

# Confronting the Shadow Education System: What Government Policies for What Private Tutoring?

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



• UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education  
• The University of Hong Kong

# **Structure of this presentation**

- **UNESCO and its system of Chairs**
- **Elements of personal history**
- **Shadow education - nature and significance**
- **The agenda ahead**

# UNESCO: What it is, and how it works

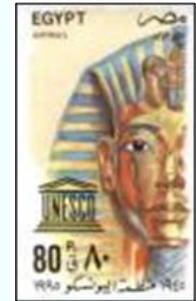
United Nations  
**Educational,  
Scientific  
and Cultural**  
Organization

Established  
1945

Head-  
quartered  
in Paris



**and  
with a global  
network of cluster  
offices, national offices,  
regional bureaus and  
institutes**



# **The system of UNESCO Chairs**

- **Launched in 1992; all dimensions of UNESCO's work**
- **In the education sector, Chairs in 74 of the 195 Member States**

Conceived as “Think tanks” and “bridge builders” between the academic world, civil society, local communities, research and policy-making.

# Elements of personal history with UNESCO

1980s

- **Consultant** (China, Malta, Papua New Guinea, Sudan...)
- **author** (double-shift schooling; small states...)

1990s

- **Consultant** in additional countries (Bhutan, Indonesia, Mexico, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam...)
- **author** on additional themes (privatisation; community financing; shadow education...)

2000s

- **Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), 2006-2010**



**Created in 1963, with its own  
Governing Board**



**Headquartered in Paris**



**Branch in Buenos Aires**

# Three main domains of IIEP work



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International Institute  
for Educational Planning



Working  
integrally  
with other  
parts of  
UNESCO

**As my period in IIEP drew to a close, one question was what I could bring back ...**

**... and how both sides could benefit.**

**The UNESCO Chair was part of the answer.**

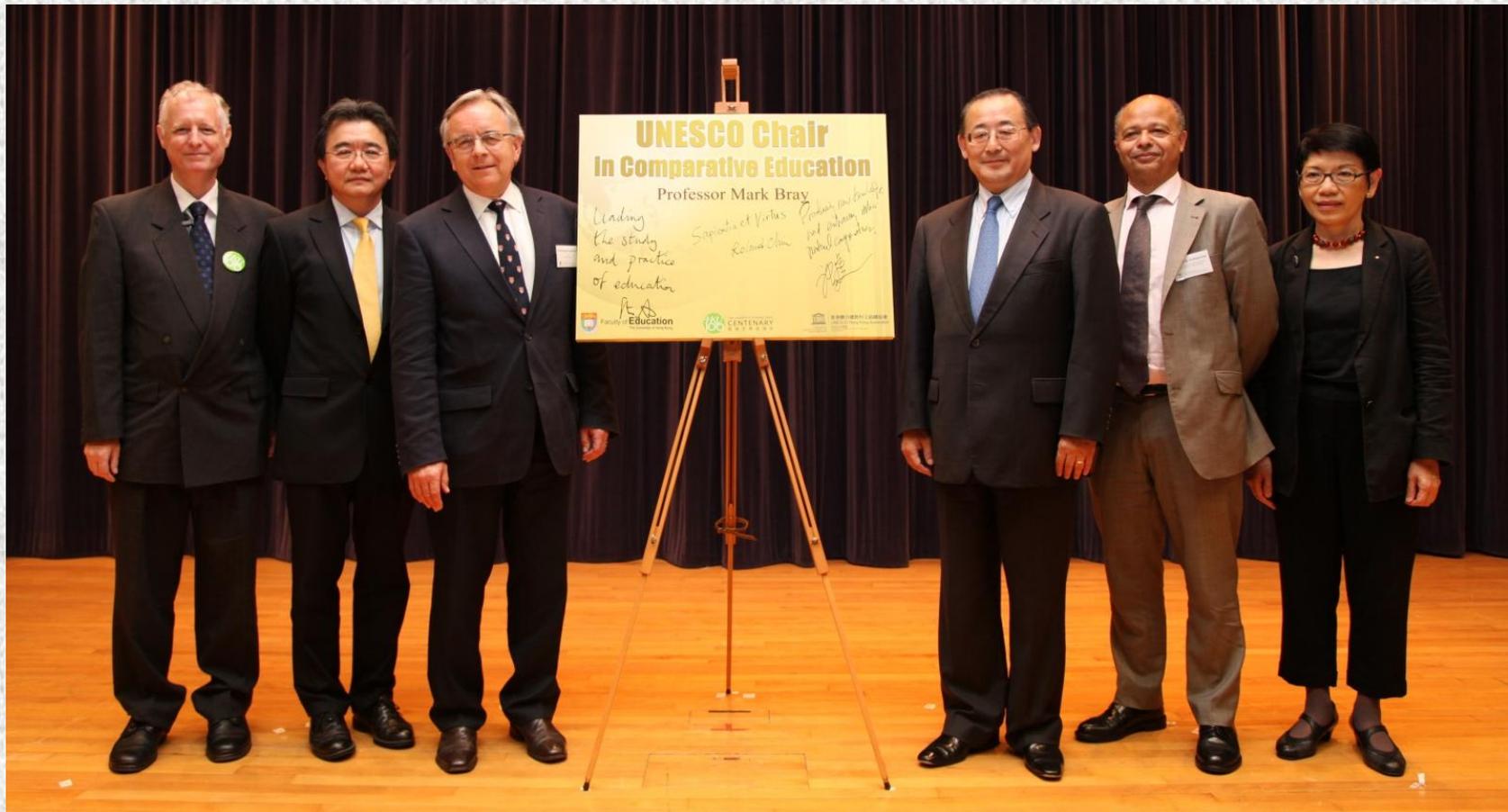


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# HKU's UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education



Launched 18 May 2012

**So, how does shadow  
education fit in?**

**And what is shadow  
education anyway?**

# Shadow education is a form of Private Supplementary Tutoring

- **academic**
- **for financial gain**
- **additional to the provision of mainstream schooling**

# Why a shadow?

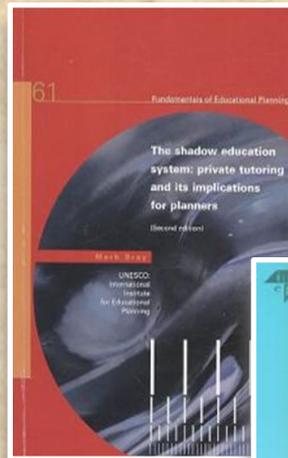
- ▶ Private tutoring only exists because the mainstream exists.
- ▶ As the size and shape of the mainstream changes, so does that of the shadow.

# Why is it important?

- **Huge investments by households**
- **Maintains and exacerbates inequalities**
- **Backwash on mainstream schooling**

**Yet in most societies, shadow  
education receives inadequate  
attention**

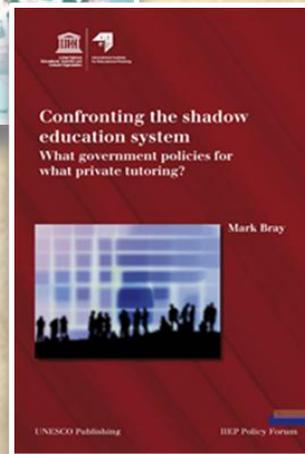
# A developing research agenda



1999



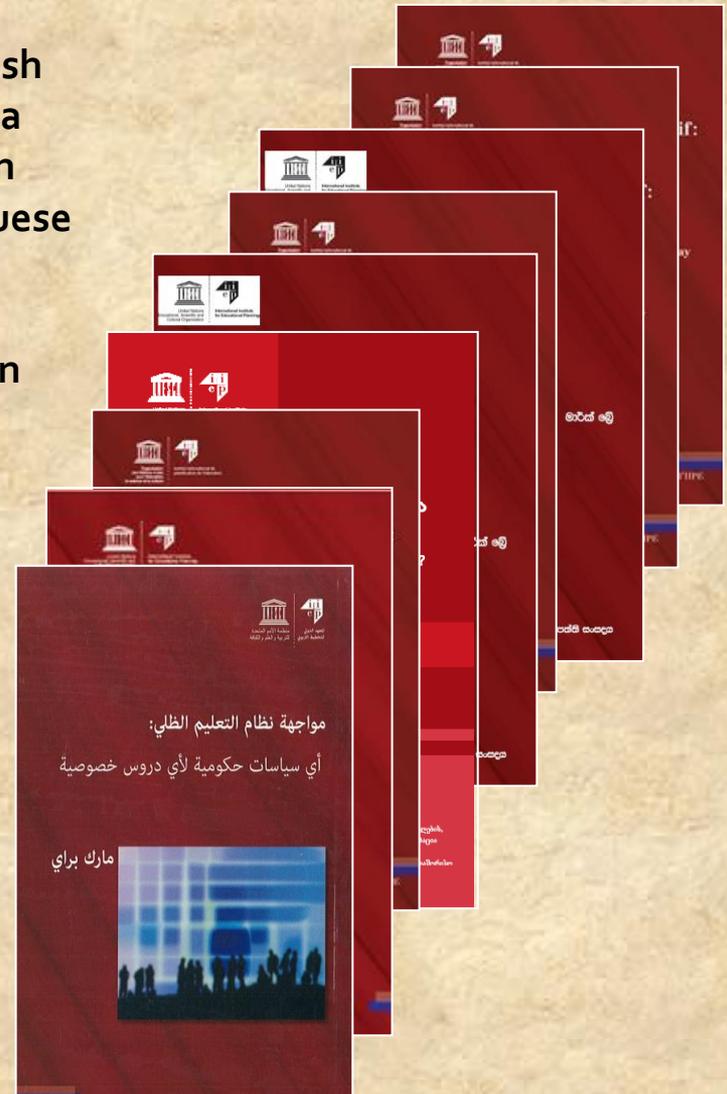
2003



2009 English



Uzbek  
Urdu  
Spanish  
Sinhala  
Russian  
Portuguese  
Polish  
Nepali  
Mongolian  
Korean  
Kannada  
Hindi  
Georgian  
French  
Chinese  
Bangla  
Azeri  
Armenian  
Arabic



# Three regional studies

## Europe (2011)

The challenge of shadow education:

Private tutoring and its implications for policy makers in Europe



## Asia (2012)

### Shadow Education

Private Supplementary Tutoring and Its Implications for Policy Makers in Asia

Mark Bray and Chad Lykins

CERC Monograph Series in Comparative and International Education and Development

No. 9



ADB



## Mediterranean (2013)

### Private Tutoring across the Mediterranean

Power Dynamics and Implications for Learning and Equity



Mark Bray, André E. Mazawi & Ronald Sultana (eds.)

# Some Hong Kong numbers (from GRF-funded research)



2011/12 survey; 1,646 students in 16 schools (3% of total):

- **51.4% of Form 3 students**
- **71.8% of Form 6 students**

# Who provides tutoring?

- University and secondary school **students**
- Self-employed **individuals across the age range**, full-time or part-time
- Professional tutors, working for **companies**

# Subjects of tutoring

(among the students receiving tutoring)

	%
English	71.7
Maths	58.0
Chinese	38.8
Liberal Studies	13.4
Science	29.9
Business	11.1
Humanities	8.8
Other	3.4

# Wider picture

- ▶ long been vigorous in **East Asia**
- ▶ now very evident in **South Asia** and parts of **North Africa**
- ▶ lower numbers but also deep roots in **Eastern Europe**
- ▶ also emerging in **Western Europe, North America, Australia, Sub-Saharan Africa**

# Scale

- ▶ **Azerbaijan:** 92% of senior secondary
- ▶ **Greece:** “almost everybody” in Grade 12
- ▶ **Egypt:** 52% rural primary; 64% urban primary
- ▶ **India:** West Bengal, 57% primary; Kerala, 72% secondary
- ▶ **Japan:** 16% Primary 1; 65% Secondary 3
- ▶ **Korea:** 88% elementary, 78% junior high, 63% senior high
- ▶ **Portugal:** 55% of students in Grades 10-12
- ▶ **Sri Lanka:** 92% Grade 10; 98% Grade 12
- ▶ **UK:** 12% of primary, 8% of secondary students

# Costs

- ▶ **Korea: US\$17.3 billion**; equivalent to 80% of govt. expenditure on primary and secondary education
- ▶ **Greece: US\$2.1 billion**; equivalent to 20% of govt. expenditure on primary and secondary education
- ▶ **Egypt: 1.6% of GDP**

**Hong Kong.** 35% felt that it was a burden to their families (17% strongly feeling this)

# Who receives tutoring and why?

- **Not necessarily the weak students – more common among the strong ones**
- **A lot of peer pressure and anxiety, among both students and parents**

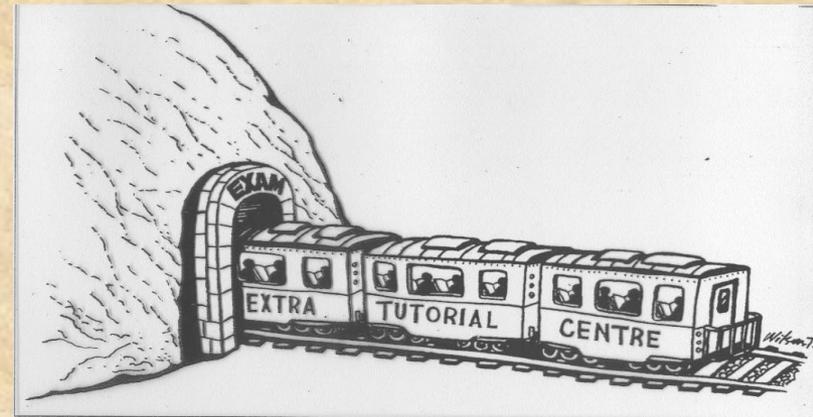


# Implications

## Pupils:

- ✧ Tutoring that helps students to pass examinations can be a good investment.

The students stay longer in the education system and have greater lifetime earnings



# Implications Tutors

- Provides incomes and employment for professional tutors
- Where salaries of mainstream teachers are low, it can compensate
- But also distorts the teaching and learning processes?



# **Implications** **Society**

- **Social inequalities**
- **Corruption**

# The agenda ahead

## Continuing partnership with

- **UNESCO**
- **Asian Development Bank**
- **governments**
- **owners of tutoring centres**
- **schools**
- **parents**

# Locally





# Mainland China



# Dubai



# Policy Forum

## 'Regulating the Shadow Education System'

8-9 April 2013

Hosted by **HKU** jointly with

- **UNESCO**



- **Asian Development Bank**



Governments, practitioners and researchers from:

Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Georgia, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Singapore, Uzbekistan, Vietnam...

## Other continuing **partnership and dialogue**

- UNESCO Education for All (EFA) agenda
- World Bank
- Commonwealth
- National governments
- NGOs

# Conclusions

- 1. The issues surrounding shadow education are complex and very important**
- 2. We are proud in HKU to be at the forefront of research – not just for its own sake, but for improvement of the world through knowledge exchange**

# More information:

Shadow education website of  
Comparative Education Research Centre

[www.hku.hk/cerc](http://www.hku.hk/cerc)



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