

A Brighter Path Forward: How Hong Kong's Government and Authorities Are Paving the Way for Shadow Education's Future

Cheng Ching Ho, Richard

Hong Kong Adventist College, Department of General Education

Email: richard.cheng@hkac.edu

Abstract

Shadow education, commonly known as private tutoring or supplementary education, plays a significant role in Hong Kong's educational landscape. In recent years, the Hong Kong government and authorities have recognized the importance of shadow education and have taken proactive steps to support its development and ensure its quality. This research article explores the initiatives and strategies implemented by the government and authorities to pave a brighter path forward for shadow education in Hong Kong. Through interviewing 10 private tutors in Hong Kong, they have expressed the need of government supports to the industry. By examining these efforts, this article seeks to shed light on the evolving landscape of private tutoring and its potential future impact on the education system. Future research may also focus on whether there is enough support and awareness to this part of shadow education in Hong Kong.

Keywords: shadow education, government policy, secondary school education

Introduction

Hong Kong's education system has long been known for its rigorous academic standards and competitive environment. However, in recent years, the rise of shadow education has been a cause for concern among both parents and educators (Liu, 2012; Bray, 2013). Shadow education, also known as private tutoring, has become increasingly popular as families seek to give their children an edge in an already competitive environment. But with concerns about the quality and accessibility of such education, Hong Kong's government and authorities have taken steps to regulate and improve the industry. Shadow education is an education system that operates outside of formal schooling. It is an industry that provides private tutoring to students. It has become increasingly popular in Hong Kong, with many parents seeking to give their children an edge in an already competitive environment (Xue and Ding, 2008, p. 3). In Hong Kong, shadow education is not just limited to academic subjects but also includes extracurricular activities, such as music, art, and sports.

The rise of shadow education in Hong Kong has been a cause for concern among both parents and educators. Some parents worry about the quality of education their child is receiving, while others worry about the cost and accessibility of such education (Cheng, 2021). Educators are concerned about the impact of shadow education on the formal education system and the widening gap between students who can afford private tutoring and those who cannot (Davies and Guppy, 2010). In recent years, Hong Kong's government and authorities have taken steps to regulate and improve the industry, ensuring that students receive quality education regardless of their financial background (Bray, 2011). However, there is not enough evidence to show those policies and schemes can significantly impact. This paper explores how Hong Kong's government and authorities are paving the way for a brighter future for shadow education. From new regulations and licensing requirements to initiatives aimed at improving the quality of private tutoring, there are signs of progress that could have a profound impact on the education landscape in Hong Kong.

The current status of Shadow Education in Hong Kong

Shadow education is a booming industry in Hong Kong, with parents spending billions of dollars annually on private tutoring for their children. According to a survey conducted by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups in 2019, more than 70% of primary and secondary school students in Hong Kong received some form of private tutoring. The cost of private tutoring varies depending on the subject and the level of education. Some tutors charge up to HKD 1,000 per hour for their services. The high cost of private tutoring has raised concerns about the growing inequality in Hong Kong's education system.

Most of the Hong Kong parents fully understand the results of their children in public examination will shape their future. Education is one of the main keys that leads to success in Hong Kong, and many believe that those who performed well in public examination will have a higher opportunity to enroll in a prestige university or even accept by some big organizations (Bray, 2013). This kind of concept brings a lot of stress to children in Hong Kong, and it has become one of the reasons why shadow education becomes more demanding throughout the years (Davies and Guppy, 2010). Bray's study on Hong Kong secondary students' time use on shadow education indicated that students in Hong Kong need to take extra classes to fulfill the "no loser" principle (Bray, 2013). According to Bray (2013), Form six (Grade 12) students in Hong Kong tended to spend 4.76 hours per week in tutorial centre during the examination season. Furthermore, there were 71.8% students in 1,624 participants expressed they had tutorial classes during the previous 12 months (Bray, 2013). The results implied that the demanding numbers of private tutoring is a result of the high competitiveness nature in Hong Kong society. The education system and the reality will create the winners and losers, and students try not to be the losers in this game (Bray, 2013). As a result, they would invest a lot in shadow education.

Hong Kong Government's initiatives for regulating shadow education

To address the concerns about the quality and accessibility of shadow education, the Hong Kong government has taken several initiatives to regulate the industry. In 2019, the government introduced new regulations that require private tutors to obtain a license from the government. The regulations also require tutoring centers to register with the Education Bureau. This move was aimed at ensuring that private tutors are qualified and meet certain standards before they can provide their services.

In order to maintain the quality of education in Hong Kong, Hong Kong government sets up some regulations since 2003 (HKSAR, 2020). Those who choose to open tutorial centres in Hong Kong need to be approved by the Hong Kong Education Bureau (Hong Kong Education Bureau, 2013), and those who have been employed by a registered learning centre need to meet the requirements of a “registered or permitted teacher” (Hong Kong Education Bureau, 2013). By doing these actions, the Hong Kong government tries to maintain the quality of Hong Kong shadow education. Further actions was taken to carry out the regulations. For example, 27 people had been prosecuted between 2011 and 2013 because of violating the regulations (Hong Kong Education Bureau, 2013). This shows that there are some actions that has been taken by the government to make sure education in Hong Kong is well-organized.

However, there are some loopholes in the regulations. For example, not all tutorial centres are required to register as a learning centre or ‘school’ in order to provide education. According to Hong Kong Education Bureau (2022), if an organization or establishment provides lessons for more than 20 people during any one day or 8 people at any one time, then that organization or establishment will need to register. There are a number of tutorial centres in Hong Kong do not follow strictly to the regulations, and these rules do not apply to private tutors who conduct one-on-one lesson at student’s place or even fast-food restaurant. As a result, the impact of the regulations are limited. Other than setting up regulations to standardize shadow education in Hong Kong, the government does not involve a lot in this issue. They would rather put more resources on developing curriculum for mainstream schools. Bray and Kwo (2014) state that authorities in Hong Kong have not spoken for private tutors, especially about the roles of private tutors and the roles of tutoring companies. It has made shadow education in Hong Kong somewhat disorganized and heavily depended on teacher’s execution. This has opened a gap for researchers to discuss. Whether Hong Kong government can help to balance the status of shadow educators and mainstream school teachers, and improve the current status of shadow education in Hong Kong.

Research Questions

Most of the research on shadow education focuses on students and teachers’ opinions, but there are other stakeholders’ opinions that may need to be discovered. As Zhang and Bray (2018) discuss, there are

still a lot of areas for education researchers to discover in the world of shadow education.

This study investigates how Hong Kong government can help tutors in Hong Kong, since it has been little research on this topic. As suggested from Yung's research in 2019, tutors often focus on results in exam rather than the process of learning. There may be questions about the choice of this are due to the lack of resources from the government or a selection by the company or maybe there are other reasons behind this. As mentioned in Yung, Bray and Zhang's works, more in-depth data is needed to complete the picture of shadow education in Hong Kong (Zhang and Bray, 2018; Yung, 2020). The following questions are the focuses of this research.

- 1) What is the role of tutors in Hong Kong?
- 2) What kind of government supports that tutors or learning centres would like to have or any kinds of government supports that are useful for the industry?
- 3) Do you think shadow education in Hong Kong is too exam-oriented?

Methodology

This study aims to explore the ways that Hong Kong's government and authorities are paving the way for a brighter future for shadow education. As a result, it is essential to gather opinion from private tutors who are the front-line educators in this industry. Their opinions can help government to know what they need to implement and assist the industry. Qualitative approach is suitable for this topic since it allows researchers to gather in-depth data from subjects (Punch & Oancea, 2014). It can also help to reveal how social actors make sense of the world around them and make this visible to the audience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Furthermore, the flexibility of qualitative studies can highlight how the world is changing and how people are responding to social change (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It can lead the public to understand a particular process, such as social change or cultural change, happens in a specific setting (Connolly, 1998; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). In this research, I encouraged private tutors to express their opinions towards the areas that government can help in Hong Kong shadow education. This can help the authorities to understand what can be done in this field.

Participants and settings

In this study, 10 private tutors were recruited and they are from local franchise learning centres (i.e. famous brand companies) and small learning centres. For private tutors, they have at least 2 years of private tutoring experience in Hong Kong, so they should have enough experience to express their opinions about shadow education in Hong Kong (Yung, 2019). Tutors' opinions are very important in this research since their suggestions can provide some in-sights for Hong Kong authorities.

Snowball sampling was used in this research, as this has been applied in many shadow education research studies (Bray, 2013; Yung, 2019). Snowball sampling starts with a small number of people to help recruit more similar participants for the research, and this type of sampling can show a chain of related participants to this topic (McLean & Campbell, 2003), and this process can accumulate. In the end, there would have been enough participants for the research. Most of my participants were referred by my friends and parents. As for the education background, all of the tutors have at least a bachelor's degree and some of them have a master's degree. They are all currently working as a tutor at a learning centre in Hong Kong, and they have experience in teaching form 6 students.

Interviews

Semi-structure interview was used as major data collection method in this research. Semi-structured interviews can allow participants to express themselves during the interview, and this method allows researchers to find useful information during the interaction (Schmidt, 2004). During the interviews, participants expressed a lot of their self-experience and came up with new ideas towards the research topic, such as how they feel about the Hong Kong education system. As for the mode of the interview, the face-to-face interview can allow the interviewer to observe the changes of the interviewees, such as body language (Savin-Baden, Gourlay, & Tombs, 2010). Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour. For the interview questions, I divided them into three sections. The first part of the interview is about the background of the participants. The participants were required to provide their educational background and personal particulars in this section. This can help to understand more about the participants and compare participants' experiences later in this research. Questions such as "participant's academic background", and "How often did you conduct a lesson at a tutorial centre?", During the interview, participants were encouraged to elaborate more on their answers, so the answers would be clear. There were some follow-up questions during the first half of the interview, such as "Can you elaborate more about the policy that you wish the government can implement? The second part of the interview focuses on the participant's impressions of shadow education. This is the main section of this research since it can help to answer the research questions. Participants answered their opinions towards shadow education. For example, "whether shadow education can help students to improve their academic performance?" For this section, participants used their self-experience and impressions to answer the questions, and pop-up questions occurred as well. I tried to ask participants to further elaborate on topics about "What is the difference between mainstream school and shadow education?", "Do you think Hong Kong needs private tutorial classes for children?" and "Do you think shadow education is more important than mainstream school classes? Why?", since this can help to answer my research questions about the expectation of shadow education and the functions of shadow education in Hong Kong. The final part of the interview focuses on students' life chances. This is about whether participants think shadow education can be the key to changing the education situation in Hong

Kong and whether shadow education can help participants achieve their goals.

Cantonese was used throughout the interview. Since Cantonese is the native language of all the participants, it allows participants to express their thoughts easily. During the interview, an audio recorder was used to record the participant's opinions.

Data analysis

In analyzing qualitative data, thematic analysis was used to analyse the interview data. Thematic analysis can identify patterns and map out the similarities and differences within the data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Furthermore, it can cover cultural, social and structural contexts in qualitative data (Kiger and Varpio, 2020), so it is a very comprehensive method to analyse interview data. The data was analysed through several steps, and they follow Clarke and Braun's model. There are two reasons for choosing Clarke and Braun's model in this research. First, it is a widely used method in qualitative research (Clarke and Braun, 2015; Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Second, Clarke and Braun's model allows researchers to go back to earlier steps if they find new ideas later in the analysis. This can help to maintain the quality of the data and include everything related to this study.

Thematic analysis allows researchers to look into “affective, cognitive and symbolic” areas in the topic (Joffe, 2011). As this can help researchers to look for information relating to these areas, this can make the data results more comprehensive as well as considering all parts of this topic. For this research, through interviewing tutors, I can compare and contrast their opinions and validate the data inside this research. Thematic analysis helps with organizing the data into different areas, such as the impression, expectations and current situation in Hong Kong society. Similar to other qualitative methods, thematic analysis allows researchers to understand the meaning of the collected data and organize them into groups according to people's perceptions, emotions and cognition (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Joffe, 2011).

Another important advantage of thematic analysis is the flexibility of this analyzing method. Thematic analysis is flexible in most qualitative research (Clarke et al., 2015) since it allows researchers to develop themes and codes which are related to their theoretical framework. In this research, because of the flexibility of this method, I can look at all three groups of data and compare them by using the steps in thematic analysis. The accessibility of this method allows me to get access to different groups and find similar and different patterns in data. For example, during step 3 and step 4, I went through data and then I went to see other group's data. In the end, I was able to come up with a new theme for categories. As mentioned by Terry et al., (2017), due to the flexibility and accessibility of this method, it should be for most of the cases in qualitative research and it is also helpful for new qualitative researchers to analyse their qualitative data.

Findings

The themes from the data are shown in Table 1. The themes indicate the responses from private tutors in this research.

Government funding	Workshops	Collaborative platform
Standardized materials	Tutor's qualifications	Tutor's status in Hong Kong
Quality assurance		

Table 1: Themes

Most of the tutors in this research mentioned the Hong Kong government did not provide any funding or assistance to private tutoring industry. As a result, their responses were about governmental supports to this industry. Some of the participants suggested that the government could provide workshops and standard materials for private tutorial centres to share their ideas and improve their teaching qualities. Furthermore, since most of the materials are provided by the government, they can maintain the quality of their services.

As for those who are working in big learning centres (i.e. franchise centres), they focus more on the status of private tutors in Hong Kong. They often indicate it is difficult to recruit new graduates into the industry, since they would rather work at the mainstream schools. In mainstream schools, graduates feel they have a better career prospect and stable salary. Compared to private tutoring, their social status and salary are not the same as mainstream schools.

As for those who are working in local centres, they tended to focus more on materialistic assistance. For example, they proposed to have workshops, materials and trainings for them. However, they are not worried about the status of private tutoring. They understand this is just a part-time job, and they have other full-time positions, such as a clerk. They admitted that there is a difference between mainstream school teachers and learning centre tutors.

Some of the tutors mentioned that the government can help to connect different tutorial centres, since this may help the industry to grow. For example, a collaborative platform for tutors to share ideas and help each other. This can bring different impacts to the industry and may promote positive competitiveness in society.

Discussions

The responses from both groups mentioned the lack of support from government. As mentioned by Bray (2021), the situation is similar in other parts of the world. Shadow education is referred as the "the hidden secret" in society, which government usually do not touch on this area. Nevertheless, it is important

for policymakers to adjust the policies and recognize this area. In Hong Kong, the needs of shadow education are obvious, since more than half of the secondary students need to take extra classes (Bray, 2013; Yung, 2019; Cheng, 2021). Policies should focus on several areas to help the industry, such as funding, status of tutors and materials for reference. These are the areas that participants expressed in this study. To be more specific, government can provide some related schemes for private tutorial centres to apply, and those schemes can help to improve the quality of education and the learning environment of the centre.

One of the prominent themes that emerged from the data is the lack of government funding or assistance to the private tutoring industry. Many tutors expressed their dissatisfaction with the government's lack of support, which they believe hinders the growth and development of the industry. This finding highlights the need for the government to recognize the importance of private tutoring and consider providing financial support or incentives to private tutorial centers. In the following, there are some suggestions that were suggested by participants in this research.

Government financial incentives for private tutors

Grants for Professional Development: The government can offer grants or subsidies specifically designated for private tutors to pursue further education and professional development. Tutors can use these funds to attend workshops, conferences, or training programs that enhance their teaching skills, subject knowledge, or pedagogical approaches. These grants can help offset the costs associated with professional development and encourage tutors to invest in continuous learning.

Tax Incentives: The government can provide tax incentives to private tutors as a means of financial support. For example, tutors may be eligible for tax deductions or credits for expenses related to professional development, instructional materials, or teaching resources. By reducing the financial burden on tutors, the government can encourage them to invest in their professional growth and provide high-quality education services.

Subsidies for Teaching Resources: The government can offer subsidies or grants to private tutors to support the purchase of teaching resources, instructional materials, or technological tools. These subsidies can help tutors access up-to-date and effective teaching resources, which can enhance their teaching methodologies and improve student engagement and learning outcomes.

Health Insurance Subsidies: The government can offer health insurance subsidies to private tutors, particularly those who work independently or do not have access to employer-sponsored health insurance. These subsidies can help tutors afford quality healthcare and reduce their financial burdens, contributing to their overall well-being and job satisfaction.

Educational resources and supports

Another theme that emerged from the data is the suggestion for the government to organize workshops and provide standardized materials for private tutorial centers. Tutors believe that these initiatives would not only enhance their teaching abilities but also promote collaboration and sharing of ideas among tutors. The availability of standardized materials would ensure consistency in teaching quality and help maintain high standards of education provided by private tutors (Yung, 2019; Cheng 2021). Therefore, it is crucial for the government to consider implementing such initiatives to improve the overall quality of private tutoring in Hong Kong.

The status of private tutors in Hong Kong was also a significant concern raised by tutors working in big learning centers. They noted that it is challenging to attract new graduates to the industry, as graduates often prefer to work in mainstream schools due to better career prospects and stable salaries (Bray, 2013; Zhang & Bray, 2018). The lower social status and salary of private tutors compared to mainstream school teachers were identified as factors contributing to this preference. To address this issue, the government could consider initiatives to elevate the status of private tutors, such as recognizing their professional qualifications and providing them with better career prospects and remuneration. Here are some suggested policies from participants in this research.

Professional Recognition: The government can establish a certification or accreditation system for private tutors, similar to the qualifications required for mainstream school teachers. This system can recognize tutors' professional expertise and validate their qualifications. It can include criteria such as educational background, teaching experience, and professional development. By providing official recognition, the government can raise the status of private tutors and enhance their career prospects.

Career Development Opportunities: The government can collaborate with private tutorial centers to develop career development programs for tutors. These programs can include training workshops, seminars, and mentoring initiatives that focus on enhancing teaching skills, pedagogical knowledge, and subject expertise. By investing in the professional development of private tutors, the government can improve their teaching abilities and provide them with opportunities for career advancement.

Collaboration with Mainstream Schools: The government can facilitate partnerships between private tutorial centers and mainstream schools. This collaboration can involve joint projects, sharing of resources and expertise, and opportunities for tutors to work in mainstream schools as guest lecturers or subject specialists. By integrating private tutors into the mainstream education system, the government can enhance their professional standing and provide them with exposure to a wider range of teaching opportunities.

Public Awareness and Recognition: The government can launch public awareness campaigns to highlight the importance and value of private tutors in the education system. These campaigns can educate

the public about the role of private tutors in supporting students' academic progress and emphasize the contributions they make to the education sector. Recognizing the efforts of private tutors publicly can help elevate their status and increase appreciation for their profession.

Collaborative Policies and Regulations: The government can work closely with private tutorial centers to develop policies and regulations that ensure high standards of teaching and learning. This can include guidelines for curriculum development, assessment practices, and student-teacher ratios. By establishing clear standards and regulations, the government can enhance the professionalism of private tutors and promote a sense of accountability in the industry.

Moreover, tutors mentioned the potential benefits of a collaborative platform for tutors to share ideas and support each other. This idea aligns with the concept of a learning community where tutors can exchange best practices, discuss challenges, and foster a sense of camaraderie. A collaborative platform could facilitate knowledge sharing, promote positive competition, and contribute to the overall growth and improvement of the private tutoring industry. The government could play a role in establishing and maintaining such a platform to support tutors and foster a sense of community. It is important to note that implementing these strategies would require collaboration between the government, private tutorial centers, and other stakeholders. By working together, they can create an environment that recognizes the value of private tutors, supports their professional growth, and provides them with better career prospects.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Hong Kong's government and authorities should take steps to regulate and improve the shadow education industry, paving the way for a brighter future for education in Hong Kong. While private tutoring will continue to be popular among parents, the government's initiatives to improve the quality and accessibility of education may reduce the demand for private tutoring in the future (Bray, 2013). The government will need to continue to monitor the industry and take measures to ensure that students receive quality education regardless of their financial background. As mentioned in this research, private learning centres in Hong Kong did not have enough to support for their programmes. This may increase the social inequality in Hong Kong, since those who have more resources may gain more than the others (Zwier et al., 2020). By supporting the shadow education industry, it allows smaller tutorial centres to maintain their teaching standards and benefits the students in a long run. This can also help to balance the educational resources between mainstream school and tutorial centre.

To effectively regulate shadow education, the Hong Kong government will need to take a multi-faceted approach. This includes introducing regulations to ensure that private tutors meet certain standards and that students receive quality education (Yung, 2019). The government should also continue to support students

from low-income families and find ways to reduce the cost of private tutoring for all students. The government should also work closely with schools and educators to reduce the need for private tutoring. This includes improving the quality of teaching in schools, providing support for struggling students, and offering extracurricular activities that can supplement formal education. As for the limitation of this research, only tutors' opinions have been discussed in this research. It would be very interesting if the government officials could have provided their responses and opinions to this issue. This can help to crystalise the picture and able to help with this issue.

References

- Braun V, and Clarke V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qual Res Psychol*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Braun, V., Clarke, V., and Terry, G. (2015). *Thematic analysis*. In P. Rohleder and A. Lyons (Eds.), *Qualitative research in clinical and health psychology* (pp. 95–113). Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Bray, M. (2011). *The Challenge of Shadow Education: Private Tutoring and its Implications for Policy Makers in the European Union*. Brussels: European Commission.
- Bray, M. (2013). Benefits and tensions of shadow education: Comparative perspectives on the roles and impact of private supplementary tutoring in the lives of Hong Kong students. *Journal of International and Comparative Education (JICE)*, 18-30.
- Bray, M., & Kwo, O. (2014). *Regulating private tutoring for public good: Policy options for supplementary education in Asia*. Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre and UNESCO.
- Bray, M. (2021). Shadow education in Europe: Growing prevalence, underlying forces, and policy implications. *ECNU Review of education*, 4(3), 442-475.
- Bryman, A. and Bell, E. (2011). *Business Research Methods* (3rd ed). Oxford et al.: Oxford University Press.
- Cheng, C, H. (2021). A Need or a Force? Shadow Education in Hong Kong From Secondary School Parent’s Perspective. *Curriculum and Teaching*, 36 (1), 37-48.
- Clarke, V., Braun, V., & Hayfield, N. (2015). Thematic analysis. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, 3, 222-248.
- Connolly, P. (1998). ‘Dancing to the wrong tune’: *Ethnography generalization and research on Qualitative Analysis Tools 581 racism in schools*. In P. Connolly & B. Troyna (Eds.), *Researching racism in education: Politics, theory, and practice* (pp. 122–139). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

- Davies, S. & Guppy, N. (2010). *The Schooled Society: An Introduction to the Sociology of Education* (2nd ed.). Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). *Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research*. In Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 1–28.
- Hong Kong Education Bureau (2013). *Records of Contraventions of the References 83 Education Ordinance and Convictions in Respect of Unregistered Schools (since January 2011)*. Retrieved from http://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/other-edu-training/non-formal-curriculum/offences_uts_e.pdf.
- Hong Kong Education Bureau (2022, 13 December). *School registration*. Retrieved from <https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/sch-admin/sch-registration/about-sch-registration/index.html>
- Joffe, H. (2011). *Thematic analysis*. Qualitative research methods in mental health and psychotherapy: A guide for students and practitioners, 209-223.
- Kiger, M. E., and Varpio, L. (2020). Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131. *Medical teacher*, 42(8), 846-854.
- Liu, J. (2012). Does cram schooling matter? Who goes to cram schools? Evidence from Taiwan. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 32, 46 – 52.
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2007). An array of qualitative data analysis tools: A call for data analysis triangulation. *School psychology quarterly*, 22(4), 557.
- McLean, C. A., & Campbell, C. M. (2003). Locating research informants in a multi-ethnic community: Ethnic identities, social networks and recruitment methods. *Ethnicity & Health*, 8(1), 41–61.
- Punch, K. and Oancea, A. (2014). *Introduction to Research Methods in Education*. (2ndEds). London: Sage.

- Savin-Baden, M., Gourlay, L., and Tombs, C. (2010). *Researching in immersive spaces*. In M. Savin-Baden & C. H. Major (Eds.), *New approaches to qualitative research: Wisdom and uncertainty* (pp. 162–171). London, England: Routledge.
- Schmidt, C. (2004). *The analysis of semi-structured interviews. A companion to qualitative research*, 253(41), 253-258.
- Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, 2, 17-37.
- Xue, H., & Ding, X. (2008). An empirical study on private tutoring for students in urban China. *Economics of Education Research (Beida)*, 6, 1 – 14
- Yung, K. W. H. (2020). Problematising students' preference for video-recorded classes in shadow education. *Educational Studies*, 1-8.
- Zhang, W., & Bray, M. (2018). Equalising schooling, unequalising private supplementary tutoring: access and tracking through shadow education in China. *Oxford Review of Education*, 44(2), 221-238.
- Zwier, D., Geven, S., & van de Werfhorst, H. G. (2020). Social inequality in shadow education: The role of high-stakes testing. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 61(6), 412-440.