Multiple Systems, Multiple Shadows:
Diversity of Supplementary Tutoring Received by Private-School Students in Dubai

Mark Bray and Alexandre Ventura

ABSTRACT

Dubai has a unique overall structure of educational provision in which 89% of students attend private schools serving multiple nationalities. About half these students receive supplementary tutoring, widely known in the literature as shadow education. Different school systems within Dubai have different shadows, shaped by various factors including curricular demands and the cultures of the learners. Some supplementary tutoring is received within the schools, and some externally. Patterns of school-provided tutoring are shaped by the operators' business models. Some schools charge high fees and include supplementary tutoring within their packages, while others charge lower fees and require separate payments for tutoring. Further variations are caused by the policies of school principals, thus indeed forming multiple systems with multiple shadows. Particularly employing interview data from 18 schools, the paper draws on Dubai's unique features to make conceptual contributions to wider literature about the ways in which curricula, cultures, business models, and school-level administrations shape shadow education provision.

Keywords: Dubai, shadow education, private tutoring, private schooling, UAE

Dubai is the most populated of the seven emirates comprising the United Arab Emirates (UAE), in 2020 having 3.4 million people in the UAE total of 9.9 million (Dubai Statistics Center, 2021, p.2). Within the Dubai population, over 90% are foreign (non-Emirati) nationals. Multiple school systems serve multiple nationalities and cultures, and Dubai thus has great diversity in its education sector.

The diversity is enhanced by the fact that most schools are operated privately with a range of business models.

Alongside their schooling, many children in Dubai – around 50% overall, and approaching 90% in some sub-sectors – receive private supplementary tutoring. Around the world, such tutoring is widely called shadow education because its content to a large extent mimics that in the school sector: as the curriculum changes in the schools, so it changes in the shadow (Zhang & Bray, 2020). An expanding international literature explores cultural, economic and socio-political forces that shape shadow education. Most authors have focused on private supplementary tutoring received by public-school students (e.g. Mahmud, 2021), but some authors (e.g. Gupta, 2021) have noted that such tutoring may also be received by private-school students who thus in effect are receiving private plus more private education.

Analysis of patterns in Dubai contributes instructively to wider understanding because of the distinctive nature of the society and its education systems. Few countries have economic, social and educational features resembling those of Dubai, yet patterns are illuminating precisely because they make Dubai an outlier able to contribute to conceptual analysis. On a further methodological note, the field of comparative education is dominated by countries as the unit for comparison. This paper does draw on cross-national comparisons, but also has much internal comparison. It highlights differences not only between systems but also between schools and even within schools.

The paper commences with the broad literature on private-sector forces in education, focusing on both private schooling and private tutoring. It then provides information on the UAE and Dubai, and on the education systems of the latter. This background sets the stage for the specific data on which the paper reports. A methodological section explains the approaches to collecting qualitative data from 18 schools (representing 12% of the total number of schools), and quantitative data from an overlapping sample of 14 schools. The paper then turns to presentation of findings, showing diversity not only between different systems but also different strata according to fee levels and the leadership views of school managers in different institutions. The final section draws threads together in conclusion.

Private Sector Forces in Education

An expanding literature focuses on private dimensions in education (e.g. Ball & Youdell, 2008; Heyneman & Stern, 2014; Macpherson et al., 2014). Most of this literature addresses marketisation within public systems, sometimes resulting from government policies, and/or the operation of private schools alongside public ones. The modes of private-school operation are very pertinent to the present paper, which includes focus on a company claiming to be the world's largest provider of

kindergarten to Grade 12 schooling (GEMS Education, 2022).[1] Private schools, the literature points out, may serve a range of income groups.

Alongside literature on privatisation as it relates to schooling are analyses of private supplementary tutoring. Insofar as this tutoring is received by students in public schools, in some settings its emergence has been described as *de facto* privatisation (Sobhy, 2012) or as privatisation by default rather than by deliberate government policy (Verger et al., 2016). Indeed, many governments are uneasy about the expansion of shadow education because it raises questions about social inequalities and backwash on mainstream schooling (Bray, 2021a, 2021b; Galinié & Heim, 2016; Park et al., 2016). Shadow education is now a global phenomenon, but with variations across countries and cultures.

The literature on shadow education shows multiple components of demand. The fundamental driver is social competition (see e.g. Brehm, 2018). Families observe that success in schooling opens avenues to prestigious post-school education and thence to well-remunerated employment. High-stakes examinations form critical junctures within the school systems, and thus are a particular focus for tutoring. Also pertinent are cultural norms, reflected for example in the fact that shadow education has been especially prominent in Confucian societies (see e.g. Sorenson, 2019), but also elsewhere including much of South Asia (Joshi, 2021) and the Middle East (League of Arab States, 2012; Bray & Hajar, 2022). Related to cultural factors is peer pressure when everyone else seems to be receiving shadow education, causing individual families to fear being left behind. Demand for shadow education also comes from formal and informal advertising by tutors, and from subtle or direct pressure from school teachers. Especially obvious is pressure from teachers who themselves offer tutoring and seek clients from among their own students, but also pertinent are teachers' general expectations that all students desiring either to catch up or to excel should receive tutoring.

On the other side are multiple components of supply, and for private schools much has to do with the business model. One analogy is with hotels that offer room-only, bed and breakfast, or full board. Alternatively, the GEMS Founder and Chairman, Sunny Varkey, has compared his model with airlines that offer economy, business and first class (Guttenplan, 2013; Ridge et al., 2016). Private schools with high fees can offer packages that include supplementary tutoring at no extra cost, while low-fee schools may provide only the basics and require separate payment for additional services. Either way, consumers in these private schools pay somehow, but not necessarily in itemised modes.

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[1] This company was founded in Dubai in 1959. Originally, GEMS stood for Global Education Management System. Now the company simply calls itself GEMS or GEMS Education. It operates in many parts of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North America, serving over 119,000 students.

The other arena for supply of tutoring is outside the schools. Some external tutoring may still be delivered by the students' regular teachers, but usually without approval by the school authorities. Alternatively, students may receive tutoring from teachers employed by other schools, from companies and/or from self-employed tutors. These suppliers have their own business models to serve different income groups.

The above account provides a framework for the remainder of this paper presented diagrammatically in Figure 1. The components of the framework are applicable across all countries, but in Dubai they operate in particular ways as explained in the following sections.

Figure 1: Supplementary Tutoring Demand and Supply
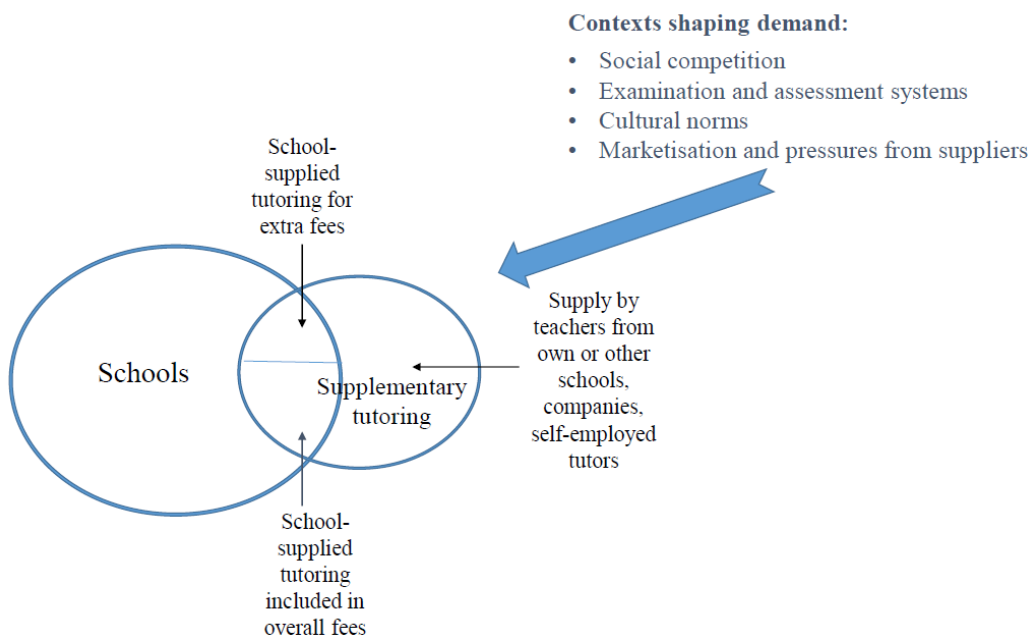
UAE, Dubai and their Education Systems

To underpin the analysis, some historical, economic and social background is needed. The UAE was formed in 1971 through initial federation of six emirates to which the seventh was added in 1972. At that time, in the words of Kamal and Trines (2018), the country was "a small, backwater desert nation of 279,000 people". Half a century later, especially because of oil revenues it had become a rich and vibrant economic centre with a population 35 times larger. Most of the UAE oil is in Abu Dhabi emirate, and Dubai's specific economic model reflects government-led development, fast decision-making, a flexible labour force, and supply-generated 'first mover' demand (Hvidt, 2009, 2019).

Most of the population increase has been of non-national employees and their families. The UAE is distinctive in the very high proportion of non-nationals in the population, and Dubai is the

emirate with the highest (Table 1). Within the total UAE population, broadly matched in the Dubai population, Indians form the largest group, followed by Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Filipinos (Table 2). Schooling is also needed for significant numbers of families from Western countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US).

Tables 1 and 2 near here

Arrangements for administration of education vary in the different emirates. In the smaller emirates the national Ministry of Education (MoE) plays a relatively strong role, but much administration in Dubai is undertaken by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). The MoE plays a direct role in Dubai's government schools, but they serve only 11% of Dubai's school-going population (MoE, 2019). The public schools mainly serve Emiratis and other Arab nationals. Education is free of charge to Emiratis in those schools, but over half of the Emirati children in Dubai attend private schools (KHDA & CfBT Education Trust, 2012; MoE, 2019; KHDA, 2021a). The Emirati families choose this route because of an associated class status, to secure not only perceived superior quality but also curricula that give stronger access to desired overseas destinations for further study.

Dubai's KHDA was established in 2006 to steer the private education sector, for which it has various regulatory powers. Within the KHDA, the Dubai Schools Inspection Bureau (DSIB) monitors quality in order to inform improvement planning at school and policy level (KHDA, 2021b). Since 2010, the DSIB has published evaluations that rank schools on a scale from weak to outstanding. The work is achieved mainly through annual school inspections, but the DSIB also conducts surveys of teachers, parents and students.

Defining Systems, Defining Shadows

The KHDA mostly defines school systems based on the curricula employed. According to the KHDA, in 2021 Dubai's private schools offered 17 different curricula (KHDA, 2021c). For present purposes it is useful to consider statistics from 2012/13 in order to match the data that follow in this paper. At that time, Dubai was described as having 15 curricular systems among 153 private schools and kindergartens (KHDA, 2013, p.8). These were all private schools, and sat alongside 77 public schools and kindergartens following the MoE curriculum. Among the private schools, the largest

group was classified as UK curriculum.[2] Next on the list were 24 schools classified as Indian curriculum, followed by 35 schools with US curriculum.

Table 3 near here

The next question concerns the definition of shadow education employed by this paper. A dominant definition in the literature has three components, namely (i) fee-charging, (ii) addressing subjects already covered in the schools, and (iii) academic rather than for example musical, artistic or sporting skills learned for more rounded personal development (Zhang & Bray, 2020). Such tutoring might be delivered one-to-one, in small groups, in full classes or over the internet.

This definition remains useful for present purposes, but for Dubai, as already mentioned, a classificatory problem arises when asking if the tutoring is free of charge or requires payment. In 2011/12 the DSIB asked 140 schools whether they provided supplementary tutoring, to which 86 (61.4%) replied affirmatively. To the next question for these 86 schools whether the tutoring was fee-charging, 61 (70.9%) said that it was free, 16 (18.6%) said that it was fee-charging, and nine (10.5%) said that it was a mix. Yet the question arises what 'free' means when all the schools were private with revenues mainly or exclusively coming from fees paid by parents or their employers. The KHDA (2013, p.4) noted that 45% of Dubai private-school students paid less than AED10,000 (US$2,700) in annual fees, while 16% paid over AED35,000 (US$9,700), and Grade 12 students at the most expensive school paid AED96,140 (US$26,200) excluding boarding facilities, transport and uniforms. Thus, students receiving 'free' tutoring were in practice still paying for it through their overall fees.

Methodology

The data for this paper were collected during 2012 by a team that brought together researchers in the KHDA and from The University of Hong Kong. Its principal goal was to assess the scale, diversities and implications of the private tutoring sector in order to improve KHDA policies. The work began

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[2] This classification, however, disguised many complexities. First, there was arguably no such thing as a UK curriculum. England and Wales did share a national curriculum; but Northern Ireland operated on different albeit a related model, and Scotland had a considerably different model (Brock, 2015). Second, many schools in Dubai used the descriptors loosely. Thus the DSIB (2013, p.62) acknowledged that around one third of UK schools did "not base their syllabus or each subject sufficiently on the National Curriculum of England and Wales", and added (p.102) that only a minority of schools classified as US-curriculum "provide learning experiences similar to those of a school in the United States" or "award qualifications to their graduates that are recognised in the US". Also, while the majority of Indian-curriculum schools were oriented to one examination board, three were oriented to another (DSIB, 2013, p.100); and some schools offered more than one curriculum or hybrid models such as UK/Indian and American/MoE. This reflects Dubai's cultural diversity and the intense competition between education companies.

with review not only of relevant literature but also of internal KHDA data. Team members then visited private schools with a range of fee levels and of quality ratings as assessed by the DSIB. The sample was chosen in order to secure diversity while also covering the main curriculum groups. In each school, semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals, in some cases accompanied by other senior personnel. This paper draws on the data from 18 private schools: six with Indian curricula, one Pakistani, five UK, three US, one with both US and MoE curricula, and two with MoE curricula. All these schools had intakes from primary to at least Grade 9, while one taught up to Grade 11, fourteen to Grade 12, and two to Grade 13. Three had high fees, seven had medium-level fees, and eight had low fees.[3]

To complement insights from the school visits, the team extended the qualitative approach by conducting semi-structured interviews with personnel in two institutes providing private tutoring, and with three focus groups of parents whose children were receiving private tutoring. The focus groups had an average of four persons, and concentrated on parents with children in UK- and MoE-curriculum schools.

Then, to add numerical data to these qualitative studies, 585 students in Grades 9 and 12 were surveyed. For this, 14 schools were sampled with overlap but not complete correspondence to the schools in which interviews had been conducted. Grades 9 and 12 were chosen because they are typically transition points first from lower- to upper-secondary education, and then from upper- to post-secondary education. Qualitative evidence and the wider literature had suggested that students were particularly likely to receive tutoring at these transition points. Students had a choice of responding to either English or Arabic versions of the questionnaire, and did so either on paper or, where available, on a web-based form using the schools' computer laboratories. The sample sizes for the Indian, UK, US and MoE curricula were 188, 121, 130 and 146 students, respectively.

Findings

The quantitative picture

The survey indicated that 49% of respondents had received some form of supplementary tutoring during the previous 12 months. Among Indian-curriculum students, 70% had received such tutoring, while among those following MoE, US and UK curricula only 38% had done so. Among Arab students from non-UAE countries, an average of 31% had received supplementary tutoring. In line with much international literature (e.g. Park et al., 2016), percentages varied according to the grades. Among responding Grade 9 students, 37% had received supplementary tutoring while 63% of the

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[3]   The KHDA had data on fees by grade in every school. In line with Ridge et al. (2016, p.276), Grade 8 was taken as the benchmark, and the total list was divided into three equal segments.

Grade 12 students had done so. In Indian-curriculum schools, respective proportions were 52% and 91%.

Table 4 reports on the modes of tutoring received by the sampled students. A small number – just 3% – received tutoring via the internet, while the rest did so face-to-face.[4] Most tutoring was one-to-one or in small groups, with 59% of the face-to-face students receiving the tutoring outside their schools and 38% receiving it inside. Among the students receiving supplementary tutoring on the school premises after school hours, 65% did so at no extra charge while 35% paid additional fees. A further 3% of the total sample received fee-charging supplementary tutoring during school hours.

Table 4 near here

Drivers of school-provided supply

The qualitative data showed wide variations in supplementary tutoring provided within schools, dependent on not only the business models but also the views of principals (Table 5). At one end of the spectrum, School A was an Indian-curriculum school with high fees, well-paid teachers, and a vigorous programme of school-provided remedial and enhancement support at no extra charge. Indeed, for senior students it had become a 'day boarding school', keeping the students until evening. Some students also came early – even at 6.00 am; and the school organised an extra week of tutoring during the summer break for students desiring it. When asked about external tutoring, a senior manager replied: "We don't like students to be learning from anyone else", adding that "tutors can mess up the child".

Table 5 near here

By contrast, other Indian-curriculum schools were more relaxed, and in some cases even encouraged shadow education. These were all low-fee schools, but still with diversity. School B organised supplementary classes on the premises, for which teachers were paid extra, and the principal highlighted the additional child-minding benefit for working parents. Other children received support externally in tutorial centres or from teachers employed by other schools. However, the principal said, "the students were exposed to different methods or pace than what is happening at school, resulting in the students [often] getting confused". The School C principal also disapproved

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[4] Internet tutoring has greatly increased since that time, reflecting not only general trends in technology use but also a great boost during the Covid-19 crisis when face-to-face tutoring was prohibited (Al-Amir, 2020). However, this matter is beyond the scope of the present paper.

of parents securing external tutoring, even calling in "a short recipe for disaster". Parents, she said, believed that investing in tutoring showed their care, commitment and love, but "the minute parents hire private tutors, students' learning is highly affected as they start ignoring school lessons". This principal, however, like counterparts in Schools D and E, adopted a largely *laissez faire* approach. She had once offered supplementary classes within the school but had received a weak response from parents. A common remark was that tutees chose tutorial centres rather than schools in order to access skills and content not available in their schools, and also to meet friends and perhaps secure prestige. The School F principal strongly disapproved of shadow education like his counterpart in School C, but it seemed that nevertheless many students did receive external tutoring.

Turning to the US curriculum, Schools M, N and O mostly served Emiratis and other Arabic-speaking students and had medium-level fees. All three principals favoured shadow education, though the policy for School O did not permit it within the school. Schools M and N themselves organised supplementary lessons for extra fees, and School M even included in the teachers' contracts a requirement to allocate time for remunerated extra lessons if requested. Other students

The Pakistani school provided a contrast as a not-for-profit community school. This school had the lowest fees in the sample, and parents were low-income. The principal estimated that only 10% of students were receiving external tutoring, even though the school day ended at 1.30 pm (after a 7.30 am commencement), and the principal added that his teachers did not give the impression that they were rushing to after-school tutoring.

Much diversity was also evident among the UK-curriculum schools, which, in contrast to the Indian- and Pakistani-curriculum schools, recruited students of many nationalities including Emiratis. The School H principal was not aware of much supplementary tutoring, and basically saw it as a non-issue. The school had at one time proposed school-based remedial support for an extra fee, but had abandoned the idea for lack of demand. By contrast, the primary section of School I actively organised supplementary tutoring at a fixed price, managing the teachers and paying them through the school accounts after taking a 10% levy. This arrangement existed despite the fact that the school was among institutions with the highest fees in Dubai. Instructively, the head of the secondary section disapproved of this practice, showing diversity within the school. School J, also in the high-fee category, had an opposite pattern: the secondary-section head had an approval system for teachers to provide fee-charging supplementary lessons, though normally outside the premises, while the primary-section head rejected the practice. In School K, which had medium-level fees, the principal also disapproved of supplementary tutoring and prohibited his teachers from providing it. His counterpart in low-fee School L critiqued external tutoring but organised in-school tutoring by the teachers for an extra fee.

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received external tutoring, which the principal of School M would have preferred to be internal because "the school knows [the students'] needs and thus is able to monitor the quality of teaching and properly support them". The principal of School N would have liked to raise the fees and then provide tutoring as part of the standard package for the school.

The remaining schools taught the MoE curriculum, in one case in conjunction with a US curriculum. School P, towards the upper end of the medium-fee group, provided free-of-extra-charge support on campus, and discouraged external tutoring. The principal of School Q, although its fees were only half those in School P, was even more assertive. "When students go to tutoring centres," she said, "I have to investigate why". Teachers were forbidden to tutor students from the school externally, and the principal had fired two teachers for having done so. Nevertheless, the principal recognised that her teachers may have been tutoring students from other schools. The principal of School R in the low-fee group was more accommodating of tutoring, but did highlight the possibilities of students becoming too reliant on tutors. She added that students receiving tutoring might focus excessively on getting grades rather than understanding content.

In summary, these interviews showed much diversity. The schools with higher fees (such as School A) could provide more internal support without extra charge, while other schools provided extra support for extra fees. Some principals were *laissez faire*, and yet others were discouraging. In Schools I and J, different arrangements applied in the primary and secondary sections. Further, the principal of School J gave explicit permission for teachers to offer external tutoring even to their own students, while his counterpart in School Q had fired two teachers for privately tutoring students from the school.

Curricula and cultures

Some interviewees identified specific links between tutoring and curricula. First was the question of subjects for tutoring. Across all schools, mathematics and sciences were in high demand. Among the Emirati and other Arab students in the US-curriculum schools, English was also much demanded. By corollary, few Emirati and other Arab students sought tutoring for Arabic, presumably feeling that they had adequate competence. Non-Arab students in the other schools mostly stuck to their own languages or to English and thus felt less need to learn Arabic, but interviewees in Indian-curriculum School D indicated that some families did desire Arabic competence that could not be offered adequately by the school. The tutoring coordinator in the primary section of UK-curriculum School I considered it an achievement to have got the Arabic teachers "on board" for the school-organised

supplementary tutoring, and to have arranged for them to receive the same payments as other teachers.

Also important was the assessment system. Thus the principal of School H, which followed a UK curriculum mainly serving Indian and Pakistani families, reported that very few students received supplementary tutoring because the assessment system did not demand it. A major factor, the principal said, was:

> the nature of the Cambridge syllabus, which [leads to student] profiles and in which less hangs on a specific percentage point. This contrasts with the CBSE [Central Board for Secondary Education] examinations of the Indian system, for example. Students in that system are forced to compete fiercely, because every mark counts in a system with millions of competitors.

Also, the principal added:

> the Indian syllabus is vast, so the students have to cram in much more. The Cambridge syllabus is narrower and thus easier to complete without the extra tutoring.

School A did follow an Indian curriculum, but was able to handle the demands with dedicated (and well-paid) teachers. However, the principal of Indian-curriculum School B felt that external supplementation was needed, especially for help with examination-board syllabuses not covered by the school. The principal of Indian-curriculum School E stated that "parents exert pressure on students to excel", but added that "the strong indicator is often exclusively about the marks scored by the student, even when there is no apparent link between the learning achievement and the marks being scored". This attitude placed much emphasis on assessment, and downplayed the development of learning skills and other softer dimensions.

At the same time, cultural traditions were clear, albeit with variations. The widely-accepted social norm of shadow education in South Asia (Joshi, 2021; Ghosh & Bray, 2020) particularly influenced patterns in Schools B-F, and helped to explain why the quantitative survey had shown especially high shadow-education enrolment rates in Indian-curriculum schools. In the words of an interviewee in School D, "there is a cultural element to private tutoring stemming from traditions in India, also tying into the focus on gaining admission to top academic institutions at the university level". However, School G following a Pakistani curriculum seemed not to fit this pattern. When asked if the students received much external tutoring, the principal replied that they could not afford it. In Pakistan itself, he said, school fees were low and tutoring was cheap; but even in this school with very low fees by Dubai standards, the fees were substantial for the families served and tutoring

was costly. In any case the families may have been relatively unambitious. Another Pakistani-curriculum school in nearby Sharjah emirate attracted higher achievers, and the Dubai school mainly served children who had failed to get into that school.

Cultural traditions of extensive shadow education also apply to many Arab countries (Abdel-Moneim, 2016), and teachers from those countries brought traditions of tutoring particularly to the MoE-curriculum schools. Ridge et al. (2017, p.46) cited a newspaper editorial applauding the UAE's educational pioneers who in the 1960s and 1970s "had the herculean task of building an entire educational network from nothing". However, the editorial added, "by importing teachers en masse from Egypt, they rebuilt the problems of the Egyptian state system here". A normalised private-tutoring culture was among these problems (Abdel-Moneim, 2016; Sieverding et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the principal of School R remarked that compared with non-nationals, Emirati students were less likely to seek private tutoring. "They express less interest and commitment towards education," she said, "because they know their future is guaranteed". This remark implied that the social competition was less intense among Emirati families benefitting from strong government-funded safety nets, particularly for males.

The question then remains about cultures of tutoring among Westerners and others. Although recent years have shown growing shadow-education enrolment rates in such countries as the USA, Australia and England (Buchmann et al., 2010; Davis, 2013; Sutton Trust, 2019), rates have not (yet) reached the levels of South Asia and the Middle East. While numerical data would be desirable for confirmation, impressions from the parental focus groups and other sources suggested that the tutoring enrolment rates for Westerners were relatively modest in Dubai. Yet just as tutoring rates are growing in the UK, the person in charge of tutoring provision in the primary section of School I indicated that significant numbers of UK families (though much fewer than Indian ones) sought tutoring – in some cases as a status symbol. It seems likely that comparable shadowing in tutoring enrolment rates from their home countries would also apply to Filipinos, Iranians, Chinese and others (de Castro & de Guzman, 2014; Shirbagi et al., 2019; Zhang, 2020).

A further cultural element had a gender dimension. The principal of School N, in which 70% of the students were Emirati, reported that boys tended to need more tutoring than girls because "they are more spoiled, less committed to learn, and want to have fun". Girls, by contrast, were expected by cultural norms to be more domesticated. Allied to this matter was the gender of available tutors. In the Arab community, men were more likely to offer tutoring, not only because of financial incentives but also because of acceptable cultural norms. Women were more likely to have family obligations that precluded supplementary roles, and for cultural reasons could less easily visit students' homes to provide tutoring. By contrast, in the primary section of School I almost all the

(mostly Western) tutors on the roster managed by the administrator were female. The proportions reflected the fact that the primary section had mostly female teachers anyway, but also the greater cultural acceptability of Western women taking on such supplementary work.

Out-of-school tutoring supply

The main suppliers of out-of-school tutoring were (i) tutorial centres, and (ii) teachers from either the students' own schools or other schools. Each category may be considered in turn.

At the time of this research, the KHDA had refused to grant new licenses to tutorial centres, feeling that the whole sector needed scrutiny. This suspension of new licences benefitted the existing centres by constraining the competition. The two tutorial centres visited for this research both especially, though not exclusively, focused on Indian clients. One had UAE premises in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and also in seven other Middle East countries plus India. It specialised in entrance requirements for US universities, and had multiple classrooms each able to accommodate 10-20 students. The second tutorial centre had a partnership with a counterpart in India, and its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) also ran a school in another UAE emirate. This second tutorial centre focused on Indian and UK curricula, and served 3,000 students from 20-25 schools. Both company CEOs originally trained as engineers, and their discourses strongly reflected business rather than educational principles. KHDA personnel indicated that the other tutorial centres in Dubai were smaller, but with similar marketing approaches that included explicit advertising and building relationships with families and schools. Returning to Table 4, most or all of the 12% of surveyed students receiving supplementary tutoring in full classes outside their schools attended such centres. Some students receiving small-group and one-to-one tutoring may also have done so in centres, but receipt from serving teachers was more common.

To understand the roles of teachers, it is again pertinent to note both school business models and wider cultures. Ridge et al. (2016, p.272) noted that teachers in Dubai's private schools were generally paid different amounts according to nationality. Typical salaries of South Asian teachers in economy-class schools barely covered their living expenses, and were less than a quarter of Western teachers' earnings in first-class schools. Specifically, average monthly salaries of GEMS teachers in 2014/15 were US$700-1,400 for South Asians compared with US$2,750-4,100 for Westerners. As a result, even though the economy-class schools had larger classes and heavier workloads, these teachers were more likely to offer private tutoring.

Between these groups were the salaries for nationals of lower-income Arab countries (i.e. countries that were not members of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] such as Egypt, Jordan and Syria). Ridge et al. (2016, p.272) indicated that these salaries averaged US$2,200-2,750. Economic

pressures were one reason for these teachers to offer tutoring, but in another paper Ridge et al. (2017, p.47) reported remarks by some non-GCC Arab teachers that even if their monthly salaries were considerably higher, they would continue to tutor because it was part of their identity. In any case, for most such teachers the principal reason for migrating to the UAE was to maximise their incomes, and tutoring was a way to do so.

The question then concerns the marketing strategies of these teachers. Most operated by word of mouth; but significant numbers tutored their existing students, and Principal O mentioned cases in which teachers deliberately omitted parts of the curriculum in their regular lessons in order to persuade students to take the supplementary paid lessons. A related tactic noted by the principal of School J was operation of pairs of teachers "in a sort of organised racket". One teacher would refer his students to a colleague for tutoring, who would reciprocate by referring his students back. Some parents, the principal indicated, were surprised to receive invoices for tutoring about which they had no knowledge. Also noted were incidents of teachers giving preferential treatment to tutees during regular lessons and leaking of examination questions during tutorial sessions.

Conclusions

The data in this paper are especially interesting for three main reasons. First, they come from an overall unusually-wealthy society, but one with wide income disparities among residents of different nationalities. Non-nationals comprise 91% of the total population, and have diverse cultures shaping attitudes towards shadow education. Second, educational provision in Dubai is dominated by private operators who serve 89% of the school-going population, and the private-school business models shape the scale and orientation of both in-school and out-of-school tutoring. Third, Dubai has a very diverse collection of curricula, each to some extent generating its own shadow.

The paper has also shown the importance of school-level factors. Table 5 reported on diverse attitudes by school principals and even of section heads at the primary and secondary levels within individual schools. The leadership attitudes again shaped both in-school and out-of-school tutoring. Thus, for example, the words of the School Q principal may be recalled: "When students go to tutoring centres, I have to investigate why". Likewise, the School L principal indicated that if he found parents sending their children for outside tutoring, he would talk with them to discourage the practice. By contrast, the School N principal stated that "some children are desperately in need of additional support", and the broadly favourable attitude towards private tutoring helped to explain why half the students in Grades 9-12 received external provision.

Alongside these patterns were various bottom-up forces from teachers and families. Some teacher-driven practices could be identified as corrupt, pressurising students to receive tutoring.

Families also had rationales for tutoring that included not only academic goals but also cultural norms and social prestige. The opening substantive section of this paper noted that shadow education has sometimes been called *de facto* privatisation (Sobhy, 2012) or privatisation by default (Verger et al., 2016). That literature concerned private tutoring received by public-school students, so was less obviously applicable to private-school students. Yet even in private schools the descriptor may be applicable insofar as the tutoring occurred without the approval of the school authorities and to some extent subverted their goals and reputations. The principal of School N would have liked to have raised the fees in order to bring the tutoring from the outside to the inside, partly to improve supervision and to reduce corruption and also to harmonise curricula so that students did not receive conflicting messages from internal teachers and external tutors. The principal of School B similarly felt that external tutoring confused students by exposing them to different methods or pace, harming consistency; and his counterpart in School C stated that students receiving tutoring "start ignoring school lessons". Such tutoring was beyond the control of the schools, and as such was a (further) privatisation by default rather than by design. This phenomenon highlights the tensions between schools and private supplementary tutoring providers.

Critiquing the GEMS model, Ridge et al. (2016) pointed out that the airline metaphor of economy, business and first class misleadingly implied that all participants in the education system reached the same destination albeit in varying degrees of comfort. The reality in the education sector, Ridge et al. observed (p.273), was that while most UAE students graduate from high school, their opportunities during schooling impact on their post-secondary education and future careers. Equally pertinent, the first-class schools might seem more socially-responsible in catering for all needs of their students, in contrast to economy-class schools that either charged extra for tutoring or by default left such tutoring to family decision-making and the marketplace. Yet in reality the first-class schools were also charging for their services, and as such were not more socially-responsible than the others in the intense for-profit approach of this education landscape.

Such relationships between business models and supplementary tutoring have not been significantly explored in the literature. Thus for example Gupta (2021) examined the entrepreneurial logic of 38 teachers from two Indian private schools who provided external shadow education, but did not address the business models and fee structures of the teachers' primary employers. More broadly, the literature does not even describe school-provided supplementary tutoring as a form of shadow education when it is included in the overall fee package; and a similar remark generally applies when tutoring has a separate charge but is provided by the school authorities. As such, this paper shows possibilities for meaningful reclassification in order to enhance clarity of processes and their implications.

Beyond this point, while this paper has used the metaphor of shadow education, it might conclude with an alternative metaphor. The paper shows ways in which cultural and curricular diversities dovetail with market forces to produce what may be called a rainbow of arrangements for supplementary tutoring by different categories of providers for different categories of clients at different prices, and in different locations, formats and subjects. Such rainbows are doubtless evident elsewhere, but have not been widely identified as such. This phenomenon is particularly striking in Dubai's distinctive society with its melting pot of cultures and approaches to both schooling and shadow education. Thus, the distinctive features of Dubai expose patterns with particular clarity, and therefore have value for analysis not only in Dubai but also elsewhere.

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Table 1: UAE Population by Emirate

Emirate	Population (millions)	% Emirati	% Non-national
Dubai	3.33	9	91
Abu Dhabi	3.23	19	81
Sharjah	1.51	12	88
Ajman	0.54	n.a.	n.a.
Ras al-Khaimah	0.39	24	76
Fujairah	0.25	39	61
Umm al-Quwain	0.08	n.a.	n.a.
Total	**9.33**	**11**	**89**

Notes: n.a. = not available. Population estimates are for 2018, from https://www.globalmediainsight.com/blog/uae-population-statistics/ (accessed 13 July 2021), including the totals for Emiratis and non-nationals. Estimates of Emiratis/non-nationals by individual emirate are for various years between 2013 and 2017 – source: De Bel-Air (2018), p.11.

Table 2: UAE Population by Nationality

Country	Population (millions)	% of total population
National		
UAE	1.15	11.5
Non-national		
India	2.75	27.5
Pakistan	1.27	12.7
Bangladesh	0.74	7.4
Philippines	0.56	5.6
Iran	0.48	4.8
Egypt	0.42	4.2
Nepal	0.32	3.2
Sri Lanka	0.32	3.2
China	0.21	2.1
All other countries	1.79	17.9
Total non-national	8.84	88.5

Note: Data are estimates for 2021.

Source: https://www.globalmediainsight.com/blog/uae-population-statistics/ (accessed 13 July 2021).

Table 3: Curricula in Dubai Private Schools, 2012/13

Schools	Students	Curricula
53	70,860	UK
24	67,629	Indian
35	47,719	US
13	16,085	UAE Ministry of Education
7	5,807	International Baccalaureate
3	4,158	Pakistani
2	3,862	Philippines
4	3,762	French
6	2,717	Iranian
1	791	Institute of Applied Technology (UAE)
1	548	German
1	541	Reggio Emilia (kindergarten)
1	456	Russian
1	135	Japanese
1	29	International Curriculum for Languages & Creative Arts (kindergarten)
153	**225,099**	**Total**

Source: KHDA (2013), p.8.

Table 4: Modes of Supplementary Tutoring Received by the Sampled Students

Mode	%
Small group (2-10 people), outside school	25
One-to-one, outside school	22
Small group (2-10 people), inside school	15
Full class (10 or more people) inside school	14
Full class (10 or more people) outside school	12
One-to-one, inside school	9
Internet	3

Table 5: School-Level Attitudes and Provision of Supplementary Tutoring

School	Curriculum	Level of fees	Principal's attitude toward external private supplementary tutoring	School-provided tutoring with no extra charge	School-provided tutoring with extra fees
A	Indian	High	Discourages extra tutoring – school provision is enough	School supports students during the day	None
B	Indian	Low	Accepts as part of reality	At one stage offered for most grades, but then suspended. Still provides for Grades 11 and 12 at no extra charge.	School organises, and pays teachers extra. Fee-charging for Grades 4-10, but free for Grades 11-12.
C	Indian	Low	Recognises that it happens, but dislikes	Did once offer free classes in school, but poor response	None
D	Indian	Low	Neutral	School provides daily 'Quality Classes' for weak pupils early in morning or during breaks	None
E	Indian	Low	"I hate it, but I cannot stop it."	None mentioned	None
F	Indian	Medium	"Outside private tuition is banned because a good school takes care of learning needs."	Support for all grades up to 4.00 pm while other students involved in extra-curricular activities	None
G	Pakistani	Low	Seems not to be considered an issue	Extra classes two days per week and on Saturdays. Free of charge for students, but teachers paid extra.	None
H	UK	Low	Principal and section heads basically view tutoring as a non-issue. They feel that the school meets students' needs.	Remedial support every Thursday for one hour during the school day	Planned after-school remedial classes with nominal charge abandoned for lack of demand
I	UK	High	Primary-section head supports and organises in-school provision. Secondary-section head disapproves.	Some extra support without extra charge	Primary section organises supplementary tutoring by teachers on the premises.
J	UK	High	Secondary-section head accepts that tutoring is important for some students and has an approval mechanism for teachers to provide. Primary-section head disapproves.	Not part of school arrangements	Secondary-section head permits teachers to provide tutoring if approved, but normally outside school.
K	UK	Medium	Disapproves, and prohibits teachers from providing extra private tutoring	In-school provision for about 2% of students	None
L	UK	Low	Principal considers external private tutoring "a financial burden and a waste of time." He talks to parents if he finds them sending their children for outside tutoring, to discourage.	Some in-school provision without extra charge	School provides extra lessons, usually at the end of term, and pays teachers extra; compulsory for weak students, optional for others.
M	US	Medium	Positive: "It means that students and parents care about learning."	None mentioned	School organises, and about 10% of students attend
N	US	Medium	Feels that supplementary tutoring is generally needed.	Classes at no extra charge for up to two years.	School organises groups of up to four students each
O	US	Medium	Many students need, but principal perceives that KHDA does not permit (even though	None	None

			other schools ignore).		
P	US & MoE	Medium	Discourages tutoring by external providers	Remedial during school hours, and enrichment after school hours	None
Q	MoE	Medium	Discourages	Support lessons during the week and even on Saturdays and during holidays	None
R	MoE	Low	Mostly neutral, though observes problematic facets	School organises 1-2 remedial lessons per week.	None