

Gender-Based Inequalities in Shadow Education Participation at Secondary Education Level in Haryana: An Analysis

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Abstract:

This study, on the basis of a comprehensive primary survey, investigates whether gender constitutes an important variable while parents make choice of shadow educational options for their offspring at secondary education level in Haryana (India). The findings of the study exhibit that a sizable proportion (i.e. 43.93 per cent) of the sampled students under the study accessed to shadow education in 2018–19, and the existence of the shadow education at such a level has led to reproduce profoundly the issue of gender-based inequalities. Thus, while 56.52 per cent of the male students were attending the private tuitions, the corresponding figure for their female counterparts was 33.71 per cent. Besides, an analysis of household spending on secondary education in Haryana also exhibited a strong pro-male gender bias at the household level.

Key words: shadow education, forms of tuition providers, gender, region, type of school, household expenditure.

Introduction :

Globally, shadow education (or “private tutoring) is demanded to enhance the academic performance of the students pursuing formal education (Baker et al. 2001). Studies (Bray 2006; Bray et al., 2014) view this form of parallel education as way to generate and reproduce socio-economic inequalities, given that it leads to create unequal educational opportunities as it is more affordable for socio-economically better-off households. Private tutoring is not a new phenomenon in India: a significant proportion of students at each stage of schooling took private tutoring even in 1986/ 87 (Azam, 2016). However, the extent of private tutoring is continuously increasing after the introduction of neo-liberal reforms in 1991, which is known to profoundly impacted socio-economic

inequalities in the country. In such a situation, it becomes important to examine the extent of shadow education at state as well as national level. Besides, there is another bigger issue: due to interplay between several socio-cultural norms and economic hardships, the female gender faces various discriminations at household level. Thus, it becomes imperative to examine the extent of gender inequalities in access of shadow education and spending patterns of households at secondary level of education.

Given the aforesaid background, the present study examines magnitude of shadow education at secondary education level and its iniquitous outcomes in terms of regional and gender inequalities in the state of Haryana. As a matter of fact, the parents

in patriarchal societies like India tend to treat their sons and daughters differently, and this issue is deep-rooted in states like Haryana. In this study we are particularly concerned about knowing whether gender is an important variable while parents make choice of coaching options at secondary level. Besides, the extent of private cost/ household expenditure on shadow education at secondary education level across the two genders is examined at rural and urban level.

In the rest of the paper, while section II focuses on reviewing the previous literature, section III precisely deals with data sources and methodology. Moreover, Section IV focuses on access to private tuitions and gender disparities, whereas Section V deals with costs of shadow education, and inequality upshots thereof. The final section presents the summary and conclusions of the study

Review of literature :

Given the exponential rise of private tuition providers in education marketplace during neo-liberal economic reforms era, the phenomenon of ‘shadow education’ is increasingly becoming a major area of interest in national and international contexts. Various scholars have examined the prevalence of shadow education and its determinants around the globe. For instance, Giavrimis et al. (1998) investigated the phenomenon of shadow education in Greece, focusing on the differences between formal and shadow education and the reasons for its existence. The primary survey demonstrates that most shadow education schools have well prepared students for the exams. Therefore, majority of families prefer to give money from their savings for their child’s success. Similarly,

Hultberg et al. (2021) predicted that higher levels of academic readiness and aptitude, as well as higher household education levels and current wealth, will increase demand for private tutoring. An additional finding was that higher expected returns to private tutoring increase demand for tutoring services.

Studies investigated the socio-economic determinants of shadow education at various educational levels like income level of the household, geographical location, parental education, fewer siblings, gender of the student social stratification etc. For example, Pallegedara and Khondoker (2018) analysed the decision to take private tutoring and the associated tutoring expenses by households in Bangladesh and showed that households with higher purchasing power are spending more on private tuition, emphasizing the unequal access to private tuition. A study by Tansel and Bircan (2006) using household expenditure survey conducted in Turkey found that households who send their children to private coaching spent 1-15 per cent of their incomes on average. In addition, Dang (2007) found that private tutoring in Vietnam is a necessity in the household budget for both primary students and lower secondary students. Similarly, in the context of India, Azam (2016) provided a comparative picture of incidence and cost of private tutoring at different stages of schooling over the last two decades in India. The demand for private tutoring is inelastic at each stage of schooling, which implies that private tutoring is a necessary good in the household consumption basket. Furthermore, students from urban areas, private schools, and from better economic backgrounds are more likely to take private tutoring.

As a matter of fact, there have been seen several gender disparities in educational attainments in terms of literacy rate, gross enrolment ratio, dropout rates and school choice and in access of shadow education at various education levels at national as well as international level. Nath (2008) analyzed the trends, socio-economic disparities and cost in private supplementary tutoring and its impact on learning achievements among primary students in Bangladesh. The study noted the prevalence of the gender discrimination against the rural girls. The study further found that Kindergartens and the secondary school-attached primary sections, where the children of well-off families enrolled, were more likely to have private tutor compared to the students of non-formal schools and the madrsas where the children of relatively poorer families enrolled.

Choudhury et al. (2021), using the latest National Sample Survey (NSS) education round data and two-step Heckman selection equation, examined the patterns and determinants of demand and cost of private coaching in higher education in India. The results show that not only is pro-male gender discrimination in existence; there is also caste inequality in the demand for and cost of private coaching, with a higher marginal effect among poor households. The differential effect of 'institution type' is also revealed in household investment on private coaching between the rich and poor, wherein rich students attending private coaching spend 2.4% more than their poor counterparts. The study establishes that the market for shadow education, which by its very nature, is highly selective and delivers the service largely to the students of socially and economically well-off families. The study

provides a rationale to consider the dynamics of inequalities in access to private coaching while devising educational policies for making higher education egalitarian.

Although, the phenomenon of shadow education and household expenditure thereon as well as the social and gender inequalities have vastly been examined in previous studies, most of these studies focused on either primary or higher level of education. There is gap in literature examining the shadow education at secondary education level and its impact on gender inequity. Besides, most of the previous studies have merely used quantitative data for examining the dynamics of social inequalities, there is gap in literature to examine these phenomena by combining quantitative statistics with qualitative data. The present study intends to fill such gaps in literature.

Objectives, data sources and methodology

The major objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the magnitude and patterns of shadow education at secondary level in Haryana (India) under the market-driven dispensation.
2. To study the financial burden of such coaching patterns on households.
3. To analyse the scenario and impact of the said institutional stratification in reproduction of gender inequalities.

The study is primarily based on the primary data collected from the 300 sampled households (180 Rural and 120 Urban) through a semi-structured interview schedule (i.e. comprising of quantitative and qualitative dimensions). The sampled

households were chosen using the Multistage Stratified Random Sampling from three districts of Haryana, viz. Fatehabad, Kurukshetra and Rohtak. These districts were selected using literacy rate as a criterion (i.e. dividing all the districts in the state into lower, medium and higher literacy rates strata). The data has been collected for 428 students studied in secondary education. The study examines the data in absolute and relative terms using the methods of percentages and ratios, and makes the analysis in comparative-descriptive manner. Moreover, qualitative information pertaining to various important aspects related to secondary education, its

commercialization and inequity has also been collected from various school teachers, principals and other administrators using personal interview method as well as focus group discussion (FGD) method.

Access to Shadow education: Levels and Patterns

Table 1 presents the distribution of students accessing shadow education at sub levels of secondary education in Haryana by region and gender. Overall, 43.93 per cent out of 428 students have access of shadow education in the state in 2018-19 at secondary education level.

Table 1: Students’ Participation in Shadow Education in Haryana by region and type of educational institute, 2018-19

Classes	Sector	Educational Institute Type			
		State-owned	Private Aided	Private Unaided	All Schools
Higher Secondary Level	Rural	25.00	20.00	55.88	39.44
	Urban	45.83	28.57	46.27	44.90
	Persons	30.68	23.53	51.11	41.67
Intermediate Level	Rural	43.64	50.00	47.62	45.71
	Urban	51.52	66.67	38.64	45.78
	Persons	46.59	57.14	43.02	45.74
Overall Level (Classes: IX-XII)	Rural	33.61	33.33	52.73	42.11
	Urban	49.12	46.15	43.24	45.30
	Persons	38.64	38.71	47.96	43.46

Source: Author’s calculations based on the field survey

Further, 38.64 per cent of the government school student accessing the shadow education while the corresponding figures for private aided and unaided school students were 38.71 and 48.96 per cent respectively at secondary education level. Besides, it has been found that the extent of shadow education is comparatively more at intermediate level vis-à-vis higher

secondary level. The rise of shadow education in Indian educational market and elsewhere is largely being questioned particularly from the perspective of gender and other forms of inequalities (Zhang and Xie, 2106; Byun et al., 2108; Mitra and Sarkar, 2019 and Choudhary et al., 2021).

Table 2: Students’ Participation in Shadow Education in Haryana by gender, region, type of school and Sub-levels of Secondary Education, 2018-19

Students’ Gender	Educational Institute Type	Higher Secondary Level			Intermediate Level		
		Rural	Urban	Persons	Rural	Urban	Persons
Boys	State-owned	27.27	66.67	40.32	66.67	68.75	67.86
	Private Aided	28.57	25.00	27.27	25.00	100.00	57.14
	Private unaided	66.67	56.76	60.94	56.76	40.00	50.88
	All Schools	46.84	56.60	48.91	56.60	56.41	56.52
Girls	State-owned	22.58	25.00	26.32	25.00	35.29	31.03
	Private Aided	NA	33.33	42.86	33.33	33.33	33.33
	Private unaided	41.38	33.33	41.30	33.33	37.50	35.19
	All Schools	30.16	31.11	33.64	31.11	36.36	33.71

Source: Author’s calculations based on the field survey

Table 2 exhibits the privatisation of secondary education has led to reproduce gender-based inequalities. Therefore, while 56.52 per cent of the male students were attending the private tuitions, the corresponding figure for their female counterparts was 33.71 per cent and the same patterns are observed at higher secondary education. The pro-male gender discrimination exists in rural as well as urban areas. However, such differences are of lower measure at the intermediate stage.

Private Expenditure On Shadow Education: Levels and Patterns

Shadow education is in existence on both ends i.e. demand side and supply side. The household and students who create demand for shadow education can be considered as the consumers. Moreover, it also came to the fore that the shadow education providers are into the business in the state to earn profits. In such a situation, it could be expected that the households in

the state must be paying substantial amounts of money to access shadow education at secondary education level. In such settings, it would be interesting to examine the comparative picture of household expenditure on shadow education secondary level in Haryana.

An analysis of data from table 3 establishes that per student per annum household expenditure on shadow education in Haryana is ₹4,695 at secondary education level. However, the amount spend at higher secondary level is ₹3,851 while the corresponding amount for intermediate level is ₹5,611. It implies that the household bear 1.47 times higher financial burden to send their wards for private tuitions at intermediate level vis-à-vis higher secondary level. During the primary survey it is found that household prefer relatively higher cost coaching options at intermediate level of secondary education vis-à-vis higher secondary level. The table also

reveals that this expenditure is of higher order at urban level vis-à-vis rural counterparts across three diverse type of schools and sub-levels of secondary education.

Table 3: Private expenditure on shadow education at secondary education level in Haryana by Type of educational Institution

Classes	Sector	Educational Institute Type			
		State-owned	Private Aided	Private Unaided	All Schools
Higher Secondary Level	Rural	1063	3500	3897	3073
	Urban	1500	5750	5968	4841
	Persons	1241	4625	4828	3851
Intermediate Level	Rural	3446	5750	7510	5331
	Urban	2853	6000	9394	6111
	Persons	3200	5875	8376	5676
Overall Secondary (Classes:IX-XII)	Rural	2493	5000	5143	4115
	Urban	2321	5917	7181	5429
	Persons	2422	5458	6066	4695

Source: Author’s calculations based on the field survey

Table 4: Private expenditure on shadow education at secondary education level in Haryana by Type of educational Institution and Students’ Gender

Students’ Gender	Educational Institute Type	Higher Secondary Level			Intermediate Level		
		Rural	Urban	Persons	Rural	Urban	Persons
Boys	State-owned	1156	1538	1335	3688	3109	3452
	Private Aided	3500	6205	5166	7000	7333	7250
	Private unaided	4327	10000	5667	8546	11250	9576
	All Schools	3511	5087	4216	5903	6645	6217
Girls	State-owned	943	1400	1080	2963	2383	2714
	Private Aided	NA	1500	1500	5333	2000	4500
	Private unaided	2967	5470	4105	5586	7744	6800
	All Schools	2221	4314	3109	4378	5375	4847

Source: Author’s calculations based on the field survey

The close perusal of data reveal that the urban students enrolled in private aided and unaided schools spend a sizeable amount on shadow education at intermediate level of secondary education and similar patterns are observable at higher

secondary education. Besides, it is also imperative to examine the gender inequalities in household expenditure on shadow education at secondary education level. Table 4 exhibits that a pronounced level of pro-male gender bias exists in household expenditure on secondary education in Haryana. The households, on an average, incur ₹4,216 and ₹6,127 annually on their male children respectively for higher and intermediate levels, while the corresponding figures for their female counterparts are ₹3,109 and ₹4,847 respectively. This indicates that such expenditure is higher for male children by 1.36 and 1.26 times respectively for higher and intermediate classes. There are sizeable variabilities in household expenditure on shadow education in urban vis-à-vis rural areas across the male and female gender. As a matter of fact, the household in urban areas spend ₹10,000 and ₹11,250 vis-à-vis their counterparts ₹5,450 and ₹7,744 at higher secondary and intermediate level of secondary education. Moreover, the rural household also prefer relatively more expensive coaching options for male as compared to female counterparts across the three diverse type of schools and sub-levels of secondary education.

Conclusion:

The findings of the study exhibit that 43.93 per cent of the sampled students under the study accessed to shadow education in 2018–19, while the corresponding figures across the three types of institutions were varying. Thus, 38.71 and 48.96% of students in private aided and unaided schools received shadow education, compared to 38.64 of students in government schools. Shadow education has led to reproduce profoundly the issue of

gender-based inequalities, as 56.52 per cent of the male students were attending the private tuitions, while the corresponding figure for their female counterparts was 33.71 per cent. Gender imbalance in access to shadow education stems from some parents purposefully choosing private tuition for their sons over their girls due to budget limitations in the home. The analysis of the data further established that households in the state ₹4,695 year per student on shadow education at the secondary level, whereas the same amount for intermediate level was ₹5,611 and the corresponding figure for the higher secondary level were ₹3,851. It suggests that the household spent 1.47 times more money to send their children to private school at the intermediate level than at the higher secondary level. Analysis of household spending on secondary education in Haryana exhibits a strong pro-male gender bias, whereby the expenditure on the male offspring is ₹4,216 and ₹6,127 at the higher and intermediate levels, whereas it ₹3,109 and ₹4,847 respectively on their female counterparts.

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