



Shadow Education in the Era of the Globalization: Comprehensive Prohibition or Active Encouragement?

Hongxia Liu* Di Suo

Institute of International and Comparative Education, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, 100875, China

ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: 18 January 2022

Revised: 25 January 2022

Accepted: 9 April 2022

Published Online: 16 April 2022

Keywords:

Shadow education

Era of globalization

ABSTRACT

With the acceleration of education democratization and the rapid development of education modernization, shadow education, as a prominent phenomenon in education globalization, has begun to develop rapidly. This paper challenges the different views of shadow education which has both positive and negative effect in the era of globalization and further discusses that shadow education should be actively encouraged from the perspective of knowledge economy, brain migration and higher education.

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on the shadow education system that occurs outside the mainstream school education and charges for school subjects. It is called shadow education because it imitates mainstream education^[1]. When the curriculum of mainstream education changes, its shadow curriculum also changes with it. It includes behaviors that happening outside of the formal school day for the purpose to master their curriculum, well prepare for their examinations, and earn grades for learning and skills that used by schools to grant students further educational opportunities^[2]. Private tutoring, in the form of the shadow education, has arisen different responses from policymakers. In some countries, it is encouraged to help students with extra tailored-made instructions; in others, it is actively controlled because it distorted formal education and brought inequality. In this paper, I would discuss whether the shadow education should be comprehensively prohibited or should be actively encouraged from the perspective

of globalization.

Shadow education in the era of globalization, arguably more than ever before, profoundly shapes the current and future well-being of the students, as well as their chances and opportunities. Different people have different opinions to the advent of shadow education. Hence, a debate about the adoption of shadow education has been raised. Some think the increase use of shadow education is a move towards privatization. That is to say, the shadow education in the form of different kinds of organizations or centers has been as an agency for the public school to supplement the knowledge for the needed students. The low efficiency at the country side promotes market forces to provide shadow education in response to a need for students to compete in a global economy. Others think shadow education is a potential threat to equity. Given that the mass education is about reducing inequality by providing educational opportunity for all students - inequality will arise again when families benefit some students by pur-

*Corresponding Author:

Hongxia Liu,

Institute of International and Comparative Education, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, 100875, China;

Email: Alice0508liu@mail.bnu.edu.cn

chasing additional schooling. This unequal reproduction disadvantaged those whom mass education was designed to help^[3].

Shadow education today has brought the inequality to the students and families through purchasing extra schooling at the perspective of consuming. Acknowledging the existence of shadow education in private schools compared to public schools, the economic cost of which prevents most disadvantaged families from participating, but this doesn't mean that it increases the inequality because banning private tutoring will only divert education spending from wealthier households towards these other investments. Additionally, access to tutoring may benefit poor families if it helps their children compete with wealthier children in private schools. Nowadays families all over the world increasingly find it necessary to invest in the private supplementary tutoring no matter they are prosperous or not because it not only improves personal ability but also meets the individual needs such as demand of immigrants and pursuit of higher education. What's more, it helps promotes talent competition and further improves the economic development.

In the era of globalization today, economic life is more competitive and challenging which makes human capability, education and development more important. As educated labor force furnished with modern skills, knowledge and training can compete and benefit from the opportunities created by globalization. Hence, it should agree that the shadow education is inevitable in the era of globalization from the following perspective.

2. The Advent of Shadow Education is Inevitable

Nowadays, shadow education has begun to take root and sprout in the world, with a strong spreading momentum. In the 21st century, the development of social information, scientific and technological civilization, and economic globalization have promoted the development of a learning society^[4]. We are moving to a new horizon of abundance and new values have also emerged which makes people all around the world much more interested in personal success in the form of excessive consumption, individualism, and competition-the three dominant traits of our times^[5]. Therefore, one of the cases in point of the globalization phenomenon is the shadow education.

While it is a feature of globalization, it is not one of its causal pillars but rather an outcome of the overall change process by which populations move to the western countries in search of better education opportunities. Shadow education opportunities hence enhance their overall competitiveness in the global era. As the public school offers

the same curriculum to every student, individuals are trying to seek the shadow education to satisfy themselves. The spread of shadow education has become a hidden form of privatization or individualism in many education systems. In some societies, even low-income families have to pay for shadow education due to the demands of the school system and society. Therefore, it has become a common model to invest in private education while receiving public education for free.

Families around the world are increasingly finding it necessary to invest in so-called private tutoring shadow education systems. This is a form of privatization hidden behind the public education system; many families believe shadow education is inevitable. The school systems have expanded so to achieve the goal of education for all. This has led families in some countries to consider the quality of education provided by public schools, as it is not sufficient to meet their needs and aspirations. Hence, some families choose to move toward the private sectors, while others even stayed in the public sector but supplemented the diet with additional tutoring. Hence, the shadow education has become more and more popular in the era of globalization.

3. Theory of Knowledge Economy with the Expansion of Shadow Education

We are entering into a society of knowledge economy. The increasingly fierce of competition caused by the globalization is the main power of the expansion of shadow education. Burbules indicated that the inevitable consequence of education service joining in the process of economic globalization is the transformation of education from public service to business service^[6]. Business service is a kind of private product which means a fundamental change in the nature of education. According to people's general understanding, compulsory education is a public product, and non-compulsory education is a private product. In the process of the transformation of education from public service to business service, the government's responsibility for education has been reduced, the financial expenditure on education has been reduced, and education has to seek financial support from commercial institutions which pushes the development of shadow education. The expansion of extracurricular tutoring in China, Korea, Japan, Western Europe, North America, Australia and other regions reflects the increasingly fierce international competition in education.

With the rise of mass education in the world, people's access to higher education is increasing. The new educational logic that emphasizes the popularization, strength and vitality of post-modern society promotes the further

development of shadow education. At the same time, the strength and ranking of colleges and universities have a significant impact on students' job acquisition, position level and promotion opportunities in the society, which makes students flock to famous schools. The contradiction between the strong demand for famous schools and the mainstream school education cannot meet this demand which increased competition in education. Therefore, the shadow education is inevitable though it aggravated the competition among the students. In view of shadow education imitating and complementing mainstream education, they propose that the expansion of shadow education is to some extent driven by "global education culture", which includes the education for all (EFA) movement and the global expansion of Higher Education^[7].

Then the promotion of the expectation of utilitarian education pushes the development of shadow education. Most parents want their children to have a bright future. They place their high expectations on their children in shadow education. What's more, children's outstanding achievements are the capital that parents show off to others. This utilitarian social expectation promotes the formation of shadow education market, which provides a huge possibility for the rise and development of shadow education. The government considers that academic performance is closely related to the future employment situation. Parents consider that test scores are directly related to the future economic income. Students bear huge test pressure. People's demand for education is even more urgent than schools can provide. When students and parents in all countries are worrying about the performance and test scores, families will invest more money to buy academic counseling services to improve their children's performance, and shadow education will grow.

4. Shadow Education under Brain Drain and Gain Migration

Shadow education has been widely spread all over the world. Brain drains and gain migration is also inevitable in the era of globalization under neo-liberal human capital theory. The essence of brain drain and gain is a kind of talent competition. Only those with more knowledge and skills can win the competition. Shadow education is not only indispensable in building the human capital in the talent competition, but it is also necessary for the talents who immigrate to a new environment.

Sellar has depicted that we live in an "age of human capital", where "an individual's economic success depends on how widely and effectively people invest in themselves"^[8]. Shadow education is a way for people to supplement their knowledge loophole which they didn't

catch very well during the school time. Or it could also be way to improve their grades and enhance their knowledge which can be seen as a kind of investment on themselves so to have more opportunities for the future economic success in the global world.

Suarez & Orozco stated some immigrant children will indeed thrive in the era of globalization. The shadow education can help the immigrants and the nation to better solve the controversial challenges^[9]. The immigration children face more challenges than those local students not only the adaptation of the local culture but the language and the thinking style. That is why most of the families will invest on the private education to help the children to adopt to the new environment both in the education and the local culture before their immigration. Without the existence of the shadow education, it would be difficult for those children to thrive in the new areas. Globalization has increased the immigrants, how to better adapt to the new life and how to participate in foreign examinations have been a hot topic now. As more and more immigrants come, extra investment in education becomes a necessity, hence shadow education will not disappear at all.

5. The expansion of shadow education under the Higher Education

With greater expansion and organizational diversification of higher education and the greater globalization of education structures across countries, shadow education has gone through a similar series of changes. The changes in the tertiary education, which were occurring at a worldwide level, make shadow education inevitable from the following perspectives.

First, the shadow education formula of providing services for university entrance exams has continued since there is non-stop competition for top universities and top white-collar jobs. As the global hierarchy of "world-class" universities has emerged. In such a market, the "best" students are attracted to the universities with the highest reputations. Students at top universities who meet these standards are most likely to succeed in the competition for elite positions. A clear implication of this argument is that, students who are trying their best to enter into the higher education need to arm themselves with more knowledge, while the public school offer the same curriculum and provide the same resources to them, students look for the personal investment that is the private tutor to help them remedy or enhance in the competition of the relatively more famous universities.

Second, shadow education spreads along with the schooling societies. As Mori states, the practice of shadow education spreads around the world as educated societies

spread around the world; the use of shadow education is motivated by the dominant logic of educational expansion in all its forms^[10]. Altbach states that four interrelated fundamental forces drive the current academic revolution: the “popularization” of higher education, globalization, the emergence of knowledge societies and the importance of research universities within them, and information technology (including distance education)^[11]. These forces have created enormous funding challenges for countries and have driven the rise of the private sector and the privatization of public colleges and universities.

Third, strong links between education and future work could lead to intense competition for more education and private tutoring^[12]. Private returns in the labor force in higher education are normally better than to secondary education and the gap between many developing and developed countries appears to be widening^[13]. These high returns can lead to highly competitive behavior by students and their parents, including the use of private tutoring to increase college admissions chances. An extreme form of these connections is “diploma disease”^[14], whereby companies and governments regard the university degree as an initial screening tool for employment, believing that the degree represents skills that contribute to productivity which are hard to measure at the beginning. This phenomenon has arguably driven¹ the demand for private tutoring in some countries.

6. Conclusions

Shadow education is an inevitable phenomenon in the era of the globalization. It is the product of the knowledge economy; the mass higher education and the brain drain and gain migration and so on. The government need positively face it and make full use of the private tutor industry to make sure of the quality of it.

References

- [1] Bray, M., 1999. The shadow education system: Private tutoring and its implications for planners. *Fundamentals of Educational Planning* No.61, Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).
- [2] Baker, D., LeTendre, G.K., 2005. National differences, global similarities: World culture and the future of schooling. Stanford University Press.
- [3] Southgate, D., 2009. *Determinants of Shadow Education: A Cross-National Analysis*. Ohio State University. Ph.D. Dissertation.
- [4] Kellner, D., 2002. Theorizing Globalization. *Sociological Theory*. 20(3), 285-305.
- [5] Stromquist, N.P., 2002. Theorizing Globalization. In N. P. Stromquist (Ed.), *Education in a globalized world: The connectivity of economic power, technology, and knowledge*: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. pp. 1-18.
- [6] Burbules, N.C., Torres, C.A., 2000. Globalization and education: An Introduction. In N. C. Burbules & C. A. Torres (Eds.), *Globalization and education: Critical perspectives*. New York: Routledge. pp. 1-26.
- [7] UNESCO, 2006. *Demand Sensitive Schooling? Evidence and Issues*. Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Washington D.C.
- [8] Sellar, S., Zipin, L., 2018. Conjuring optimism in darktimes: Education, affect and human capital. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*.
- [9] Suárez-Orozco, C., 2001. Afterword: Understanding and serving the children of immigrants. *Harvard Educational Review*. 71(3), 579-590.
- [10] Mori, I., Baker, D., 2010. The origin of universal shadow education: What the supplemental education phenomenon tells us about the postmodern institution of education. *Asia Pacific Education Review*. 11(1), 36-48.
- [11] Altbach, P.G., Reisberg, L., Rumbley, L.E., 2010. Tracking a global academic revolution. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*. 42(2), 30-39.
- [12] Stevenson, D.L., Baker, D.P., 1992. Shadow education and allocation in formal schooling: Transition to university in Japan. *American Journal of sociology*. 97(6), 1639-1657.
- [13] Brunello, G., Comi, S., Lucifora, C., 2001. The college wage gap in 10 European countries: Evidence from two cohorts. Available at SSRN 292061.
- [14] Dore, R., 1976. *The Diploma Disease*. Education, Qualification and Development.