education experience (36.1 per cent). Combined, the data show the inequalities inherent in
private tutoring. As private tutoring is increasingly tied to academic success, to university admissions and sometimes to favourable labour market outcomes, its uneven access and prohibitive costs could become mechanisms that maintain and possibly increase social inequalities.

Figure 5.5 Kyrgyzstan: the cost of private tutoring lessons in Kyrgyz soms by rural and urban areas (all subjects)

![Graph showing the cost of private tutoring lessons in Kyrgyz soms by rural and urban areas](image)

Ethical issues

The widespread use of private tutoring among secondary school students raises a number of ethical issues. A special concern stems from the fact that a large number of students (39.3 per cent) take private tutoring lessons from their own teachers. The majority of surveyed students admitted that it was common for students to seek tutoring from their own teacher after school hours (63.0 per cent) and that teachers encourage their own students to take private tutoring lessons (63.4 per cent) (see Table 5.6). This suggests that teachers may not be able to cover the official curriculum during the regular school hours because it is overloaded or because they work in overcrowded classrooms. However, this may also suggest that teachers deliberately do not cover the entire curriculum to increase the demand for private tutoring after school hours in order to secure additional financial income. In fact, the majority of the surveyed students (66.5 per cent)
believed that teachers engaged in private tutoring for financial reasons, that is, to supplement their meagre salaries. Importantly, the majority of the surveyed students (59.9 per cent) agreed or strongly agreed that teachers treat students who take private tutoring lessons from them better than they do other students. At the same time, however, only one third of the surveyed students (32.9 per cent) believed that teachers should be prohibited from tutoring their own students. Perhaps this could be explained by the fact that students see private tutoring as the only way to receive a good-quality education (48.9 per cent) or to pass university entrance examinations (53.1 per cent).

Table 5.6 Kyrgyzstan: Students’ opinions about corruption-related issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corruption-related statements</th>
<th>Respondents who somewhat/strongly agreed (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is common for students to ask their class teacher to provide private lessons.</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class teachers encourage pupils who have problems with a subject matter to take private lessons.</td>
<td>63.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the main reasons for private tutoring is so that teachers can receive an additional financial income.</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers treat students who receive private tutoring better than students who do not.</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusions and recommendations**

While private tutoring is shaped by multiple educational, economic and social factors, this study illustrates that one of the main forces driving the demand for private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan is the perceived deterioration in the quality of education in mainstream schools. This causes many students to seek out supplementary private tutoring to compensate for the shortcomings of the mainstream education system. Importantly, students also get private tutoring to prepare for centralized university entrance examinations in order to increase their chances of winning limited state-funded higher education placements. In addition to educational factors, private tutoring is also driven by economic factors, such as extraordinarily low teacher salaries, which force many teachers into private tutoring in order to secure a supplementary income. These educational and economic factors are tightly interrelated, as underpaid
teachers are likely to have no incentives for improving the quality of education in their classrooms, instead focusing their efforts on private tutoring, which is more rewarding financially.

Although private tutoring may be considered beneficial in some respects (for example, providing an additional income for underpaid educators), it can also exacerbate social inequalities, distort curricula, and lead to corruption. Given the complexity of the phenomenon and its negative implications, it is important that private tutoring be appropriately acknowledged by educational policymakers in Kyrgyzstan. One of the most effective ways to tackle the phenomenon is through the development of a systemic approach in the broader educational context. On the one hand, the demand for private tutoring would decrease if the quality of education in secondary schools were improved. This would require addressing the issues of curriculum and teaching materials, as well as teacher training and professional development. Furthermore, the demand for out-of-school private tutoring would decrease if education institutions offered additional educational services at the school level for those students in need of such services. On the other hand, the government should improve the working conditions of teachers by providing adequate salaries. Parallel to the above measures, government and civil society should ensure wider public participation in debates and discussions about private tutoring. It is essential that parents be aware of the possible negative implications of private tutoring (that is, unethical use of private tutoring by teachers) as well as the ongoing reforms in the education sector. In the short run, the following recommendations should be considered:

- **Conducting further research and monitoring of private tutoring.** There is a need for in-depth research that will facilitate comprehensive understanding and analysis. It is important to collect systematic data on private tutoring, such as scope, providers, types, and gender and geographic distribution of private tutoring at various educational levels. The data should be regularly updated so that trends can be analysed in the context of changing education policies. Further research should combine quantitative and qualitative data to gain a better understanding of the causes and implications of private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan.
• **Developing and enforcing regulations.** While prohibition of private tutoring is unrealistic in the existing context, the government of Kyrgyzstan should consider regulating the nature and forms of private tutoring. This might include prohibition of supplementary private tutoring during school hours and/or prohibiting schoolteachers from tutoring their own students.

• **Raising public awareness.** Few students, parents, school administrators or teachers have a good understanding of the complexity of this phenomenon. In order to gain public support for policies, it is important to promote debate on this issue.

• **Introducing incentives for teachers.** It is essential to raise the motivation and commitment levels of schoolteachers through the introduction of incentive mechanisms. These should include both increased salaries and incentives in the form of regular professional development.

• **Providing additional education services in secondary schools.** Additional services are needed to enrich the existing learning opportunities in mainstream schools and to widen the types of learning that the schools promote. At the same time, the focus of teaching should emphasize critical thinking and problem solving, particularly in the light of the reformed centralized national examination policy. Schools should be encouraged to provide additional support to their students after school hours to meet the demands of a competitive educational environment. Such efforts are necessary to ensure that parents do not seek these services externally.

**Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Yulia Aleshkina for organizing the data collection process in Kyrgyzstan.
The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 presented innumerable challenges for the education system of Tajikistan. As Niyozov (2006) summarizes, school infrastructure and materials needed to be replaced or repaired, the curriculum needed to be adapted to rapidly changing conditions, teachers’ professional development was lacking and children’s access to education was threatened. Not only was state education too slow to embrace socio-political changes during the 1990s, it also struggled with the rapid decline in the quality of education in schools. According to the assessment of all education establishments in the Republic of Tajikistan, which was undertaken by the Ministry of Education and the Government in 2005, the education system was “on the road to ruin”:

None of the universities train highly qualified specialists. University students lack elementary basis of school knowledge. There is only one way out of the situation: to hold school students in iron fists! Students should be preparing for university admission examinations during the entire period of their studies in secondary schools. (Postarova, 2006)

The crisis of the education system is widely acknowledged by various education stakeholders in Tajikistan. According to the National Education Conceptual Framework (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2002b), “the knowledge, capabilities, and skills of secondary school students do not meet the state education requirements, because secondary schools lack teachers”. President Rakhmonov himself has acknowledged that student achievement is very low (especially in the state languages and sciences), and some school graduates are illiterate (Rakhmonov, 2005). As a result, students seek private tutoring to compensate for the shortcomings of the state education system in order to prepare for university entrance examinations, and, in some cases, to successfully study in and graduate from higher education institutions. Investments in private tutoring are
often considered more economically feasible than paying bribes for university admission and throughout higher education.

Although the existence of private tutoring is publicly acknowledged in Tajikistan, the real scope of the private tutoring phenomenon remains unknown due to the lack of statistical data. Despite the urgent need to better understand the private tutoring phenomenon in a post-Soviet environment, neither state agencies nor non-governmental organizations have engaged in monitoring private tutoring. This study presents the first attempt to examine the private tutoring phenomenon in Tajikistan by (1) analysing the legislative, political and economic factors driving the demand for private tutoring; (2) examining the scope, types and forms of private tutoring; and (3) discussing the implications of private tutoring for education, economy and society.

This study focuses on private tutoring at the transition point from secondary to higher education. A total of 999 first-year university students were surveyed. The study covers the four largest state universities in Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tiube, including Tajik State National University, the Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University, the Tajik State Linguistic Institute in Dushanbe and the State University of Kurgan-Tiube (see Chapter 1 for more details). Of the sample of students, 80 per cent were studying in Tajik-medium and 20 per cent were studying in Russian-medium or other programmes. Approximately 60 per cent of the surveyed students were in high-demand programmes (for example, business- and economy-related), while 40 per cent were in low-demand programmes (for example, pedagogy, natural sciences). In addition to quantitative data, interviews were conducted with the following categories of respondents in the cities of Dushanbe and Kurgan-Tiube: parents of secondary school and first-year university students, schoolteachers and university professors.

**The context: legislative and educational factors**

**Legislative factors**

The Law on Education of the Republic of Tajikistan (2004, Article 47) legalizes and regulates paid educational services. According to this law, parents (or guardians) may request state secondary
Private tutoring in Tajikistan

schools to arrange supplementary classes for a fee. According to the national legislation, supplementary tutoring can be carried out in addition to the official school curriculum in the following areas: (1) separate programmes and subjects that are not covered by the state education curriculum; (2) in-depth study of topics that are not covered by educational institutions; and (3) other types of educational services that exceed state education standards. Article 47 of the Law on Education (2004) allows teachers of all education institutions to offer private tutoring and other educational services for a fee. The Law on Education defines a private tutor as “a teacher who offers tutoring to students on an individual basis or in groups, beyond the [official] working hours at school or university”.

Although the state legislation allows supplementary educational services, there is no mechanism regulating the delivery of paid supplementary services by schools. For example, Article 47 of the Law on Education (2004) stipulates that parents (or custodians) should transfer payments for supplementary tutoring to a bank account of an educational institution. However, none of the state schools have their own bank accounts (or their own cash registers), with the exception of a few schools from the five pilot regions introducing per capita financing of education under a World Bank loan. As a result, supplementary tutoring is paid for illegally and spontaneously. In most cases, it is individual teachers (not schools) who take the initiative to provide supplementary tutoring beyond state education standards, given that schools offer supplementary tutoring in subjects included in the state curriculum and the state education standards.

The legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan, especially its tax legislation, does not create favourable conditions for the delivery of paid educational services. Similar to other countries with transitional economies, an individual wishing to offer private tutoring in Tajikistan must register as a private entrepreneur, obtain a license and pay taxes on any income earned from tutoring. However, this procedure is rather complex and does not justify related costs, especially as private tutoring is an irregular, seasonal endeavour for teachers. Article 47 of the Law on Education (2004) states that “incomes generated from the delivery of paid educational services are subject to taxation in accordance with the Tajik legislation”. The law defines supplementary
tutoring as a commercial activity for state educational institutions and a non-commercial activity for non-governmental educational institutions. This means that the income generated from supplementary tutoring by state educational institutions is subject to taxation, even if it is spent entirely on the reimbursement of costs related to learning processes. This is why state educational institutions and teachers themselves are not interested in the legalization of their additional incomes.

**Educational factors**

The *Constitution of the Republic of Tajikistan* of 1995 (Article 30, Paragraph 1) and the *Law on Education* of 2004 (Article 6, Paragraph 3) guarantee free compulsory education at state educational institutions to all citizens of the country. According on the *Law on Education* (2004), secondary education programmes determine the content for each level of education. General education programmes are covered by the following levels of education: (1) preschool education; (2) elementary, general basic and general secondary education; (3) elementary and secondary professional education; (4) higher professional education; (5) post-graduate professional education; (6) supplementary education; and (7) specialized education. According to the legislation, basic general education is compulsory. General education consists of three levels (including primary, general basic and general secondary education) and is provided by primary schools, secondary schools, gymnasias and lyceums. Tajik legislation envisages that Tajik citizens under the age of 16 have the right to obtain a general basic education (nine years) in full-time general education facilities. General education schools provide instruction in six languages. In the 2004-2005 academic year, 74.0 per cent of students studied in the Tajik language, 22.6 per cent in Uzbek, 2.22 per cent in Russian, 0.8 per cent in Kyrgyz, 0.2 per cent in Turkmen, and 0.05 per cent in English (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2007: 18).

In the 2004/2005 academic year, Tajikistan had 3,775 general education schools, 30 more than the previous academic year. In the same period, the number of students increased by 13,779, reaching a total 1,673,745 in the 2004/2005 academic year. According to the official statistical data (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2007), the number of students in Grades 5-9 decreased
by 3,864 between 2003/2004 and 2004/2005, while the number of Grade 1-4 students decreased by 2,863 (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2007: 3). At the same time, the number of Grade 10-11 students increased by 14,404, showing a growing demand for secondary education among Tajikistan’s population. The number of female students in general education schools constitutes 46.3 per cent (775,056) of all students. It is estimated that the number of students will increase by approximately 850,000 children by 2015, which is one and a half times higher than the current demand for education (World Bank, 2003). According to the World Bank projections, the number of secondary education students will increase by 40 per cent between 2005 and 2015.

The admission of students to higher education is made on a voluntary basis and is based on the individual student’s aptitudes and interests. Institutions of higher learning may require students to pass an entrance examination for admission to their establishment. Students may obtain secondary education for free in state schools, which also may provide paid tutoring on the basis of an agreement with their parents. General secondary education ends with an examination, the content and form of which is defined by the Ministry of Education.

School-leaving and university entrance examinations

In secondary schools, students’ knowledge is assessed on the basis of their performance in examinations. There are two types of examinations: regular (upon completion of a grade) and state (final graduation) examinations. Upon completion of Grade 9 (basic education) and Grade 11 (complete secondary education), students take final examinations in the main academic subjects. School graduates receive certificates of basic or complete secondary education. Students who do not receive satisfactory marks (three and above based on a five-point grading scale)\(^\text{13}\) have to take additional autumn examinations when transferring to the following grade. If they fail the autumn examinations, they have to repeat the grade. School graduates who do

\(^{13}\) Inherited from the Soviet period, the existing assessment system in Tajikistan is based on a five-point scale: 1 = a very bad performance, 2 = bad, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, and 5 = excellent. Some schools of a new type (for example, Tajik-Turkish lyceums) use a 100-point assessment system. However, all grades are converted into the same traditional five-point grading scale in official documents, with points (percentages) of up to 50 being equivalent to the traditional 2, 51-70 being equivalent to 3, 71-85 to 4, and 86-100 to 5.
not pass at least one examination do not receive a certificate of complete secondary education.

Students who get the highest marks in all school subjects receive the certificate with honours (gold medal), which grants them certain privileges when entering higher education institutions.\textsuperscript{14} The winners of annual national Olympiads are also granted privileges for university admission. All other university applicants have to take admission examinations, which are determined by the individual higher education institutions. Some universities use the old system of admission examinations (that is, written and oral examinations), while other universities use standardized tests. University applicants who wish to be admitted to self-financed study groups are granted some privileges during the admission process, such as the possibility of entering a higher education institution with low admission scores and/or passing an interview instead of examinations.

\textit{Socio-economic conditions of teachers}

During the past decade, economic crisis, civil war and other difficulties of the post-Soviet transformation period have contributed to a significant outflow of qualified teachers and other education specialists from schools into other spheres of the economy. At the same time, due to low pay, deteriorating labour conditions, the decreasing status of the teaching profession, and a lack of other incentives, the inflow of young education specialists has also decreased significantly. Analysis of the official statistics (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2007) shows that secondary schools employed 100,947 teachers in 2004/2005, including 61,319 teachers (60.7 per cent) with higher education, 4,778 (4.7 per cent) with an incomplete higher education, 24,567 (24.3 per cent) with a specialized secondary education and 9,843 (9.5 per cent) with a general secondary education (Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2007: 3). In primary schools, over 30 per cent of teachers had completed specialized secondary education and general secondary education (UNDP, 2005). According to the Ministry of Public Education of the

\textsuperscript{14} For example, ‘gold medallists’ can enter pre-service teacher education programmes without taking university entrance examinations. For entering other higher education study programmes, they need to pass only one university entrance examination.
Private tutoring in Tajikistan (2004), the general secondary education system lacks around 107,000 teachers.

Teacher salaries are determined by the Tajik Government and depend on the teacher’s qualification level and workload. On average, schoolteachers are paid 50 somoni (US$16.6) a month for one workload. Importantly, the Ministry of Education allows teachers to work one-and-a-half loads per month, which equates to a monthly salary of 75 somoni (US$25). Furthermore, teachers receive additional payments for grading students’ work (10 per cent of a workload), classroom management (20 per cent of a workload), and purchasing stationery and teaching aids (10 per cent of a workload). In addition, teachers and staff of pedagogical institutions receive 10 per cent of their monthly salary for the purchase of textbooks, methodological literature and other materials to be used for self-education purposes. Combined, some teachers may earn up to 105 somoni (US$35) per month. In some parts of the country (especially where there are teacher shortages), many teachers work on a two- to four-workload schedule, which significantly increases their salary. According to state legislation, education institutions (regardless of their legal types and ownership) may use additional forms of pay and incentives for teachers in accordance with the country’s labour code. However, the State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Tajikistan (2005) reports that an average salary in the education sector is 75 somoni (US$24.2), which constitutes approximately 90 per cent of the average salary in the country and 97 per cent of the minimum subsistence level in the country. Compared to average salaries in other sectors of the economy, teacher salaries constitute only 39 per cent of the average salary in the industrial sector and 21 per cent of average salary in the credit/insurance sector.

**Private tutoring in Tajikistan: survey findings**

The findings of this study are based on a quantitative survey of 999 first-year university students, 44.1 per cent of whom were young

---

15. Calculations were made by the authors based on the statistical data of 2005.
16. According to the State Statistics Committee and the World Bank (2003), a minimum subsistence level for one individual constitutes 80 somoni (US$25) in Dushanbe and Khatlon oblasts, and 80.64 somoni (US$25.2) in Sogd oblast.
17. Teacher salaries increase every year and are now higher than those of other education specialists. For example, an average salary of a university professor was 29.45 somoni (US$9) a month in 2005, which is equivalent to 60.7 per cent of an average secondary schoolteacher’s salary (Bayzoyev, Amonov, Boboyev and Kodirov, 2006).
men and 55.9 per cent young women. The majority of the respondents (99 per cent) had graduated from schools in Tajikistan, while the rest had graduated from schools in other countries (for example, 0.3 per cent in Kazakhstan, 0.2 per cent in Uzbekistan, 0.1 per cent in Kyrgyzstan). More than half of the respondents (51.8 per cent) had graduated from urban schools (43.2 per cent from secondary schools in the capital city, 18.3 per cent from schools in rayon centres, and 29.8 per cent from rural schools). The vast majority of the respondents (73.2 per cent) had graduated from general secondary schools, while 21.3 per cent had graduated from gymnasia and 3.1 per cent from technical colleges. Most of the respondents (79.8 per cent) had graduated from secondary schools in 2005, while 9.1 per cent had graduated in 2004 and 11.1 per cent had graduated before 2004. More than half of the respondents (60.2 per cent) reported studying in state-financed university programmes where they did not have to pay tuition, while 39.8 per cent reported paying tuition in higher education institutions. Most of the respondents (77.3 per cent) admitted that they had tried to win state scholarships to study in higher education institutions.

Based on the data from quantitative and qualitative research, this section examines the characteristics of private tutoring, the main factors driving demand, and the educational, social and economic impact of private tutoring on the mainstream education system in Tajikistan.

**General characteristics of private tutoring**

**Scope**

The findings of this study reveal that about 60 per cent of secondary school students used private tutoring, of whom 27.6 per cent had private tutoring lessons, 5.7 per cent attended preparatory courses, and 26.6 per cent used both (*Figure 6.1*). The respondents were also asked about the scope of private tutoring among their classmates. Almost all respondents said that 29.6 per cent of their classmates been tutored privately.
Figure 6.1 Tajikistan: the scope of private tutoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparatory courses</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private tutoring</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Academic subjects

The largest number of the respondents took private tutoring lessons in foreign languages (32.3 per cent), followed by mathematics (23.8 per cent), Tajik language and literature (8.6 per cent), and the Russian language (7.6 per cent). Similarly, the respondents reported that their classmates took private tutoring lessons mainly in the same subjects.

### The pervasiveness of private tutoring use

The monitoring study revealed that 21.3 per cent of the respondents took private tutoring lessons in one subject, 12.1 per cent in two subjects and 7.3 per cent in three and more subjects. Most of the private tutoring users (65.0 per cent) said they had had two to four hours a week of private tutoring lessons, while 21.2 per cent said that they received more than four hours, and 13.8 per cent indicated that they received one hour a week. Among the students attending preparatory courses, 45.9 per cent did not indicate the amount of time they spent in preparatory courses, while 54.1 per cent indicated that they spent on average 45 academic hours.

Of all the students taking private tutoring lessons, 35.9 per cent reported taking them regularly throughout the year, and 19.0 per cent occasionally throughout the year. Approximately one third of all surveyed students took private tutoring lessons regularly throughout
the last semester (14.6 per cent) or in the summer prior to examinations (26.2 per cent) (see Figure 6.2). Among the students attending preparatory courses, approximately one third (31.6 per cent) opted for private tutoring a year ahead of university admission examinations, while the majority of the respondents attended preparatory courses closer to university entrance examination dates: 26.0 per cent of the respondents began attending preparatory courses three to six months prior to university entrance examinations, 25.1 per cent approximately two months prior to examinations, and 17.3 per cent began attending preparatory courses a month before admission examinations.

**Figure 6.2  Tajikistan: the pervasiveness of private tutoring use**

![Diagram showing the pervasiveness of private tutoring use in Tajikistan](image)

**The size of private tutoring**

The largest number of students attending private tutoring lessons studied individually with a tutor (37.9 per cent), 23.1 per cent of the respondents had studied in small groups (two to three students), and approximately one third had attended private tutoring lessons organized for larger groups of students (12.2 per cent of students studied in groups of four to five students and 26.2 per cent in groups of more than five students). Among the students attending preparatory courses, almost half (46.1 per cent) had studied in small groups of up to five students and 32.5 per cent in groups of six to fifteen students. Only 11.1 per cent of the respondents studied in larger groups of 16 to 30 students while
10.2 per cent attended preparatory courses organized for groups with more than thirty students.

**Private tutoring costs**

Many factors influence private tutoring costs, including the tutor’s rating, the duration of the tutoring, the student’s academic knowledge level, the type of tutoring (individual or in group) and others. This study identified private tutoring costs ranging from US$1-2, typically charged by school teachers, to US$4-5 an hour, typically charged by university professors and other private tutors who prepare students for university admission. The costs of preparatory courses vary from US$20 to US$70 per course. The survey data indicate that, of the respondents using private tutoring lessons and those attending preparatory courses, 39.2 per cent and 61.2 per cent respectively, spent more than 100 somoni (US$29.90) per year for one subject/course, and 21.7 per cent and 8.8 per cent spent more than 200 somoni (US$60) respectively. On average, 62.5 per cent of the respondents agreed that private tutoring was expensive.

**The dynamics of private tutoring use**

Almost half of all the respondents (45.8 per cent) said that they began using private tutoring at Grade 11, presumably in order to prepare for university entrance examinations. *Figure 6.3* illustrates that the number of students using private tutoring increases by grade and reaches its peak in Grade 11 (that is, graduation year).
Private tutoring users: who is receiving private tutoring and why?

The findings of the study reveal that private tutoring is primarily used by students whose parents have some higher education experience (that is, a higher education degree or an incomplete higher education) and by students who had graduated from schools in urban areas. Private tutoring users constituted approximately half (42.6 per cent) of all students whose parents had a higher education and only 15.4 per cent of all students whose parents had no higher education experience (a difference of 27 per cent). In addition, the data reveal that private tutoring is more widespread among students from urban areas: private tutoring users constituted almost half (49.9 per cent) of all surveyed students in urban areas, but only 41.0 per cent of students in rural areas (a difference of 10 per cent). Analysis of private tutoring use by gender shows a rough parity between genders.

Students use private tutoring for different reasons. Most of the respondents said they used private tutoring to better understand the subjects taught at school and to fill knowledge gaps, which points to their perception of the inferior quality of education in mainstream schools (see Table 6.1). In particular, students believed that the skills and knowledge obtained at school are not enough to pass final school-leaving
and university entrance examinations without additional classes with a private tutor or preparatory courses. For example, 20.2 per cent of the respondents said private tutoring was necessary to pass the final examinations at school, and 37.6 per cent stated that private tutoring was necessary to pass university entrance examinations.

**Table 6.1  Tajikistan: main reasons for using private tutoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for private tutoring use</th>
<th>Private tutoring lessons (%)</th>
<th>Preparatory courses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To have a better understanding of the subjects taught at school</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To memorize and systematize topics learnt earlier</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill knowledge gaps</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To prepare better for examinations</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents made me take private tutoring</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other students used private tutoring, therefore I decided to</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The education system does not give the required knowledge/skills, therefore it is necessary to take private tutoring</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reasons</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this research has primarily focused on secondary school students (that is, students in the final grade of secondary school), the findings reveal that there are other groups of private tutoring users (see Table 6.2). Qualitative data suggest that private tutoring is also widespread among elementary and primary school students, as well as university students. While some students use private tutoring to increase their competitive advantage in the job market and in school-leaving and/or university entrance examinations, the majority of the students used private tutoring to compensate for the inadequate quality of education in mainstream schools. For example, some respondents reported a lack of qualified teachers in some subjects (for example, English language and computer science) in their schools, which created the need to hire private tutors in order to gain the necessary skills and knowledge. As a first-year student at the Russian-Tajik (Slavonic) University explained, the inferior quality of education in secondary school did not allow him to successfully cope with the demands of his university studies, thus leading him to hire a private tutor:

I graduated from school in Ghissar and entered university the same year. We did not have English language classes at school.
I do not even know the English alphabet. Our English language professor reported this to our supervisor and the dean. I came to her and asked for advice. She suggested that I take private tutoring lessons from her for additional payment. Since I cannot afford the pay for private tutoring lessons from a university professor, I found an elderly schoolteacher who agreed to teach me for smaller amount. ... (A student interviewed by Shodibeg Kodirov, 12 January 2006)

Table 6.2 Tajikistan: users and providers of the private tutoring market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private tutoring users</th>
<th>Reasons for using private tutoring</th>
<th>Providers of private tutoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Secondary school graduates intending to enter higher education institutions | • To prepare for university entrance examinations  
• Forced to take private tutoring lessons from their own teachers in order to receive good marks in secondary education certificate | • University professors  
• Teachers from students’ schools  
• Teachers from students’ schools who teach the same students during school hours |
| Primary school students (Grades 6-10) | • To get better results in the assessment of their academic achievement  
• To obtain a higher quality education  
• To prepare for studies outside the country | • Teachers from students’ school  
• Special centres or recommended tutors  
• Schoolteachers offering preparation for the study abroad programmes, recommended tutors |
| Elementary school students (Grades 1-5) | • To receive tutoring in the Russian language  
• To fill knowledge gaps in order to better cope with the school curriculum  
• For assistance with homework through paid after-school classes | • Russian-speaking elementary-school teachers  
• Elementary-school teachers responsible for teaching the same students in mainstream school |
| University students | • To compensate for inferior education in mainstream schools and improve academic achievement at university  
• To increase their competitive advantage in the job market (e.g. through the supplementary learning of foreign languages and computer science)  
• Forced to take private tutoring lessons from their own professors | • University professors  
• Special training centres or recommended tutors |
| Other users | • To improve job prospects  
• To upgrade qualifications  
• Other reasons | • Special courses  
• Recommended tutors |
Similarly, some elementary school students used private tutoring to compensate for the low quality of education in mainstream schools. For example, some native Tajik parents are often interested in hiring a Russian-language tutor for their children, especially if they attend classes in Russian. This could be explained by the fact that the quality of education in many Tajik language schools is perceived to be low compared to the quality of education in Russian-language schools. Therefore, many parents hire Russian-language tutors for their children in order to provide better education opportunities for their children. Increasingly, some parents pay for another type of private tutoring – that is, after-school classes organized by schools – which assist children with homework assignments and/or offer extra-curricular activities.

**Providers of private tutoring: who offers private tutoring and why?**

The findings of the study reveal that providers of private tutoring form a diverse group, consisting of schoolteachers, university professors and lecturers, retired university professors and experts in certain academic fields. Schoolteachers constitute the largest category of private tutoring providers, with 73.1 per cent of private tutoring users and 37.2 per cent of preparatory course users being taught by schoolteachers (see Table 6.3). University professors constitute the second largest group of private tutoring providers, with 19.8 per cent of preparatory course users and 12.7 per cent of private tutoring users studying with a university professor (see Table 6.3). Professionals in the field of study who are not employed by official educational institutions were identified as private tutoring providers by 22.1 per cent of students attending preparatory courses and 10.2 per cent of students taking private tutoring lessons. Finally, university students were among the least common of private tutoring providers, with 4.0 per cent of students attending private tutoring lessons and 4.3 per cent of students attending preparatory courses using their services.
Table 6.3  Tajikistan: most common providers of private tutoring in descending order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private tutoring providers</th>
<th>% of all students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking private tutoring lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolteacher</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University professor</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University student</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist in the subject (not employed by official educational institutions)</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A variety of institutions offer preparatory courses, including schools (46.9 per cent), universities or faculties (22.2 per cent), private educational institutions (10.8 per cent) and other institutions (20.0 per cent). Unlike other former Soviet countries, where preparatory courses are generally offered by higher education institutions, university-run courses are not particularly popular in Tajikistan, for several reasons. First, parents are not confident that these courses will help their children to pass university entrance examinations. Second, preparatory courses require students to register in early autumn, while most university applicants begin seeking private tutoring services two to three months ahead of university entrance examinations. Third, the schedules of school classes and preparatory courses often overlap, which makes attending preparatory courses very difficult. Fourth, many people believe that preparatory courses are not taught by the best university professors and that it would make more sense to find a better university professor as a private tutor during the summer.

As an alternative to preparatory courses offered by higher education institutions, many students choose to attend courses offered by various private educational companies (centres), which emerged with the collapse of the Soviet Union. These centres are usually located in large cities and offer tutoring in the most popular disciplines for a fee (for example, courses in foreign languages, computer skills, accounting). According to the findings of this study, 10.8 per cent of the respondents received training in such centres (for example, Shelali, the Soros Foundation, Rafokat, Accountants’ Public Institute, Norwegian Center, Manija). These centres are particularly attractive to students who wish to receive additional tutoring at a lower cost and to students who would
like to receive certificates of completion of training courses, which are not usually issued by private tutors yet are becoming increasingly important when applying for jobs. Typically, these tutoring centres employ retired schoolteachers or teachers who have resigned due to low salaries. According to the findings of this survey, the majority of respondents thought that the teaching quality in these education centres was lower than in individual private tutoring.

Notwithstanding the type of private tutoring (individual private tutoring lessons or preparatory courses) or the professional status of providers (teachers, university professors, or retired education experts), most providers of private tutoring engage in such activities in order to supplement their incomes. According to the interviews, private tutoring often provides the only opportunity for schoolteachers and university professors to financially support their families and therefore presents an attractive opportunity to secure the necessary income. This is also supported by quantitative findings, with the majority of the respondents (54.2 per cent) agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that one of the main reasons for offering private tutoring is to receive an additional financial income.

Given the low salaries and the declining status of the teaching profession, it is important to review the profile of those teachers who do not engage in private tutoring. Although it seemed that the teachers who would refuse additional income through private tutoring were few, some cases were identified of teachers who chose not to engage in private tutoring. For example, some explained that they did not need additional income as their spouses were able to provide for their family. Importantly, some teachers did not engage in private tutoring because they were able to achieve learning targets during regular school hours, thus ensuring that their students performed satisfactorily. Finally, some teachers did not give private tutoring lessons, simply because students did not seek their assistance, due to their poor reputation.
Implications of private tutoring

Private tutoring and the quality of education in mainstream schools

The findings of this study reveal that most students obtain private tutoring because they are not satisfied with the quality of education in mainstream schools. For example, 57.0 per cent of the respondents indicated that students used private tutoring because the school curriculum is overloaded, and 60.4 per cent indicated that private tutoring is necessary because the curriculum does not cover all the topics covered in the university entrance examinations. Furthermore, approximately half of all the surveyed students stated that private tutoring was the only way to get a high-quality education (51.1 per cent). Importantly, 73.4 per cent of the surveyed students believed that the education system should be such that no one should need private tutoring.

Regarding the perceived effectiveness of private tutoring, only 9.0 per cent of the respondents said that private tutoring classes had not helped at all in passing university entrance examinations. The majority of the respondents believed that private tutoring had an impact on their performance in university entrance examinations: 40.8 per cent saying that it had some impact and 34.2 per cent saying it had a great impact. The respondents assessed the impact of preparatory courses on university entrance examinations in a similar way: the majority (50.9 per cent) thought they had some impact, and 28.6 per cent indicated that they had a great impact. Only 7.8 per cent of the respondents stated that preparatory courses had no impact on their performance in the university entrance examinations.

Educational ethics and corruption

One of the worrisome findings of this study is that the majority of the respondents had been tutored privately by schoolteachers (73.1 per cent), with 51.2 per cent taking them with their own class teachers, 7.6 per cent with their own schoolteachers, and 14.3 per cent with teachers from other schools. Given that most schoolteachers engage in private tutoring because they are under pressure to secure
sufficient financial resources to provide for their families, they may be tempted to engage in unethical behaviour. In particular, 60.9 per cent of the surveyed students admitted that teachers had encouraged their own students to take private tutoring lessons from them. Similarly, qualitative data show that schoolteachers were interested in generating shadow incomes from private tutoring and therefore encouraged (and sometimes forced) their students to take private tutoring lessons from them. Not surprisingly, the majority of the respondents (52.0 per cent) believed that teachers treated students who had private tutoring better than other students. For example, some interviewed students mentioned the cases of compulsory private tutoring, where their teachers were forcing students to take private tutoring lessons with them in order to get good marks. One mother of a secondary school graduate explained:

When my son was about to graduate from school his relations with chemistry teacher spoiled. The teacher did not want to put a good mark to him. After we began paying to her for additional classes, she put an excellent mark to him for the term and the year. The same problem our daughter faced with math teacher: to ensure she passes entrance university exams, we have hired a university professor, but to have an excellent mark in the certificate of secondary education we had to pay to her schoolteacher as if she took additional classes. (A parent interviewed by Shodibeg Kodirov, 12 January 2006)

Instances of ‘compulsory’ private tutoring were also recorded in a university setting. Interviews with students revealed that university professors frequently compelled their students to take supplementary private tutoring lessons from them, often threatening to lower their marks if they refused to pay for tutoring lessons (see also Table 6.4). For example, a third-year student of the Tajik State Medical University explained:

Professors make us taking additional classes and charge different fees for that: some professors ask for 1 somoni per class, others for 2 somoni. In some subjects we feel the need for additional tutoring, but there are professors who take money from us and do nothing. We cannot ignore them as they may treat us
dishonestly during examinations. (A student interviewed by Shodibeg Kodirov, 12 January 2006)

Table 6.4 Tajikistan: students’ attitudes regarding teachers who worked as private tutors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A schoolteacher is a better private tutor than a university professor</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers encourage students who have difficulties with a subject matter to take private tutoring lessons with them</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the main reasons for private tutoring is for teachers to receive additional financial income</td>
<td>54.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers treat students who pay for private tutoring better than students who do not</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers should not be allowed to offer private tutoring to their own students</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is common for a student to ask his/her own teacher to provide private tutoring lessons</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equity issues

The findings of this study suggest that private tutoring is not accessible to all students. The data reveal that private tutoring is more widespread among students from wealthy families, as well as from families where at least one of the parents has some higher education experience (that is, a higher education degree or incomplete higher education). In addition, private tutoring is more widespread among students who have graduated from schools in urban areas. While there are many factors that influence students’ access to private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses, the economic factor is among the most important. The findings of this study reveal that 85.9 per cent of the respondents who did not use private tutoring admitted that they could not afford it. Table 6.5 summarizes that most of the respondents (56.5 per cent) agreed that private tutoring was expensive. Approximately half of the respondents (49.3 per cent) admitted that only students from wealthier families could afford private tutoring, and 67.4 per cent indicated that children from wealthier families could hire better tutors (see Table 6.5).
Table 6.5  Tajikistan: students’ attitudes regarding access to private tutoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only students from wealthy families can afford private tutoring</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In general, private tutoring is expensive</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children from wealthier families can hire better private tutors</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions and recommendations

In this analysis of the private tutoring market in Tajikistan, the following important issues stand out. The absolute majority of the respondents opted for private tutoring because they thought that the knowledge and skills received in mainstream schools were not sufficient to pass university entrance examinations. Generally, the respondents indicated that private tutoring was used to compensate for the poor quality of education in mainstream schools. In addition to educational factors, however, private tutoring is also driven by economic factors, such as extraordinarily low teacher salaries, which force many teachers into private tutoring in order to secure a supplementary income. Despite the fact that national legislation allows supplementary private tutoring by schools and teachers, there is no functioning mechanism in place to monitor the private tutoring market in order to minimize its negative effects on students, parents, teachers and the economy. Based on the analysis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- **Consider amending the Law on Education (2004) to clarify various forms of private tutoring and formulate precise mechanisms for a more effective and transparent functioning of the private tutoring market.** The existing Law on Education does not distinguish between various forms of private tutoring, including private tutoring lessons (offered by individuals), preparatory courses (offered by institutions) and additional paid services (offered by schools). It is important to clarify these terms and formulate clear mechanisms for both private tutoring consumers and providers to effectively and transparently utilize private tutoring services.

- **In the area of taxation, develop new mechanisms for the registration of private tutoring services and provide taxation incentives for**
private tutoring providers. Most respondents believed that the current tax regime is totally inadequate, discouraging them from legalizing their private tutoring incomes. It is important to develop more adequate mechanisms for the registration of private tutoring providers and offer some incentives for them to legally engage in the provision of private tutoring services.

- **Wideley publicize state regulations regarding private tutoring in order to ensure that all education stakeholders are aware of their rights and responsibilities.** Parents, schoolteachers and university professors are not aware of private tutoring regulations. But every group believes that the quality of the private tutoring market will abruptly fall with the enforcement of regulations in the field of private tutoring. It is important that these education stakeholders know the specifics of the state regulations to ensure that they can engage in an informed dialogue with state authorities regarding private tutoring regulations.

- **Increase teacher salaries and/or provide incentives for teachers to minimize unethical use of private tutoring.** Most of the teachers surveyed thought that it would be more useful to increase teachers’ and university professors’ salaries, which would result in an increased social status of the teaching profession, a stricter selection of human resources, and consequently an improvement in education quality, which could potentially make private tutoring use less urgent and necessary.

- **Discourage unethical use of private tutoring by prohibiting teachers and university professors to tutor their own (or prospective) students.** It is important to prohibit teachers from undertaking paid private tutoring for their own students in mainstream schools. This would reduce the dangers of teachers favouring their private tutees when awarding marks. Similarly, university professors developing and/or administering university entrance examinations should be discouraged from offering private tutoring lessons to their potential students to mitigate corruption in admissions to higher education institutions.

- **Reduce the demand for private tutoring by improving the quality of mainstream education.** While public awareness and enforcement of basic regulations are important in addressing the negative impact
of private tutoring on schools, real changes can be achieved if the quality and relevance of mainstream education is improved by developing new curricula and standards, ensuring adequate teacher remuneration and improving the overall learning environment in schools. Furthermore, the standards of mainstream education and the requirements of higher education entrance examinations should be consistent.

- **Conduct further research and monitoring of private tutoring.** There is a need for further research on private tutoring to facilitate comprehensive understanding and analysis of this complex phenomenon. It is important to collect systematic data on private tutoring, such as scope, providers, types, and gender and geographic distribution of private tutoring at different educational levels. The data should be regularly updated so that trends can be analysed in the context of changing education policies.

- **Raise public awareness about the phenomenon of private tutoring.** The most important recommendation to arise as a result of this study is that the phenomenon of private tutoring should be given much more attention – by governments, the media, non-governmental organizations and society at large. In this respect, various education stakeholders need to consider why tutoring is becoming more prevalent in Tajikistan and how this affects society, education and the economy.

**Acknowledgements**

This document is of a research and advisory character and reflects the opinions of its authors. The authors are grateful to Iveta Silova, Alexander Ivanov, Zhanar Rakhimzhanova, as well as colleagues from other countries for their help and support in implementing this project. The authors would also like to thank Abdudjabbor Rakhmonov, Minister of Public Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, and Khayol Boboyev, Head of the State Education Policy Department of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan, for their invaluable assistance in this research study.
Private tutoring has emerged as a major phenomenon in the countries of the former socialist bloc, including Central Asia. Despite high levels of poverty in most of the countries included in the study (especially Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), many families manage to secure private funds for supplementary tutoring for their children. This emphasizes the extremely high value placed on education and its perceived role in the socio-economic advancement of individuals during the post-socialist transformation processes. For many families, education (including various types of private tutoring) has become the last hope and the main way to advance or maintain one’s socio-economic position as the economic prospects for those without education credentials deteriorate. Increasingly, academic success is becoming such a central and crucial orientation for the majority of youth in post-socialist countries that low educational achievement is often perceived as severely disadvantageous both for the individual and for society as a whole.

While private tutoring differs in scope and characteristics in Central Asia, its nature shares common features with that found in other countries of the former socialist bloc. In particular, private tutoring seems to increase student motivation to learn by offering more innovative and individualized learning opportunities compared to those of mainstream schools. It also helps students to prepare for university entrance examinations and to improve their marks at school. Furthermore, private tutoring offers new employment opportunities for schoolteachers whose official salaries are below national wage averages in all Central Asian countries.

However, the findings of this study reveal that private tutoring has a number of negative implications, such as exacerbating social inequalities and inviting corruption in mainstream schools. Alarmingly, the negative implications of private tutoring seem to be more serious in Central Asia than in the other countries of the former socialist bloc.
In Central Asia, unequal access to private tutoring creates a growing divide between students from different socio-economic backgrounds and geographic locations, limiting educational opportunities for the majority of students from lower socio-economic strata and rural areas. Furthermore, Central Asia has the largest proportion of students being tutored by their own teachers, which may contribute to widespread corruption in mainstream schools. Wherever these patterns become extreme, they could pose a threat to overall stability, contributing to rising social tensions and legitimacy crises. In this context, the study of the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring could serve as a gauge of the strength of the education systems, revealing whether education stakeholders trust state education systems and to what extent quality education is accessible to all students. Drawing on the conclusions of the private tutoring study in the nine former socialist countries (Silova et al., 2006b) and on the findings of this study, this chapter explains how the study of supplementary private tutoring could be used to examine the ‘health’ of mainstream education systems in post-socialist contexts.

**Private tutoring as a gauge of mainstream education systems**

This book has examined the ways in which not only private tutoring but also mainstream school systems have changed since the collapse of the socialist era in each country discussed. However, the study of private tutoring is important not only because it shadows mainstream education, but also because it helps to determine the ‘health’ of mainstream education systems. As the findings of this study reveal, private tutoring may be a reflection of serious problems in the mainstream education systems. In particular, an excessively wide scope of supplementary private tutoring may indicate deteriorating public trust in mainstream education systems and reveal the declining professional status of teachers. Furthermore, the unethical use of private tutoring by schoolteachers may be both a symptom of corruption in societies and an instrument through which corruption becomes more deeply entrenched.

**Deteriorating public trust in mainstream education systems**

The findings of this study and previous research (Silova et al., 2006) reveal that private tutoring is most widespread in countries where
the majority of students do not believe they can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in mainstream schools. We may even argue that it is evidence of a dramatic crisis of confidence in mainstream schooling. However, Baker and LeTendre (2005: 65) suggest that instead of viewing the rise of private tutoring as “a sign of institutional decline or a major shift in institutional configuration”, it is more appropriate to think of it as a likely consequence of a greater institutionalized education system within nations. They argue that mass schooling has legitimized academic achievement and produced a heightened demand for quality schooling, which, in turn, has contributed to the growth of private tutoring.

Their argument is based, however, on the assumption that families and students voluntarily opt for private tutoring at all times. This is not necessarily the case in the post-socialist countries, where students frequently report being extorted by their teachers to use private tutoring on a regular basis. Beyond direct extortion, students may also feel pressured to use private tutoring upon realizing – whether proven or perceived – that mainstream education is simply failing to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to advance academically and professionally in the future. The 2007 PISA results, which ranked Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan as the lowest-performing countries in the world, provide new evidence of the failure of mainstream schools to equip students with minimum competencies in reading, mathematics and science. When the vast majority of the student population fails to reach minimum competencies, the problem is clearly not with the students themselves but with the wider education systems. Therefore, it was not surprising that most of the respondents in this study agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that mainstream education systems should be such that there should be no need for private tutoring. For most of the respondents in this study, private tutoring was primarily associated with the failure of the mainstream education system to effectively adapt to the new education requirements.

**Declining professionalism of teachers**

Private tutoring may also be a ‘symptom’ of other problems plaguing mainstream schools and their teachers. In all Central Asian countries, teacher salaries are considerably below national average
wage. In some countries, teacher salaries actually fall below minimum subsistence levels. In addition to low salaries, increments in salary raises are small, amounting to a compressed salary scale. As a result, such low salaries do not attract enough teachers, resulting in teacher shortages (Steiner-Khamsi, 2007). Those teachers who decide to stay in the education system actively seek additional employment opportunities to compensate for their low salaries at school. As one of the teachers explained, “To be a good teacher you need to have both a good education, to be in possession of good knowledge of your field, and to be living well off, to have another source of income, otherwise you won’t be able to survive” (DeYoung et al., 2006: 187). It is only natural that most teachers find other sources of income in their own professional field:

Many teachers teach extra after-school classes; provide paid tutoring services; or run after-school clubs. Teachers are paid by the number of hours they teach, and since the hourly wage is very low, most teachers are eager to obtain extra assignments if they want to live on their earnings (DeYoung et al., 2006: 40).

In this context, private tutoring is generally teacher-driven and reflects teachers’ attempts to compensate for low salaries and to increase the prestige of the teaching profession. It is likely that reforming teacher salary structures and raising these salaries may help teachers to be less dependent on private tutoring and allow them to invest more time in their primary responsibility of teaching in mainstream schools.

**Corruption**

The findings of this study reveal that private tutoring may be a worrisome ‘symptom’ of corruption in the education systems of Central Asia. Generally, corruption in Central Asian republics is perceived to be higher now than it was during the Soviet period (Heyneman, Anderson and Nuraliyeva, 2008; Johnson, 2008). For example, Cokgezen (2004: 92) claims that the rising level of corruption in Kyrgyzstan is due to low income levels, legacies of excessive state interventionism, weak democratic institutions and an ineffective legal system. Similarly, Rose-Ackerman (1999: 72) describes corruption in austere conditions as a “survival strategy” for extremely poor civil servants, who turn to
corruption in order to survive in the face of an unliveable wage. These are the conditions that many teachers face in post-Soviet Central Asia, where education has become a public sector conducive to corruption. As Johnson (2008: 85) puts it, the size of the education sector intersects with its typically chronic underfunding, high-stakes results and dissatisfied educators to create “the perfect corruption storm”.

Interestingly, the respondents in this study did not blame teachers for engaging in corrupt practices – rather, they blamed the system itself. This is also supported by other findings (Johnson, 2008), indicating that the perceived reason for corruption among teachers is systemic (the government, economy or society), not the failings of individuals. As concluded in Johnson’s study (2008) of teacher corruption in Kyrgyzstan, the most commonly offered reason for corruption among teachers was teachers’ pay. It is likely that corruption could be reduced by better professional and financial support of teachers in mainstream schools.

Recommendations

This study reveals that the scale of out-of-school tutoring in Central Asia is fairly intensive and that it has a number of both positive and negative implications. While it is important to acknowledge and capitalize on positive effects, adverse implications of private tutoring should be further examined and considered when devising appropriate policy responses. Bray (2003) identified four types of government responses to private tutoring, namely: (1) banning, (2) ignoring, (3) controlling and monitoring, and (4) actively encouraging. Policymakers in Central Asia have traditionally ignored private tutoring, but it is likely to become more difficult to do so in the future. Because tutoring appears to be expanding across the region, policymakers may find themselves under increasing pressure to devise policy responses. One of the most extreme policy responses to private tutoring – a complete ban – has proven ineffective in all countries that implemented this policy as the governments were unable to enforce it in practice (for example, Cambodia, Mauritius, Myanmar and South Korea). Therefore, policymakers in Central Asia may find it more meaningful to consider how the private tutoring market could be monitored and regulated to ensure that its positive aspects are encouraged, while its negative effects are controlled.
Although any specific policy action is always context-specific and needs to be devised with the involvement of major education stakeholders in each country, the following section summarizes broad recommendations to education planners and policymakers. These recommendations were formulated as a result of in-depth discussions of the draft report with various education stakeholders in Central Asia.

- **Restoring public confidence in education.** Restoring public confidence in mainstream education should be a central priority of education reform in Central Asia. As long as students and parents perceive that state education does not provide quality education and is eroded by endemic corruption, the demand for private tutoring will continue to exist. Real changes can be achieved in a sustainable manner only if the quality and relevance of mainstream education is improved through such systemic efforts as ensuring adequate state funding of education, developing new curricula and standards, ensuring appropriate teacher remuneration and improving the overall learning environment in schools.

Most countries of the Central Asian region (with the possible exception of Turkmenistan) have already engaged in wide scale education reform efforts to improve education quality and relevance. For example, governments across the region have introduced remarkably similar policies, forming a “post-socialist education reform package” (Silova and Steiner-Khamsi, 2008), including the extension of the curriculum to 11 or 12 years of schooling, the introduction of new subjects (for example, English and computer literacy), student-centred learning, electives in upper secondary schools, the introduction of standards- and/or outcomes-based education, the decentralization of educational finance and governance, the reorganization (or ‘rationalization’) of schools, the standardization of student assessment, the liberalization of textbook publishing and others. As governments continue to implement these reforms, it is important to monitor their impact on the scope and nature of private tutoring to assess whether public satisfaction with the quality of mainstream schools will reduce the widespread demand for supplementary private tutoring.
Conclusions and recommendations

- **Regulating private tutoring to reduce socio-economic inequities.** While inequities in education provision and opportunity existed in Central Asia during the Soviet period (for example, between the centre and the peripheries, between city and countryside, and between larger and smaller schools), these inequalities seem to be exacerbated by the rise of private tutoring in the post-Soviet context. As long as private payments exist in the education systems of Central Asia, it will be important to make provisions for those who cannot afford to pay. This can be achieved by targeting public spending towards the poorer segments of society and by substituting community contributions for payments by individual households. Dang and Rogers (2008) suggest that governments should consider targeting the source of underlying inequalities by equalizing school financing across rural/urban areas. In addition to getting the necessary resources to schools with lower academic performance, one option is to provide more flexibility in the use of budget resources in schools to include, for example, support for extra-curricular tutoring if it is found to be an effective intervention for improving the learning achievements of the lowest-performing schools and students. Moreover, governments may consider directly funding tutoring programmes as an alternative mechanism for targeting economically or socially disadvantaged students. Finally, NGO-financed tutoring programmes for disadvantaged children should be encouraged to improve education outcomes for those children and promote education equity.

- **Regulating private tutoring to reduce the risk of corruption in schools.** It is important that the various informal payments that are now pervasive be made transparent and regulated, again with a particular emphasis on equity. The first step is to develop a legal framework, which would provide a clear definition of supplementary private tutoring, including individual tutoring and preparatory courses. As Bray (2003) observed, governments must then decide how they would monitor their regulations and what resources would be allocated for these purposes. For example, governments may decide to introduce licensing requirements for individual tutors and tutoring institutions. Furthermore, in some
countries governments may decide to control and monitor the activities of tutors and tutoring centres in order to ensure quality and appropriate standards.

It is important to note that monitoring and regulating private tutoring may not be effective for all types of tutoring, because much tutoring is undertaken on an informal basis (that is, through private arrangements between tutors and their clients). Moreover, even if it were possible to regulate all forms of tutoring (that is, both individual private tutoring lessons and preparatory courses), it is doubtful whether that task should be a priority for scarce government resources in countries studied here. Nevertheless, it would seem very desirable for governments to prohibit teachers from undertaking paid private tutoring of their own students in mainstream schools. This would reduce the dangers of teachers favouring their private tutees when awarding marks. It would also reduce the danger of teachers covering only half of the lesson during school time with a promise of completing the lesson during paid private classes.

- **Ensuring adequate salaries for teachers and restoring teacher morale.** Teacher morale is a serious problem across the region, and most teachers in Central Asia have to take on additional jobs in order to survive economically. Insofar as tutoring is driven by the need for teachers to earn supplementary incomes in order to feed their families and secure minimum standards of living, private tutoring will continue to create opportunities for unethical behaviour among teachers. This study underlines the importance of teachers being paid adequate salaries for their mainstream duties. When teachers are forced to seek supplementary incomes through tutoring, the whole fabric of society, including the state commitment to fee-free education, is called into question (Silova *et al.*, 2006). Therefore, reforming teacher salaries should be one of the key priorities in education reform in Central Asia.

In addition to teachers’ salaries, the prestige of the teaching profession should be restored to ensure that qualified education professionals remain in schools. This can be achieved by providing regular professional development opportunities and providing incentives for teachers as professionals. Many countries
in Central Asia have already institutionalized policies to provide incentives for teachers working in rural and/or mountainous areas, such as granting land plots and covering teachers’ transportation and/or utility bills. Furthermore, teachers may be encouraged as a professional group by regular state recognition of their efforts, such as introducing best-teacher awards. Finally, governments should encourage the establishment of teacher associations, which can provide professional, legal and moral support to teachers as they struggle to redefine their new roles in post-Soviet contexts.

• Encouraging more research on the dynamics of private tutoring. While this study provides a first insight into the private tutoring phenomenon in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, more research is necessary to better understand the dynamics of the private tutoring market in Central Asia. In particular, more research is necessary to examine both the macro- and micro-level factors that affect private tutoring locally. On a macro level, what impact do government policies (such as high-stakes examinations) have on the demand for private tutoring? On a micro level, what drives individual households to invest in private tutoring? Finally, what are the short- and long-term effects of private tutoring on students’ well-being, as well as on education and labour market opportunities? Answers to these questions could be helpful as governments formulate specific policy responses to private tutoring in their specific political, socio-economic and education contexts.

• Raising public awareness about the phenomenon of private tutoring. The last recommendation arising from this study is that the entire phenomenon of private tutoring demands public discussion. It should be given much more attention by governments, the media, professional associations, schoolteachers, students, parents and society as a whole. A meaningful discussion can only occur when society is aware of the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring. The data from this study provide a starting point for these public debates as they invite all education stakeholders to consider the causes and consequences of private tutoring in Central Asia.
REFERENCES


References


DeYoung, A.; Reeves, M.; Valyaeva, G. 2006. Surviving the transition? Case studies of schools and schooling in the Kyrgyz Republic since independence. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.


IIEP publications and documents

More than 1,200 titles on all aspects of educational planning have been published by the International Institute for Educational Planning. A comprehensive catalogue is available in the following subject categories:

*Educational planning and global issues*
  - General studies – global/developmental issues

*Administration and management of education*

*Economics of education*
  - Costs and financing – employment – international co-operation

*Quality of education*
  - Evaluation – innovation – supervision

*Different levels of formal education*
  - Primary to higher education

*Alternative strategies for education*
  - Lifelong education – non-formal education – disadvantaged groups – gender education

Copies of the Catalogue may be obtained on request from:
IIEP, Publications and Communications Unit
info@iiep.unesco.org
Titles of new publications and abstracts may be consulted at the following website: www.iiep.unesco.org
The International Institute for Educational Planning

The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) is an international centre for advanced training and research in the field of educational planning. It was established by UNESCO in 1963 and is financed by UNESCO and by voluntary contributions from Member States. In recent years the following Member States have provided voluntary contributions to the Institute: Australia, Denmark, India, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

The Institute’s aim is to contribute to the development of education throughout the world, by expanding both knowledge and the supply of competent professionals in the field of educational planning. In this endeavour the Institute co-operates with training and research organizations in Member States. The IIEP Governing Board, which approves the Institute’s programme and budget, consists of a maximum of eight elected members and four members designated by the United Nations Organization and certain of its specialized agencies and institutes.

Chairperson:
-Raymond E. Wanner (USA)
  Senior Adviser on UNESCO issues, United Nations Foundation, Washington DC, USA.

Designated Members:
Christine Evans-Klock
  Director, ILO Skills and Employability Department, Geneva, Switzerland.
Carlos Lopes
  Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations, New York, USA.
Jamil Salmi
  Education Sector Manager, the World Bank Institute, Washington DC, USA.
Diéry Seck
  Director, African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, Dakar, Senegal.

Elected Members:
Aziza Bennani (Morocco)
  Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Morocco to UNESCO.
Nina Yefimovna Borevskaya (Russia)
  Chief Researcher and Project Head, Institute of Far Eastern Studies, Moscow.
Birger Fredriksen (Norway)
  Consultant on Education Development for the World Bank.
Ricardo Henriques (Brazil)
  Special Adviser of the President, National Economic and Social Development Bank.
Takyiwaa Manuh (Ghana)
  Director, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana.
Philippe Méhaut (France)
  LEST-CNRS, Aix-en-Provence, France.
Xinsheng Zhang (China)
  Vice-Minister of Education, China.

Inquiries about the Institute should be addressed to:
The Office of the Director, International Institute for Educational Planning,
7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix, 75116 Paris, France
This book focuses on private tutoring in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Through international comparison and national case studies, it examines the ways in which not only private tutoring but also mainstream school systems have changed during the transformation period since the collapse of the socialist era. The book provides the first insight into the scope, nature and implications of private tutoring in Central Asia. It also identifies challenges that confront education stakeholders and policymakers as they decide how to respond to the rapidly spreading and constantly changing phenomenon of private tutoring.

The author

Iveta Silova is an assistant professor of Comparative and International Education at Lehigh University, Pennsylvania, USA. She holds a PhD in comparative education and political sociology from the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, Columbia University, USA. She is the co-editor of European education: issues and studies. Her recent books include How NGOs react: globalization and education reform in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia (co-edited, 2008), Education in a hidden marketplace: monitoring of private tutoring (co-edited, 2006), and From sites of occupation to symbols of multiculturalism: re-conceptualizing minority education in post-Soviet Latvia (2006).