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Causes and impacts of private tuition in mauritius- a stakeholder analysis

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Abstract

Payment-based private supplementary tutoring is a growing phenomenon in Mauritius especially among students who prepare for competitive qualifying examinations such as the Primary school achievement certificate (PSAC), National Certificate of Education (NCE), Cambridge School certificate (SC) and Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC). Private tuition in Mauritius is one of the major educational challenges as it goes against the conception of providing free education at all levels ranging from primary to university levels. The aim of this paper is to examine the phenomenon of private tuition in relation to its causes and impacts. Thus, a mixed methodology was used with two distinct phases. Phase one with a quantitative stance, captured the perceptions of 600 students through an amended version of TIMSS students' questionnaire consisting of standardised set of items. The second phase with a qualitative stance consisted of a stakeholder analysis using open group discussions. Analysis of the data collected during the two phases revealed that there are two school of thoughts, where one justifies private tuition evidencing that generally tuition educators show higher level of professionalism in terms of class management, pedagogy, evaluation, feedback, monitoring, moral support, pastoral care and subject content knowledge compared to school educators. They believe that private tuition is significantly correlated with academic success. In addition to teacher factor, this paper explores how school and school leadership, the actual education system and parents are actually drivers of private tuition in Mauritius. However, the second school of thought believed that private tuition is shadowing the school system and is gangrening the Mauritian society.

Keywords: Private tuition, TIMSS students' questionnaire, stakeholder analysis.

I. Introduction

Private tuition lies deep in our local history and is arguably the most intriguing phenomenon of the Mauritian education system. However, analysis of the existing literature revealed that despite the multiple implications of private tuition ranging from pedagogical, psychological, social, economic, political, historical and even cultural, private tuition is an area that has only received limited research attention in the Mauritian context. In fact, the reasons for the dependence of the Mauritian students on private tuition remain largely unexplored.

Actually, there are two schools of thought where one justifies its role in improving students' academic performance whereas the other explained that private tuition has turned into a shadow system posing a challenge to the regular formal system of education. Bray (2013) stated that in an ideal world, private tuition is meant to