

Emergence of Demand for Private Supplementary Tutoring in Hong Kong: Argument, Indicators and Implications

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Abstract

The paper highlights the determinants for demand for private supplementary tutoring and their interrelationships in a case study of Hong Kong. Reviews of past local and international literature reveal several research gaps related to tutoring studies and lack of theoretical explanations for the emergence of tutoring demand. Based on relevant interview and survey data, some socio-economic and socio-cultural patterns of tutoring demand are depicted in terms of a multi-level socio-cultural argument for its nature and determinant relationships via some conceptual indicators. New issues and challenges to various educational fields are finally addressed.

INTRODUCTION

Past comparative and international research on examining educational systems (Dore, 1976, 1997; Eckstein & Noah, 1992; Little, 1984, 1997) realized that private tutoring is, to a large extent, a by-product of examination-oriented learning or examination-driven school curricula. Other past social or sociological studies like Dore (1976, 1997) and Little (1997) indirectly touched the 'hidden' educational phenomena at national level and in comparative perspective when examining the pervasive phenomena of 'diploma disease' or 'credential inflation' in lately developing societies. As private tutoring was not their research focus, there was a gap in theoretical explanation for emergence of 'diploma disease' or 'credential inflation' and

demand determinants, or causal links among their determinants for tutoring in single countries or comparative perspective.

Among the existing works on private tutoring, Bray (1999) stood out as an important and broadly-focused comparative work on both of its demand and supply sides and drew policy-making implications and his following works (2003) pinpointed the adverse effects of private tutoring upon mainstream schooling, societies and economies, based on five case studies in Asia and Africa. Other studies (de Silva, 1994; Foondun, 1992; Zeng, 1999) hinged upon pervasive 'hidden' educational phenomena in African countries or Asian regions without any inter-regional contextual

comparisons. And all of their works lacked a detailed theoretical analysis of causal relationships among demand determinants.

Methodologically speaking, there are logistic difficulties for doing research on tutoring, due to its subtlety, complexity and irregularity. The subtlety of private tutoring lies in its hidden scale, subject to intangible nature of tutoring services in socio-economic perspectives (Hua, 1996, p.5). Its complexity comes from inexact causal relationships between formal daytime schooling, family and tutoring in socio-cultural and socio-economic dimensions. Its irregularity is derived from governments' difficulties in controlling its growth, censoring or monitoring the functioning of tutorial schools, owing to some socio-cultural and socio-political reasons (Bray, 1999, pp. 37-41 & 74-83). Such three characteristics often lead educational policy-makers or researchers to pay little attention to tutoring. It is because there are more thorny educational problems in pressing policy agendas and other urgent research issues.

Through a multi-level analysis, the paper endeavors to portray how some educational and social phenomena at micro (individual), meso (institutional) and macro (system) levels are related to the pervasive phenomenon of private tutoring at all secondary levels (Secondary 1-7 / Grade 7-13) of schooling in Hong Kong. It also puts forth some theoretical arguments for causal relationships between social, educational changes and demand determinants, and conceptualizes a socio-cultural argument, accounting for the emergence and nature of demand for tutoring in Hong Kong. Subsequently, its far-reaching implications for further research will be drawn.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Comparative studies on examining educational systems

When doing cross-national comparisons of educational systems, some researchers have detected the widespread phenomena of 'diploma disease'. Theoretically speaking, Dore's 'diploma disease' (1976, p.72) thesis and Little's modified term (1997) 'credential inflation' have contended that the later the development of societal modernization, the more widely will be credential uses for occupational selection, or the more rapid will be the rate of credential inflation. As a result, schooling will become more examination-oriented and educational certificates will turn to be problematically stressed, devaluating the true values of schooling. When considering strategies for combating 'diploma disease', Little (1984, pp. 202-228) has observed that there will not be much impact on reducing demand for or changes in value beliefs about tutoring, and emergence of diploma disease does not necessarily entail occurrence of pervasive tutoring phenomena. For instance, despite commonly suffering from diploma disease, some lately developing countries like China, Egypt, Japan and Sri Lanka had a large scale of the 'hidden' educational phenomena whilst others such as England and Tanzania did not have such pervasive phenomena of tutoring in 1990s (Little, 1997, pp. 5-21).

Single-society or cross-national studies on tutoring

Past comparative researchers on tutoring (Bray, 1999, 2003; Chew & Leong, 1995; de Silva, 1994; Foondun, 1998, 2002) realized that the phenomena of private tutoring are complicated. Its possible multi-level demand determinants can be related to various arenas of education (Baker et. al, 2001), society and heritage

culture (Sorensen, 1994). Macro-level social factors include credential inflation, favorable economic prosperity, big income differentials and limited job opportunities (de Silva, 1994). Meso-and macro-level educational factors are significance of high-stake examinations for upward social mobility, national government's ineffective censorship, ineffective daytime schooling (Bray, 1996; de Silva, 1994), peer group influence (Hua, 1996) and uneven access to higher education (Stevenson & Baker, 1992). Micro-levels social factors are students' personal characteristics (Hua, 1996) and their families' socio-economic status (George, 1992) and no free academic guidance from families (Kim, 2000; Polydorides, 1986). On evaluation, causal relationships among such social and educational factors articulated by past researchers have not been fully conceptualized into a unified theoretical framework in single societies or cross-societal perspective so far. And there has been no investigation about overall impacts of determinants upon students' or their parents' determination to seek tutoring in intra-societal and inter-societal perspectives.

Other pieces of past single-society or cross-national research (Akiba & LeTendre, 1999; Chew & Leong, 1995; Foondun, 1998) lacked a clear definition of private tutoring and a systematic classification of its types, resulting in inaccurate analysis or invalid comparisons. Single-country past research literature on tutoring (Fenech & Spiteri, 1999; Harnisch, 1994; Rohlen, 1980; Yoon, 1997) merely investigated the intensity or scope of demand for tutoring without bridging the gaps between micro-level and macro-level determinants.

Tutoring research in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, most past studies (Lee, 1996; Liu, 1998; Man, 1998; Tseng, 1998; Wong, 1998) on tutoring were quantitative research reports, depicting the span and intensity of demand in statistical variations or patterns. For instance, reasons for seeking or not seeking tutoring, distributions of tutoring fees, duration of tutoring, types of supply at primary (Primary 1-6 / Grade 1-6) or secondary levels (Secondary 1-7 / Grade 7-13). They lacked detailed educational and social explanations for those descriptive demand variations and patterns, and no in-depth investigation was focused on lower secondary (Secondary 1-3) levels. In particular, Tseng (1998) hypothesized possible impacts of high-stake examinations and credential inflation upon tutoring without sufficient qualitative data support. Yeung (2000) articulated qualitative patterns of teachers' value beliefs towards private tutoring at middle secondary (Secondary 4-5) levels through teacher interviews. On the supply side, Tong (2001) detected the supply of private tutoring as a commercial commodity in massive scales in Hong Kong and Taipei without any scrutiny of the supply-demand mechanism or theoretical socio-cultural explanations for the supply. On the whole, past research in Hong Kong did not cover conceptual and theoretical issues concerning demand or supply for private tutoring.

In other fields of education, previous researchers in Hong Kong tended to underestimate the significance of private tutoring or indirectly touched it without penetrating studies, despite its widespread existence at primary and secondary levels of schooling. For example, Yiu (1996) only depicted a case of how mass tutors helped tutees make preparation for economics at advanced level. Facing the new syllabus, an economics teacher was so helpless that he borrowed lecture notes indirectly from those tutees. Moreover, little attention was paid to household expenditure on private tutoring

in some studies of financing of basic education (Cheng, 1992; Kwan, 1992; Wong, 1992). Past researchers on social stratification (Post, 1994; Postiglione, 1997) focused on gender variations or ascription over achievement in educational opportunities and the influence of social classes (or status groups) and families resources upon students' educational attainments (or learning outcomes). They neglected possible effects of tutoring on educational outcomes. Other bodies of sociological research done by Post (1993) and Tsang (1993) concerned more about the tensions between the government and educational policies and internal mechanisms of policy implementation e.g. the impacts of nine-year free, compulsory education policies implemented at primary and lower secondary levels since 1978 mentioned by (Wong, 1997). Noteworthy, additional effects of social stratification induced by demand for tutoring have not thoroughly been investigated in their studies.

NATURE, PATTERNS AND DETERMINANTS

With all these research gaps and limitations, the author strives to undertake a multi-level social analysis of students' demand and to build up a unified theoretical framework, accounting for the nature and emergence of the demand in Hong Kong as a case study (Kwok, 2001). Such case study qualitatively explores into causal interactions of its possible demand determinants and their interrelationships, in socio-cultural and socio-economic senses. Its research foci lie in the nature and socio-cultural and socio-economic patterns of secondary school students' demand for private supplementary tutoring in Hong Kong from 1 September 1997 to 31 August 2000. The marketing mechanism of its supply

side will not be scrutinized in the paper. Multi-level educational and social determinants for the nature and such patterns of demand for private tutoring and their causal inter-relationships will be formulated in terms of theoretical argument and pattern indicators, based on interview and survey data.

A definition of private supplementary tutoring

Private supplementary tutoring, throughout the paper, refers to a kind of extra, fee-paying academic teaching or drilling for full-time students studying in regular school instruction programs or syllabuses at all levels of education. It necessarily has three characteristics:

- academic oriented
- monetary transfer (from tutees or their parents / guardians to tutors)
- tutoring content or mastery of some cognitive skills being in line with tutees' day-time schooling.

Private supplementary tutoring can complement and repeat what tutees (full-time students) have learned in their daytime schools. It can help them revise their daytime lessons and deepen their understanding of the underlying concepts or theories through drilling exercises. Its main functions are to help students cope with examinations and to improve their academic achievements. There are various types of tutoring: individual, group (2-8 tutees per group) and mass (more than 8 tutees in a class) and their geographical locations can be in tutees' or tutors' residential areas, day-time school campus or even in commercial buildings. Its massive scale can partially be reflected on the supply side by heavy advertisements of various types of tutoring in streets, popular public areas and through mass media,

and by an increasing number of registered mass tutorial schools in Hong Kong. On the demand side, indicators are its high occupation rate of students' spare time and rough statistical figures reflected by some past studies done in Hong Kong (Lee, 1996; Tseng 1998).

Socio-cultural and socio-economic patterns

A student questionnaire survey (containing semi-open multiple-choice and five-point Likert-scale optioned statements concerning degrees of agreement / disagreement) was conducted in six conveniently sampled secondary schools of 630 respondents in Hong Kong in the school year 1998-1999. One class was randomly selected from each of form range: Secondary 1-3 (S.1-S.3), Secondary 4-5 (S.4-S.5) and Secondary 6-7 (S.6-S.7), with the permission of the school heads and assistance of the school administrators. Items were written in Chinese language and tested and modified after a pilot study conducted in another secondary school in April 1998. Criteria for determining families of low,

middle and high socio-economic status (SES), father's, mother's or (inclusively in logical sense) guardian's occupation were classified into blue-collar / unclassified types, white-collar types and professional / executive types respectively. The following socio-cultural and socio-economic patterns of tutoring demand are depicted, in triangulation with interview data, collected from snowball samples involving various types of stakeholders in Hong Kong:

- ***Emergence of nuclear families:*** The average household size (including tutoring and non-tutoring respondents) was 4.52 and the average number of schooling children per family was 2.28 respectively. Their nuclear families (of average size 4.52) in general had great academic concern. For detail, variations over studying forms can be found in table 1. Such nuclear family structure would increase the likelihood of seeking tutoring, as educational expenditure (including tutoring costs) focused merely on 1-2 schooling children per family.

Table 1 Distributions of mean numbers of family members, school children per family

Groups of students	Tutoring students			Non-tutoring students		
	S.1 - S.3	S.4 - S.5	S.6 - S.7	S.1 - S.3	S4 - S5	S6 - S7
Various studying forms						
Mean no. of family members (including the respondents) (FN)	4.40	4.26	4.28	4.75	4.82	4.39
Mean no. of schooling children (including the respondents) (SN)	2.15	1.96	2.09	2.54	2.45	2.47

Note: all numbers are round off to 3 sig. figs.

- **Affordability of tutoring fees:** It was found that in families of low socio-economic status (SES), students' participatory rates in private tutoring were 24% at S.1 - S.3, 47% at S.4 - S.5 and 61% at S.6 - S.7 levels whereas in high SES families, the rates were 63% at S.1 - S.3, 55% at S.4 - S.5 and 68% at

S.6 - S.7. Among one five-opinioned statement concerning decisions tutoring fees over quality, affordability of tutoring fees was one decisive factor for seeking tutoring, especially in low-income or middle-income SES families, in tutees' perceptions in table 2.

Table 2 Distributions of opinion about affordability among tutoring students

Affordability is more important than quality when considering current forms of tutoring	Parents' or Guardians'		Parents' or Guardians'		Parents' or Guardians'	
	Low SES (blue collars, no occupation, or unclassified)		Middle SES (white collars)		High SES (professionals or executives)	
Strongly agree	(14 / 132)	11 %	(7 / 51)	14 %	(12 / 123)	10 %
Agree	(32 / 132)	24 %	(12 / 51)	24 %	(22 / 123)	18 %
Neutral	(44 / 132)	33 %	(14 / 51)	27 %	(39 / 123)	31 %
Disagree	(33 / 132)	25 %	(13 / 51)	25 %	(36 / 123)	29 %
Strongly disagree	(9 / 132)	7 %	(5 / 51)	10 %	(14 / 123)	11 %

Note: all percentages are round off to whole figures.

- **Insufficiency of free academic guidance from elder family members:** Survey data illuminated that the higher educational qualifications of tutees' parents or guardians, the greater would be the demand for tutoring, despite the fact that they could teach tutees

freely by themselves in table 3. Qualitative data reflected that the busy daily working schedule of tutees' elder family members was the most probable reason.

Table 3 Distributions of parents' or guardian's educational qualifications

Demand for tutoring	Parents' or guardians' educational qualifications						Proportion out of total respondents
	Primary education below	Junior Secondary	Upper Secondary	Matriculation	University above	or	
No	(126/195) 65%	(101/182) 55%	(59/125) 48%	(19/58) 33%	(19/70) 27%		(324/630) 52%
Yes	(69/195) 35%	(81/182) 45%	(66/125) 53%	(39/58) 67%	(51/70) 73%		(306/630) 48%
Proportion out of total respondents	(195/195) 31%	(182/630) 29%	(125/630) 20%	(58/630) 9%	(70/630) 11%		(630/630) 100%

Note: all percentages are round off to whole figures.

- ***Relationships between consuming tutoring types and nature of curricula:*** Both qualitative and quantitative data reflected that the lower the secondary level, the more popular would be individual home tutoring and multi-functional tutoring (provision of lesson revision, examination preparation and homework guidance). The higher the level of upper secondary (S.4-S.7), the more popular form would be examination-oriented mass tutoring. One-to-one residential tutoring and multi-functional tutoring were relatively more common at lower levels of secondary schooling than upper levels. Interview data also revealed that upper secondary curricula were less flexible without catering for individual learning differences than lower ones. Student tutoring at upper secondary levels of schooling were accommodated to open examinations whilst tutoring at lower secondary levels of schooling focused more on individual learning differences, in line with less rigid school curricula.
- ***Examination-oriented school culture:*** In the survey, examination pressure was the biggest reason for seeking private tutoring at upper secondary levels of schooling whilst it was only the fifth big reason at S.1-S.3 level. The more senior the studying forms, the higher were the participatory rates in private tutoring: 35% at S.1-S.3 level; 47% at S.4-S.5 level; 70% at S.6-S.7 level. Among extra learning needs identified by students, examination skills were the most common. So examinations dominated surveyed students' learning, and tutoring students sought private tutoring in order to cope with examination pressure. The situation was more serious at the upper level of secondary schooling (i.e. S.4-S.7). This implied open examination-driven upper

secondary curricula in the mainstream sector of Hong Kong (Hong Kong Baptist University & Hong Kong Examinations Authority, 1998).

- ***Selective functions or screening effects of the secondary educational system:*** The earliest starting time to seek private tutoring was mostly at P.4-P.6 level for tutoring and non-tutoring students during the survey time, regardless of their current studying levels in the survey. The second peak starting time was at S.4-S.5 level for S.4-S.7 students. Qualitative data indicated the screening effect or selective function of the educational system where some junction points were found between upper primary and lower secondary levels and between upper secondary (S.4-S.5) and matriculation (S.6-S.7) levels.
- ***Social significance of some popular tutoring subjects:*** Popular tutoring subjects were Mathematics and English. These two subjects were major ones in the whole S.1-S.5 curricula and also important for tutees' future careers. One of the common mass tutoring subjects at S.6-S.7 level was Use of English, which was a compulsory subject for university entrance examination, playing a decisive role in their future career. Despite the transfer of its sovereignty to Mainland China with Chinese as her official language since 1997, English itself is still an international and official language for maintaining prosperity of the Hong Kong society. In the six schools, there was a higher proportion of Science tutees in particular than Arts ones at S.4-S.7 level, because of greater expected rates for receiving tertiary education or better job prospects after graduation.

- **Societal credentialism and meritocracy:** Among the 5-optioned statements, the majority (strongly or just) agreed to the statements that education was the most potent means for upward social mobility and that private tutoring was regarded as a kind of educational investment. Qualitative data provided the underlying reason. Upper secondary students near the graduation time had more time to think about their future career and naturally higher expected rates of return when seeking tutoring.

THEORETICAL ARGUMENT FOR TUTORING DEMAND AND THEIR DETERMINANT RELATIONSHIPS

Through cross-method and cross-data triangulation (Neuman, 2000), a comprehensive picture of how a combination of multi-level demand determinants acted upon each other during the research period is portrayed as follows:

- I. The ultimate causative forces lied in rapid social modernization with corresponding economic growth and technological advancement, facilitating the marketization of various types of tutoring and affordability of tutoring fees at the societal level.
- II. Education was the major screening device for upward social mobility, in line with some salient features of Confucian-heritage culture. And credentials were used for elite selection and job allocation in such a meritocratic society of Hong Kong. As a result, credential inflation or qualification escalation was involved at societal level.
- III. At educational policy level, there was little effective censorship or monitoring of quality education in mass tutorial schools. At societal level, marketization of mass tutorial schools was

prevalent through mass media and their locations were geographically located in urban areas with convenient access by means of public transport systems.

- IV. At school level, examination-oriented upper secondary curricula and dominating summative assessment reinforced students' and teachers' heavy stresses on academic achievements. Students faced considerable studying pressure and peer group pressure when crossing over 'hurdles' at upper secondary and matriculation levels. They were accommodated into rigid school curricula, without catering for their individual learning differences. As a result, their learning problems increasingly arose, in case of insufficient academic guidance from teachers, their questionable pedagogy and tight studying schedules.
- V. At nuclear family level, elder family members' heavy daily workloads or inappropriate educational qualifications rendered little free academic guidance for students.
- VI. Subject to the above I-V, secondary school students would seek tutoring, in case of unfulfilled basic or extra learning needs from family, peers, teachers and ineffective self-learning in Hong Kong.

Conceptual indicators and determinants relationships

To trace out interrelationships among demand determinants for private tutoring, three key conceptual indicators were articulated as accessibility, affordability and insufficiency. Accessibility referred to the availability of various types of tutoring, promoted through mass media or other promotion means under the state's policy governance. Socio-economically, affordability concerned whether tutees or their families could afford certain types of tutoring whilst

insufficiency in socio-cultural sense, pointed to the dissatisfaction of basic or extra learning needs initiated from daytime schools and lack of free academic guidance from tutees' elder family members, school teachers, peers and self-learning.

In fact, there were three sets of determinant patterns. Firstly, big socio-economic changes led to marketization of various types of tutoring in a multi-service economy and establishment of convenient public transport system after fast technocratic changes under the state's ineffective policy censorship towards various types of tutoring. This came to accessibility of demand for tutoring. Secondly, affordability of tutoring fees was mostly resulted from emergence of nuclear families with 1-2 schooling children on average. The underlying reasons were high economic growth in the 1980s, successful control of birth rate since 1970s (Ng, 1978) and parental willingness of spending education for students' future, under great societal competitive pressure in the late 1990s. Thirdly, facing credential inflation and social selective functions of educational system under heritage Chinese culture, students (key stakeholders) regarded education as the most potential means for upward social mobility. In some cases, low quality in school education and rigid school curricula created extra learning needs or basic learning problems for some students, which could not be satisfied freely by their elder family members, school teachers, peers or solved by themselves. In short, this referred to insufficiency of free academic guidance from students' social circles.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

There are two major contributions of the study. Firstly, it provides a multi-level theoretical argument accounting for socio-cultural and socio-economic demand patterns

for tutoring and demand pattern indicators help explicate determinant relationships. Secondly, socio-cultural and socio-economic patterns of tutoring demand help imply further advancement in several fields of educational research.

School effectiveness and improvement

Based on research findings, lack of alternatives for satisfying extra learning needs of schooling children from families and schools reflect unresolved problems in school quality education, intended curricula implementation and family education. This poses a great threat to the normal functions of formal schooling, in view of enormous demand for private tutoring in Hong Kong and other societies with similar development. Educational researchers on school effectiveness and improvement (e.g. Neville, 1995) and local policy-makers (e.g. Education Commission, 2000) often regard daytime schools as a standard unit of analysis at meso level. However, the influence of mass tutorial schools or home tutoring upon schools and students cannot be neglected, because of the supplementary role of private tutoring. Therefore, notions of 'school effectiveness' and 'learning effectiveness' need to be revitalized, facing the joint effects of day-time schooling and part-time private tutoring on students' learning outcomes.

Economics and financing of education

Reflected from interview data, some tutees or their elder family members regarded private tutoring as a kind of educational investment for upward social mobility, under great meritocratic and credential pressure. The notions of 'private or social rates of return' to both formal and informal education (Carnoy, 1995; Psacharopoulos, 1994) should include allowance for considerable

financial figures spent on private tutoring in the societies with pervasive phenomena of private tutoring. Theorists who advocate formal education as a screening mechanism (Groot & Hartog, 1995) need to consider the effects of seeking private tutoring on students' overall academic achievement. Under peer group pressure and higher studying motivation, high-achievers seek more affordable tutoring lessons with fruitful academic returns than lower-achievers, reflected from survey and interview data. As a result, screening effects are reinforced in such a way that more academically talented or able students can survive at the top of schooling systems. So more theoretical discussion on 'screening models' and empirical studies on 'rates of return' need to be rectified.

Sociology of education

On the one hand, cultural capital, investigated by the pioneer sociologist Bourdieu (1977, 1997) and his followers such as Brown (1997) and El-Bilawi (1982) needs to include considerable monetary expenditure upon private tutoring at household level in those countries with pervasive phenomena of private tutoring. On the other hand, social capital in the creation of human capital, which is proposed by some sociologists like Coleman (1997), should incorporate some resources attributed to subsidized or charged types of private tutoring from some commercial enterprises or voluntary community organizations. Such resources are not negligible when considering community or household financing of education (e.g. Bray, 1996, 1998, 2002). Further, the supplementary roles of tutoring will complicate the educational inequality and social inequity issues. Inequalities of educational opportunities and qualities in educational input and teaching and learning processes will be aggravated by students' unequal

accesses to different types and extent of tutoring. In table 3, those students with high parents' or guardians' educational qualifications tended to indicate greater demand for tutoring than those with low qualifications, besides quality considerations in tutoring. In particular, heavy demand for individual residential tutoring or taking numerous mass tutoring subjects might cause financial burden to low-income families revealed by qualitative data. Other blackmail cases of 'moonlighting' teachers towards their day-time students and idol tutors' illegal release of open examination trends are also unfair to the majority of examination candidates during educational assessments (Bray 2003; Greaney & Kellaghan, 1995).

Cultural issues

Some past culturists (Cheng, 1997; Zeng, 1999) argued for the influence of 'Confucian-heritage culture' over the massive demand for private tutoring in East-Asian countries. They speculated some commonalties such as meritocratic drive towards nation-wide examinations (similar to examinations recruiting civil servants in ancient times of China), working through hardship and studying by diligence rather than inborn abilities, and repetitive, holistic approaches to learning. All these salient features exhibited distinctive characteristics of heritage Chinese cultures, uncovered by some researchers in educational psychology (Dahlin & Watkins, 2000; Watkins & Biggs, 1996). On evaluation, such cultural argument seemed to lack rigorous cross-cultural data support. It was because some non-Chinese heritage societies with pervasive 'hidden' educational phenomena might have similar inter- or intra-societal tensions, similarly articulated in the above socio-cultural argument (de Silva, 1994; Foondun, 1992, 1998, 2002; Hua, 1996). And large-scale cross-societal studies like

TIMMS 1995 and TIMMS-R 1999 have not scrutinized any correlations between intensity of tutoring demand (except some parameters such as time spent on after-school lessons in Leung, Yung & Tso, 2002, p.37) and features of societal cultures. Nor have follow-up comparative studies pinpointed any causal relationships between cultural features and intensity or span of tutoring demand (e.g. Baker et. al., 2001) when comparing East Asian societies with African, European, North American and South American counterparts. Hence, more cross-national or cross-societal qualitative studies should be conducted in future to articulate how heritage cultures constitute or reinforce schooling students' demand for tutoring under those inter- and intra-societal tensions in the above socio-cultural argument.

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CONCLUSION

In the above, a multi-level socio-cultural argument for the emergence of demand for tutoring has been articulated. And demand determinants and their causal interrelationships have also been conceptualized in terms of indicators like accessibility, affordability and insufficiency. Further research recommendations are made to academic fields of school effectiveness, economics and financing of education, sociology of education and cultural studies in education.

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