



Singapore's example of what private tuition businesses should NOT do

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Attempts to help Singapore self-regulate 4 years ago were rejected by private tuition businesses within the island nation on the grounds that there 'was no need at present'. This, despite widespread consumer sentiment that private tuition enterprises needed greater accountability and that a dialogue with parents about tuition would help to raise awareness about the role, relationship to mainstream schooling and need for private tuition.

On three separate occasions, at personal cost, I travelled to Singapore, at the request of separate businesses there, in order to help facilitate self-regulation with a view to:

- Helping businesses benchmark best practice and accountability
- Help the market stop the regulatory push that is coming from governments globally
- Help consumers (parents) have a body with whom there could be a dialogue on private tuition matters

However, rather than engage with the issues and properly consider students and their needs, businesses and their owners sought greedily to maximise on the commercial gains they could make without proper consideration for students, respect for families or mainstream educational institutions.

The result has been that the government of Singapore has passed legislation and now has in operation the CPE (Council for Private Education) law which has imposed stringent requirements on businesses and has led to the closure of 300 enterprises. This body has powers to prosecute and their enforcement actions are listed on their website: <http://www.cpe.gov.sg/enforcement-action>

As a result of the passing of the law, the private tuition market has now become concentrated with a few large players dominating and small, niche enterprises either closing or merging with other businesses. Whilst the effect of this rationalisation has been slightly greater accountability and the closure of a number of shoddy enterprises, the greater effect has been to limit the scope and diversity of tuition offered, and well as to add significant compliance and administrative costs.

Had the providers been less self-interested and more educationally accountable the law would not have been changed. Globally, the private tuition sector has been put on notice: self regulate and act with responsibility or face the prospect of regulation with its increased costs, accountability and constraint.

The CPE is continuing to enforce action and has recently announced a crackdown on misleading advertising. The activities of the CPE can be read about here: <http://www.cpe.gov.sg/news-and-events/cpe-in-the-news>

New book captures trends in tuition

The world's leading academic on private tuition, Professor Mark Bray, has advised the ATA about a new book about shadow education ('private tuition') in Asia. It can be downloaded for free from:

http://www.fe.hku.hk/cerc/Publications/monograph_no_9.htm

Alternatively, the book may be purchased from The Asia Development Bank. Professor Bray is UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education and also the Director, of the Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong.

Many tutors in Australia will find the publication an excellent and interesting read and thus the order form can be found within. Note: the ATA does not make any money from sales of this book and is only promoting it as tutors may find the content of value. Note also that it is available for free download.

Literacy Intervention

What's the verdict...?

The Federal government has spent \$540 million dollars of money over the past 4 years on programs aimed to lift numeracy and literacy rates. This money had been allocated to An Even Start (AES) private tuition program by the previous Liberal government. When Education Minister Peter Garrett was interviewed last year in response to a question from journalist Breanna Tucker (Canberra Times) he said the program only offered short-term benefits and "half of all eligible students missed out".

Tucker reported that his department redirected the funding to the Smarter Schools National Partnerships program, which places literacy and numeracy coaches in schools shown to perform below national benchmarks.

Well, it has been revealed now that the redirected money has had little to no effect on literacy and numeracy rates. There has been NO difference to NAPLAN results among the students targeted for literacy and numeracy intervention. This is a very big waste of nearly half a billion dollars. Garrett suggests that the investment will take 'years to show its effects'.

Perhaps Garrett should look at the positive effects of using tutors for intervention as detailed by the independent assessment of the Tutorial Voucher Initiative (TVI) which was a forerunner to the AES program. The TVI program did not run for years and did not require years for the effects to be felt. They made a discernible difference within 12 - 18 months.

It seems that government policies need to be premised on the twin factors of insight and accountability, rather than narrow ideology and notions of more of the same. After all, the acquisition of basic numeracy and literacy skills is essential for helping students to gain equity and access both now and in the future.

The ATA has always espoused a position of an investment in private tuition with tutors subject to accountability to mainstream educators. In this way literacy and numeracy targets can be subject to proper, structured and accountable forms of intervention which is inclusive of schools and embraces the best that the private market has to offer.

ATA in the Press

NAPLAN

There has been a lot of reporting about the NAPLAN tests and the idea that there are groups boycotting the tests. Schools and teachers have been reported as fearing the accountability that comes with such tests. Parents have been confused again by ACARA duly pronouncing that 'tuition is unnecessary'.

This position confuses parents who hear from their children that teachers are specifically preparing students for the tests. Moreover, teachers have been encouraging students to get tuition.

If tuition helps students to learn to problem solve, identify how to answer questions, and increases the range of strategies that students have when test taking, then how can that tuition be destructive? Surely such tuition helps students to gain confidence and also helps students to improve their general ability. In this way, private tuition benefits students specifically and also generally, and acts an investment in improving national outcomes.

Bethany Hiatt, Education Editor for The West Australia, wrote an article titled, "Demand for tutors amid NAPLAN worry" on 30th April. In her article she states:

Melissa Smith, who runs Lifelong Learners tutoring, said few parents responded last year when she offered NAPLAN preparation for the first time. This year she had a lot of interest with eight additional clients solely to do with NAPLAN and two of her 20 existing clients asked her to focus just on NAPLAN. During the...holidays she taught NAPLAN classes to children in Years 3 and 5 for eight hours a week at about \$40 an hour. Though she explained that NAPLAN tests were to give an accurate reflection of their child's results, mostly to indicate which schools needed extra funding, parents still wanted their child to do well.

Danielle Calleja, from the International Centre for Excellence, said parents often compared their children's NAPLAN results. She was sick of seeing children stressed so she ran NAPLAN classes so they could see what the tests were like.

Australian Tutoring Association chief executive Mohan Dhall said schools were also under pressure because their results were put on the My School website.

Excerpts from B Hiatt, "Demand for tutors as parents worry about NAPLAN", Source: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/thewest/al/-/breaking/13551557/demand-for-tutors-as-parents-worry-about-naplan/> Other sources: K Danks, "Studying won't lift NAPLAN test results", The Daily Telegraph 8.05.12 from <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/sydney-news/studying-wont-lift-naplan-test-results/story-e6freuzi-1226349272402>

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SURVEY

Alongside the discussion about the NAPLAN the Daily Telegraph ran the following survey:

Do teachers use too much time preparing students for NAPLAN tests?

- Yes: 77.28% (2,704 votes)
- No: 22.72% (795 votes)

World News

As can be expected, there is much news from around the world.

Canada

In Canada, Jennifer Roselli from TutorDoctor reports as follows:

“Despite a rough economy over the past few years, private tuition in Canada has grown year-over-year amongst students, families and adults. As Canada adapts to the new realities of constant change, the one thing that hasn’t changed is the importance of education, how we all learn differently and how the right tutor can help bridge any gaps a student might have.”

Singapore

The activities of the Council for Private Education (CPE) tends to dominate the news from Singapore. An article appeared recently that indicates that the issue of misleading advertising is now subject to scrutiny:

CPE issues Advertising Code for private schools

Private education institutions with misleading advertisements will now be taken to task with a new code that takes effect on 9 July.

The Council for Private Education (CPE) said the code establishes ground rules for responsible advertising by private education institutions to better protect consumers.

For private schools like Kaplan, the new code will not have much effect on its current advertisements as it has always complied with the advertising code. Amy Tee, marketing director, Kaplan City Campus@ Wilkie Edge, said: “We are very mindful and very cautious in whatever we put in our communication. For example, “World’s best”, “Number one in Singapore” - we do not quote all these disclaimers or put these disclaimers in our communication, advertising or marketing material unless there are sources that prove that we do have this accreditation.”

Ms Tee said formalising the Code means there will not be any disparity in messaging. Under the code, the institutes must ensure advertisements do not contain false claims about the source or course fees. They must provide documentary proof of the claims in their ads and must not discredit competitors. The code was developed in consultation with the institutions and members of the public.

It applies to all types of advertisements and commercial communications such as brochures, pamphlets, posters, banners which are used to promote their courses and services to students or prospective students.

The Council said examples of misleading advertisements include the use of superlatives like “No. 1” and “100% student satisfaction” when the claim cannot be substantiated, and facility photographs that are not of the institution’s own premises.

Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) said its advisory council Advertising Standards Authority of Singapore (ASAS) has seen 60 cases since January 2009 related to misleading advertisements from such institutions.

The cases include feedback, enquiries and filed cases. Examples include falsely advertising a degree or claiming it’s the top school without proof. And while CASE does not see an increasing trend in such ads over the years, there is still cause for concern.

Seah Seng Choon, executive director, Consumers Association of Singapore, said: “We do not want our consumers to be misled by them. Usually the amount the consumer pays to acquire such a degree or diploma can be substantial. Very often than not, if the consumer is misled, there is a possibility that they may not even recover their fees.”

The new code also stipulates stricter disciplinary action, compared to when the ads were monitored by CASE. With the effect of this code, private education institutions with misleading ads will see harsher penalties. Whereas previously, they may have had to remove or modify their ad, they will now face fines or even imprisonment. For instance, under section 46(1) of the Private Education Act, any person convicted of knowingly or recklessly issuing or publishing any false or misleading advertisement about a Private Education Institute shall be liable to a fine of up to S\$5,000, or to imprisonment for up to six months, or both.

Source: <http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1194178/1/html>

South Korea

Kim Bo-eun writes about the focus that parents in South Korea have about tuition drawing from a survey conducted by the one of the nation’s largest private tuition providers. The article can be read below:

Seven out of 10 parents are worried that their children may fall behind if they do not get enough private tutoring. The finding was based on a survey of 517 parents by Yoon’s English Institute, one of the nation’s largest privately-run English education academies. The poll discovered that 72.1 percent of the respondents were obsessed with the education for their children that takes place outside of school. The survey indicated that parents have been heavily weighed down by rapidly changing education policies as well as the private tutoring craze.

Eighty percent of parents in the affluent southern Seoul, where fervor for education is sky high, answered that they are extremely preoccupied with private tutoring for their children. In northern Seoul, 71.9 percent of parents said that they feel stress about private tutoring. And 71.3 percent of parents in Gyeonggi Province and Incheon City responded the same way.

About 23 percent said they send their children to cram schools, believing that private tutoring would improve their academic capabilities. Another 22.5 percent said they let their children get private tutoring because other parents do so. And 18.5 percent said they pay for private tutoring for their children to enter prestigious universities and land decent jobs after graduation.

Some parents (11.5 percent) said they longed for the satisfaction of seeing their children receive a better education than they did. Others (11 percent) responded that they felt guilty that they were only able to provide the minimum for their children.

As for the impact of such an obsession, 29.5 percent said they expect better grades from their children, and 29 percent responded that they are under significant levels of stress. Some said they felt they weren’t providing enough for their children, at 25.7 percent.

Another repercussion cited by 18.2 percent was that parents

increase expenditures on private education even if it is a strain on themselves. A mere 2.9 percent said they are too preoccupied with their children's education.

The high levels of stress caused by private education for their children are having harmful effects on the health of parents. Survey results showed 22.5 percent had experienced physical symptoms from stress regarding private education, and headaches were the most common of them, taking up 27.4 percent. Another 22.6 percent suffered depression and 17.9 percent experienced indigestion. Other symptoms included apathy (13.1 percent), insomnia (9.5) and hair loss (7.1).

Obsessed parents were found to spend an average 345,000 won on private tutoring for their kids, about 1.5 times the amount spent by parents who were not obsessed. When asked whether their children's grades would rise in proportion to the money they spent on private education, 61.2 percent responded "yes" while 7.9 percent disagreed.

Source: Kim Bo-eun, "Parents obsessed with private tutoring" bkim@koreatimes.co.kr

Taiwan

It is currently summer in Taiwan and students are enjoying their summer break. A recent survey in Taiwan revealed that the costs of private tuition are a significant factor that parents consider when deciding which activities their children are to undertake during their holiday break. Second to family travel, tuition is very popular during the break. More about the survey can be read about below.

Approximately 40 percent of parents are reducing the budgets for their children's summer activities because of the rising costs of living, according to the results of a recent survey. Twenty-three percent of parents, meanwhile, have not allocated a budget for their children to take part in summer camps this year. The survey reveals that when arranging summer activities for their children, 76 percent of parents will consider their content and 44 percent will look at the costs involved. Family travel is the most popular summer activity, favored by 56 percent of parents, followed by private tuition and talent classes. The survey was conducted by the King Car Education Foundation on 1,152 parents and 1,201 students between fourth grade and sixth grade. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Source: Hsu Chih-wei and Y.F. Low, "Parents cut budgets for summer activities amid rising costs: survey", from http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=1939349

Vietnam

Vietnam is undergoing very rapid change, including a very significant national investment in education. Coupled with this investment is a rise in a new sector – the private tuition market. As education is very highly valued and there are very limited university places, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is raising concerns about the some aspects of the growing market for private after school-hours tuition.

One of the issues is that of taxation – how can the cash economy be held to account? A second issue relates to whether teachers can survive on a wage from mainstream teaching alone. The issue is discussed below:

The draft regulation by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) says that teachers have to pay tax for private tutoring. Experts, though believing that private tutors are high income earners who should be taxed, still have doubts about the feasibility of the attempted regulation.

T, a teacher of a high school in Hanoi, related that 10 years ago, when moving from a northern province to Hanoi, she had to stay

at a relative's home. Several months later, she borrowed money to buy a small house located on a small alley. Two years ago, she not only paid off all the debts, but also had money to buy a 100 square meter apartment. At a meeting with friends on Tet holiday, T revealed that she was going to buy a car which she would drive to school and private tutoring classes.

T said that her school is now a famous school, and she does not have many tutoring classes, therefore, her income is modest. "My friends, who teach at famous schools, can earn nearly 100 million VND a month, which is enough to buy a luxury scooter," she said.

T, like many other teachers, does not live on the salaries they get from the state budget, but from the tuitions they collect at extra classes.

A teacher of the Le Quy Don High School said that in general, teachers in big cities can earn big money from extra classes. Besides, they also get money from parents for "sensitive reasons". A paradox has existed that the teachers of primary schools can earn more money than university lecturers. It is because primary school teachers can provide private tutoring, while university lecturers cannot.

Analysts say nearly 100 percent of high school students go to private tutoring classes, because they have to attend the university entrance exams, the most important exams in students' lives.

"Those teachers, who do not have private tutoring classes, can teach at people founded schools, which can bring the income high enough to live in comfortable circumstances," the teacher of Le Quy Don school said.

Meanwhile, a student of the Giang Vo Secondary School, said that she and the other 59 classmates go to extra classes three times a week. With the tuition of 30,000 VND per private lesson, her teacher can earn 9 million VND from the class alone.

"The teacher's income must be much higher than 9 million VND, because she also gives private tutoring to other students as well," she said.

A parent whose son is studying at Trung Tu Primary School, said that the teacher of his son can earn 43-48 million VND a month from the two private tutoring classes. Meanwhile, in Vietnam, those, who have the monthly income of 10 million VND are considered "high income earners."

Tutors to be taxed?

An official of MOET said that collecting tax is the job of the finance ministry, not the education ministry. Therefore, the tax payment has been stipulated in the draft regulation on private tutoring management as a principle that all teachers must follow.

However, doubts have been raised about the feasibility of the regulation on taxing tutors. The problem is that no ministry or branch knows exactly about the real income of teachers. Students pay teachers in cash and many income items are not reported. Therefore, there is no ground for the taxation bodies to tax tutors. However, some teachers have said that they would accept to pay tax, because all the citizens have to obey the laws.

"Once you pay tax, this means that you provide a healthy service with the permission from the State," TK, a teacher of the Khuong Thuong secondary school in Hanoi said.

Source: Tien phong, "MOET attempts to force teachers to pay tax for private tutoring" <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/en/education/19004/moet-attempts-to-force-teachers-to-pay-tax-for-private-tutoring.html>

Greece

Greece is undergoing significant political turmoil and this is having an impact on the social fabric of the society. Private education and education generally has always been very highly valued in Greece. George Hagitegas, the first President of the European Network of Educational Support (ENES), said

“ENES is arranging for the formal presentation of models of supplementary (‘supportive’) private education which represents the competent bodies of the European Union next October. The Education Committee of the European Union (EU) is planning political action about the phenomenon of ‘shadow education’ which is important in many European countries. The management of ENES is gathering reports of problems that exist in issues of competition from all European countries. A common issue and a serious problem in all the reports of member countries (France, Austria, Germany, Portugal, Turkey and Cyprus) is the black market in educational services that competes in illegal ways with the legitimate businesses of private education providers. For this reason, the President of ENES, George Hagitegas, has travelled to many European countries to protest and to raise awareness to the local governments that disguise the effects of the black market. Recently ENES has encouraged youth organisations from several European countries to conduct a major world conference in Greece in June 2013.

The blog of ENES is available at online at <http://enes.eu.com> . Here any significant information and improvements about the activities of supplementary education providers from around the world are reported”.

Apart from this report summarising the activities of ENES, a new phenomenon is occurring in Greece with a group of volunteer tutors starting to provide free tuition to students. This can be read about in the article below.

Greece on the breadline:

Pooling resources to provide an education

Jon Henley meets the tutors giving free lessons to children who can’t afford the tuition needed to get into university. Ever since anyone can remember, Greek schoolchildren hoping to get into university have relied on extra out-of-school tuition to pass their school leaving exams with good enough grades.

It is, any Greek parent with children of school age will tell you, generally accepted that the state school system is not enough to ensure you a place in further education.

The same goes for learning foreign languages, for music lessons, or simply, for some students, to stay abreast of routine schoolwork. So a whole parallel system has grown up; after-school tuition has become the norm for most Greek children at some stage in their school lives.

It takes place either one-to-one, or more often in classes at private tuition centres (the Greek word is frontistirio). There are hundreds of these; they teach languages, give extra lessons to weaker students, and prepare everyone for competitive national exams.

But they don’t come cheap. Harris Xanthopoulos, a father of two boys aged 11 and 15, said the cost can range from €300-400 a month for lower-school language teaching up 600-900 for final-year high school students seeking to go to university.

That’s a lot for most Greek families, even assuming both parents work. When salaries have been cut by a quarter (as many have), taxes have multiplied and someone has lost their job, it’s impossible. Xanthopoulos, a mechanical engineer by training, has seen his small business dwindle to all but nothing; his wife’s salary has been slashed.

“We just couldn’t afford it any more,” he said. “My younger son, Vassilis, is dyslexic and has had extra tutoring to make sure he can follow in class since he was young. It cost us €450 a month; the Greek state has never provided that kind of special needs teaching. Last year we had to stop. Vassilis started falling behind almost straightaway.”

Tutorpool began with a single tweet last December. Silia Vitoratou, a statistician, began tutoring a couple of children in her neighbourhood for free whose parents were in difficulties. She tweeted her frustration at how unjust it was that some children were now losing out, and about how satisfying it felt to have helped out.

“Within a couple of hours, I had 40 offers of help,” she said. “I made a simple Google map, pinning each volunteer’s name to a location and saying which subjects they could teach, and when they could teach them. We were up and running literally a week after that first tweet.”

Tutorpool now has 500 volunteer tutors around the country and as far afield as Finland (Tutorpool aims to find local matches where possible, but long-distance tutoring is common and done by Skype). The organisation’s website, built by volunteers, enables parents to log on and see what subjects available where, and tutors to see who is looking help and of what kind.

So far, all tutoring has been one-to-one; the group hopes soon to be able to offer group sessions, but is hampered by legal and licensing requirements it is doing its best to work around. But the site has had

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over 200,000 hits to date, and nearly 300 families are registered for help.

“It’s appalling, of course it’s appalling, that we have to do it at all,” said Agathi Papanoti, an archaeologist who tutors Latin, Ancient Greek and history. “We shouldn’t be needed. But as long as we are, we can do something. Anger isn’t enough any more; we have to find new ways of making things work, help each other out.”

It’s rewarding for tutors, too. Marianna Roumelioti, a careers counsellor and Tutorpool tutor, said that when you “get an email from a 17 year-old, stressed because his exams are coming, and he knows his parents are behind with the rent so they can’t to afford the classes he needs ... When he realises you can help – that’s gives you a full feeling.”

Along similar lines, a group of music teachers have recently started a social music school. Their representative didn’t want to be named (“We are a collective; we work together”), but said that the only music taught in most Greek state schools was theory.

“There are two state music schools, conservatories, in Athens and Thessaloniki, and both are currently being shut down,” she said. “If you want to learn an instrument, you pretty much have to have private lessons. Fewer and fewer people can.”

The school, which operates from premises donated by assorted theatres, associations and even a company or two, gave its first classes last month. Some 90 volunteer music teachers now teach singing, piano, guitar, violin, cello and percussion to more than 150 students, both children and adults. More than 250 are waiting to join.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2012/mar/14/greece-breadline-pooling-education-resources>

Consumer protection

In NSW the Office of Fair Trading reported a sharp decrease in the number of tuition-related complaints. Only ten were recorded in the past financial year. The Press Release issued by the Office of Fair Trading was joined by a release from the ATA on May 8th. Despite the reduction in the number of consumer complaints, the ATA has heard had a spike in complaints. These include the following complaints against businesses that tutor – none of which are ATA members:

- A situation where a student was locked in a tuition centre after-hours for an hour while the security alarm sounded, traumatising the boy. The owner took no personal responsibility but blamed the boy.
- A business that did not provide a tutor left a student unattended for an hour and did not give a reason for the tutor’s non-attendance. In this case the parents’ response was extremely unreasonable and the police and security had to be called. However, the situation could have been ameliorated prior to it escalating with a more proactive response from the business.
- An on-line tuition business has refused to offer a refund to a client for non-delivery of a service worth nearly \$1800. This is currently being investigated.

Whilst none of the businesses involved are ATA members, the behaviour of some tuition businesses can negative affect and tarnish all tuition businesses. It is therefore very important for ATA members to actively promote the ATA Code, encourage calm dispute resolution and aim for harmonious client relationships.

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Burma (Myanmar)

As political change sweeps through the nation, the question of teacher wages has been raised. Currently teachers earn about 50,000 Kyats (or \$60AUD) per month and need to engage in supplementary tuition in order to earn a decent wage. The Education Ministry is looking at increasing basic teaching wages, however there is a concern that this will negatively impact the private tuition market. Private tuition has been a feature of the education system for over 20 years. There is a question about whether the impact will be felt without a revision of the syllabus and an increase in teacher standards generally.

United Arab Emirates (UAE)

The government of the UAE has made tuition illegal in response to some serious issues and concerns facing the sector. Businesses aiming to enter the market cannot state that they are 'tutoring' but need to find alternative nomenclature. The issue can be read about below.

Dubai: Lawyers and education officials have stressed to parents that anyone who works as a private teacher is doing so illegally, after a series of court cases involving tutors accused of molesting their pupils. At least 11 cases have been prosecuted in the Dubai criminal courts since January last year. The most recent involves a tutor accused of molesting four girls aged between seven and 11.

In a case last week in the Dubai Criminal Court of First Instance, an Egyptian clerk was accused of molesting three girls he had been teaching for three years. Many parents are tempted to hire private teachers to give their children more personalised learning. But UAE law prohibits such teachers, according to the Ministry of Education. Teaching visas are issued only to teachers affiliated to schools, and private citizens cannot sponsor them. Anyone teaching privately is breaking immigration laws by not working for their visa sponsor or not having a visa at all. Even an imam who gives Quran lessons can do so only if registered to an emirate's Islamic affairs department and if the lessons are conducted in the mosque.

"There will be no refuge for those who practise this outside their current scope and without the permission of Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA)," said Mohammed Darwich, the chief of regulations and compliance commission of the KHDA. The consequences could include a prison sentence, according to Dr Ali al Jarman, a Dubai-based managing partner at Prestige Advocates.

"They can be charged with illegal employment under a different sponsor, which carries deportation, jail time and a heavy fine," he said. "The parents can be prosecuted and be fined up to Dh50,000 and face jail and deportation."

Most schools offer after-hours programmes to help children who needed extra attention, education officials say.

"Even if there is a weakness in the child's learning, there are competent and authorised institutions to do tutoring, but not in a teacher's home," said a spokesman for the Sharjah Education Zone.

Abdullah Amin, of the Sharjah Education Zone, said only a few private tutors were properly trained. Many were university students and others used visit visas, he said. He warned that licensed teachers who were found guilty could be banned from teaching and that people on visit visas would be deported.

Schools in the UAE have recorded that more than 60 per cent of their pupils from Grade 10 and up sought after-school support, according to Professor Mark Bray, the author of *Confronting the Shadow Education System: What Government Policies for What Private Tutoring?*

"Some parents feel that they are being a good parent if they send their children for tutoring - and if they do not, they have a finger pointing at them," he said. Private tutoring cannot be eliminated but can be regulated, he added. "There is a need to raise awareness with parents and address the concept that you are a good parent if you send them for tutoring," he said.

"KHDA is in the process of conducting a thorough study, involving other concerned parties [including schools, pupils and parents] and looking at the larger picture with a view to drafting regulations for this sector if deemed necessary. At all times, the recommendations for the policy will seek to enhance education provision in general," Mr Darwich said. "KHDA encourages schools to take a keen interest in the student's learning and development so that the students do not need private tutoring."

A report released last year by the Abu Dhabi Department for Economic Development said that 27 per cent of Emirati families hired private tutors, spending on average Dh1,436 per month.

Source: Awad Mustafa, "Private tutors are illegal, parents told" <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/education/private-tutors-are-illegal-parents-told>, 16.01.2012

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