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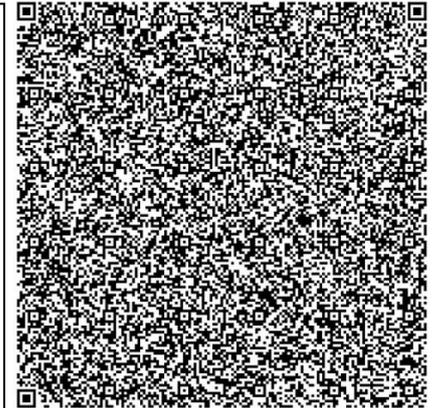
Shadow Education as a Supplementary Learning Tool: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract

In the 20th century, the widespread growth of private tutoring in India has emerged as a significant phenomenon within the education system, where students seek to address their academic difficulties, a practice often referred to as 'shadow education'. As a supplementary educational resource, private tutoring operates alongside the formal schooling system. Students benefit from various advantages of 'shadow education', such as addressing academic deficiencies, preparing for exams, and receiving increased personalized attention. This research paper explains the multifaceted role of private tutoring in India, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges of shadow education and the problems students face within the education system. This paper contributes to the understanding of this crucial aspect by discussing the opportunities and challenges of shadow education, as well as its impact on students' academic achievement and personalized learning based on existing literatures. This paper reveals some critical issues, such as increased mental stress on students, educational inequality, and the privatization of education. Finally, the result is that the benefits of shadow education can be extended to all, with proper regulation and utilization, ensuring equal opportunities and acting as a complementary tool to formal education. Otherwise, its unregulated use can create risks within the education system, exacerbate educational inequality, and hinder social progress.

Key Words: Shadow education, rote learning, elimination of inequality, ready-made notes, Commercialization of Education.



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INTRODUCTION:

In keeping with formal education, shadow education has now made teaching and disseminating

knowledge simpler. Shadow education has emerged as a contemporary and significant form in this setting, in addition to being an alternate system. This kind of instruction can be recognized as a student-centred approach because of its adaptability and activity. These characteristics resemble those of student-centred education. Theoretically, pupils' academic performance both online and offline is currently improved via shadow schooling. There is a significant trend among parents where they spend a lot of money on supplementary tuition or coaching for their children. But they are indifferent to the fact that when they are getting the same education in formal education, then why do they need extra coaching? (Bray, 2009). Students' competition has become so fierce that, in order to remain in mainstream education, they have developed the belief that additional coaching is the only method to achieve higher grades. (Bray, 2013; Bray & Kwo, 2013). Students attempt to briefly memorize the teacher's notes in order to get good grades without really grasping any subject. Without any effort or concern, parents keep their kids interested in their studies; with all these resources, it is evident that each student has several coaches or private tutors. Shadow Education serves as a support not only as an alternative, but also for underperforming students in traditional educational institutions. Capable of

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meeting academic needs in a variety of competitive exams, including West Bengal Civil Service (WBCS), National Eligibility Test (NET), Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) etc.,

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

In the present times the prevalence of shadow education has increased immensely along with formal education. Although the need for these supplementary tutoring is a blessing for weak students, its positive outlook is not seen in all cases. But it also helps in restructuring the learning behavior of students and eliminating the knowledge. The Ministry of Education (2024) has said that certain guidelines and policies should be followed by private tutors so that the quality of education does not decrease. Although students in urban areas get the benefits of shadow education, there is a high level of educational reluctance among rural boys and girls. If the positive aspects of shadow reduction are highlighted in rural areas while mainstreaming the quality standards, then rural students will also be able to participate in education at the same level as urban students.

Shadow education in Indian context: -

Essentially, shadow education is a similar support to formal education to achieve academic success, but it is a system that requires pay to play. The prevalence of all these coaching or private tuition in India has increased tremendously in the last two decades.

Statistical data: -

1. Educational competition is more prevalent among students in urban areas, with 35 to 40% of them taking private tuition to keep up in the competition (Pratham, 2018).
2. The picture of this educational competition among children in rural areas is somewhat different from that in urban areas, with only 18 to 22% of them interested in taking private tuition (ASER, 2019).
3. The ASER 2022 report has revealed significant information: students studying in government schools have a greater inclination towards private tuition than those in private schools. The report shows that 29.7% of private school students and 30.9% of government school students participate in private tuition.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Bhandari, B. L. (2022) conduct his study on, “teachers’ and students’ attitudes toward shadow education in teaching and learning English”. The study was conducted in the context of Rupandehi district of Nepal. The researcher used unstructured interview method to collect data. The study found that shadow education has both negative and positive effects on both students and teachers in language learning.

Hayat, M. S., & Ali, D. M. A. (2025) Studied on “effect of shadow education on students’ academic achievement at secondary level”. The researchers investigated to see in their study, the effect between the two groups of students who are receiving private tuition and the students who are not receiving private tuition. They used descriptive research design in their study. By the applying stratified sampling technique, they studied 300 students and concluded that the academic success of students receiving shadow education is higher than that of those not receiving tuition.

Hegedűs, G., & Csépes, I. (2024) Work on “Participation in shadow education in church- and state-maintained schools: The role of cultural and social capital”. In this study the researchers have used quantitative survey and data are collected by covariance sampling the main objective was to explore the relationship between supplementary language tutoring and cross sectional learners this study reveal there is a positive relationship between the tendency of educated mothers to receive shadow education in their children.

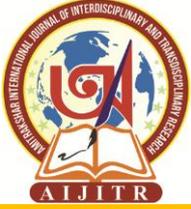
Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai 200234, China, & Li, J. (2020) conducted a study on “Substitution or complementation: The relationship between school education and shadow education”. Based on PISA-2015 data, an attempt has been made to examine the relationship between school education and shadow education in four regions of China, Beijing Shanghai Jiangsu and Guangdong. The researcher used two stage stratified sampling in this study. This study found that the tendency of rural students to receive private student is much higher than that of urban students and they the quality of rural education is much lower due to shadow education

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To investigate the opportunities of shadow education.
2. To assess the challenges that students face in shadow education.
3. To bridge the challenges and opportunities of shadow education

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researchers conducted the study based on qualitative data, that is why they collected data from various authentic sources. The researchers relied on books, research articles, reports published by the government etc. for all the information provided in their study.



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ANALYSIS:

1. TO INVESTIGATE THE OPPORTUNITIES OF SHADOW EDUCATION.

- **Personalized roadmap:** Each student has a unique learning style, and by using an individualized approach, teachers can design an education system that is appropriate for their students. In this manner, teachers can devote adequate time to each student by developing individual roadmaps for them.
- **Flipped Classroom:** In the digital age, a great advantage of shadow education or private tuition is the arrangement of a flipped classroom. The teacher highlights the complex issues through projectors, animation, models, etc. That is, the use of modern technology with traditional education can create an educational environment suitable for learning.
- **Visualization:** When the subject is presented in front of the students through a flowchart or diagram, they can easily collect the intended information. There is an opportunity to provide information by explaining life in the light of practical experience. It is very easy to try to solve complex issues in a simple way.
- **Tracking Performance Report:** Short-term assessment, mock tests—all these evaluation methods can be used to track the performance or achievement of the students. Teachers can take proper measures by taking necessary measures. Another significant advantage of the Tracking Performance Report is that parents can be sure about the situation of their children.
- **Peer tutoring:** To make the teaching-learning process more effective, peer tutoring can be organized with advanced students. This allows students to openly discuss and solve their problems and keep pace with the mainstream of education.
- **Remedial tutorial activities:** Students who lag behind in formal education can bring themselves up to the level of their classmates with the help of shadow education. There are many topics in textbooks that are not easily understood by students in a regular classroom; in such cases, slow learners can benefit from extra coaching or private tuition.
- **Reflective environment:** Inspiration and emulation are key features in helping students achieve success in private tuition. Group or individual inspiration from the teacher encourages the students. Through emulation, a reflective environment is created by increasing attention, developing regular study habits, and completing homework. Simultaneously, the success of one student paves the way for the success of other students.

2. TO ASSESS THE CHALLENGES THAT STUDENTS FACE IN SHADOW EDUCATION.

- **Obstacles to latent development:** "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man" (Vivekananda, 1947, p. 358). A child is born with latent talents, and through education, these potentials are developed, enabling the child to attain a complete personality. However, shadow education currently fails to foster the development of a child's talents because the complete development of an individual requires a suitable and authentic environment, which shadow education is unable to provide for children.
- **Ready-made:** Children memorize conventional notes without verifying or analysing the information. Without reaching a level of understanding, there is no connection between this information and real-life experiences. These coaching centres prepare notes in advance for the students, and the students are forced to memorize them without understanding. After the exams, these notes hold no importance for the students. The same notes are given to students year after year.
- **Exam-oriented:** Education is currently being treated as an exam-oriented program. This trend is observed not only among students but also among parents. Students enrol in private tuition for specific exams. They prioritize passing exams over practical application.
- **Commercialization of Education:** Education should be free and compulsory (RTE Act, 2009). Education should never be considered a commodity; it should not be treated as something to be bought and sold for economic profit (UNESCO, 2015). Nevertheless, to improve academic performance, students enrol in extra coaching classes for a fee, in addition to their formal education. In many cases, it is observed that school teachers directly or indirectly influence them to do so.
- **Mental Stress:** Students' learning abilities are not the same for everyone. In any classroom, there are some students who are slow learners, while others can easily grasp complex concepts. Ignoring this difference, private tuition centres provide the same teaching methods for all students. Studying in this generalized pattern, the subjects become a burden for the students instead of being enjoyable. They constantly experience mental stress, which can lead to a loss of mental balance.



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- **Social Isolation:** One of the main reasons for the progress of society is the proper practice of social characteristics. A miniature society is represented by the school (Dewey,1899). Educational institutions bring together students from different cultures and communities. However, shadow education places more emphasis on small group or individual teaching, which prevents the development of social characteristics such as interaction, tolerance, and empathy among students. Gradually, they isolate themselves from society.
 - **Banking Theory:** Shadow education exhibits a one-way approach to learning. Although this concept was followed in education initially, modern education systems do not prioritize the one-way flow of information. In this concept, the student is merely a passive observer; their experiences and opinions are disregarded. The information provided by the teacher is stored in the students' brains. While students may be able to use this information theoretically when needed, there is no opportunity for practical application (Freire, 1970).
 - **Decline in the importance of formal education:** Traditional education not only develops social characteristics but also ensures the holistic development of the child. It increases the child's and individual's receptiveness and shapes them into social beings (Durkheim,1956). The increasing influence of unregulated shadow education is diminishing the importance of formal education. Students are increasingly prioritizing private tuition over attending school.
 - **Educational inequality:** Alongside social inequality, educational inequality is also observed among students. Children from financially well-off families have access to multiple 'extra coaching' opportunities, and it is not possible for all parents to afford the quality private tuition or personal coaching available. Children from rural areas, in particular, fall significantly behind in educational competition.
 - **Individualistic flaws:** The majority of shadow education is organized for children on an individual basis. Although modern education emphasizes individualism, the way private tuition or coaching centres follow the principle of individualism is not the same. By treating the child in an unstructured way, both society and the child are facing challenges. This type of individualistic education makes the child more selfish and self-centred.
- ### 3. TO BRIDGE THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF SHADOW EDUCATION.
- **Enhance quality:** The quality of formal education has declined to a great extent, changes need to be made in the infrastructure and teaching methods of the institutions. Instead of forcing students to memorize some knowledge and information, arrangements should be made for discussing the problems of the students, encouraging them to participate in the programs, using projectors, etc. If the quality is not improved, students will not be retained in school. The quality of institutional education should be improved to create a positive attitude towards formal education in students.
 - **Application of digital:** In the era of modern technology, the positive aspects of digital devices should be applied in Education. modern technology should be organized in the evaluation system and it should be ensured that students come forward for spontaneous participation. Digital devices play a significant role in maintaining the attention of students therefore, the teacher should ensure infrastructural development and provide overall support to the students.
 - **Elimination of Inequality:** National Education Policy (2020) has insisted for equity for every student in the school and bringing everyone under the same umbrella. Discriminatory education leads to decentralisation of students, inclusivity decreases. They take admission in various coaching centres or private tuition in exchange for money. To eliminate inequality in education, education should be taken forward by giving equal importance to both inclusivity and equity.
 - **Policy making:** State governments should take strict action against unscrupulous coaching centres with poor infrastructure so that children do not fall into their trap. Certain guidelines should be laid down. Ministry of education (2024) has fixed some roadmap for private tuitions regarding the safety and future of students. Strict measures should be taken and implemented to ensure the student-teacher ratio in educational institutions.
 - **Refresher course:** To improve the teaching behaviour of teachers, they should be encouraged to participate in Refresher course. A suitable environment should be created so that teachers can do refresher course during summer vacation, weekend. As a result, it is possible to present the subject in front of the students in an easy and fluent manner.

CONCLUSION: -

Although shadow education emerged to play a supporting role in formal education. Its relevance can be seen to a sufficient extent at present. There is a need for supplementary tutors to provide support to all the weak students who face various problems during their studies. But in some cases, it is seen that unscrupulous businessmen have turned



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education into a commodity. They have rotated education into a means of investment to fulfil their own interests. Even though these shortcomings have been mentioned in various reports, the government should take appropriate steps immediately to address the problems of shadow education. There are various positive aspects of shadow education but if the shortcomings are not properly addressed, institutional education will lose its quality.

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