CHAPTER 8

Ethical Dilemmas in the Education Marketplace: shadow education, political philosophy and social (in)justice in Cambodia

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> My child wanted to go to private tutoring. Although we did not have enough money, she still went to study [extra lessons] and owed her teacher for months. When I earned money, I paid off the debt. The teacher did not mind.

When the resources to educate students are scarce but the desire to be educated is great, students, teachers and parents find themselves facing ethical dilemmas such as the one described above by a parent of a secondary-school student in rural Cambodia.[1] This parent, like many others in Cambodia, finds herself paying for services in a marketplace of private tutoring services described broadly as 'shadow education' (Bray, 2007). It is 'hidden' because the Ministry of Education in Cambodia takes a *laissez faire* approach to regulation, which means education outside mainstream school hours is not under the government's purview.

Shadow education is a multi-faceted phenomenon that has been found worldwide (Bray, 2010, 2011; Bray & Lykins, 2012). Its geographical reach is as wide as its purposes are diverse. Shadow education has been used for expanding knowledge and interests for individuals (Bray, 2007), accumulating human capital for societies (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2002), and providing new strategies for coping with rapid geopolitical transitions for a variety of education stakeholders (Silova, 2009; Silova & Brehm, 2013). Within such complexity and diversity, shadow education naturally embodies multiple perspectives on educational justice.

When a public-school teacher tutors his or her own students, as the quote from Cambodia implies, the situation could be interpreted in

different ways. On the one hand, it may be thought that this teacher is somehow *forcing* the poor student of this family to attend private lessons on credit because examination preparation is often given during the extra lessons. Despite the 'trick' being played by the teacher (Dawson, 2009), this family has no choice but to go into debt in order to send their children to private-tutoring lessons where monthly examination questions are often reviewed or the answers handed out. On the other hand, the extra lessons might be essential for covering the national curriculum that is too difficult to complete during official school hours because of double-shift schooling, which reduces the school day in order to accommodate multiple shifts of students into a single school building. Since engaging in private tutoring limits a teacher's ability to hold a second job outside of school, which the vast majority of Cambodian teachers do (Benveniste et al, 2008, p. 68), the teacher must charge students for the extra instruction. Within this environment, households must find a way to justify, perhaps unwittingly, giving unwarranted power to teachers within a system of little accountability in order for their children to receive an education.

Whatever the decision by households, this particular situation raises issues related to educational justice. From the former perspective, which is based on the assumption that teachers force students to attend private tutoring, injustice is created in the very limitation of choice. Students have no choice but to attend the extra lessons in order to prepare for monthly examinations, which are graded by the teacher, receive the remainder of the national curriculum, or both. If they do not attend private tutoring, they are at a disadvantage compared to their peers who decided to pay for extra lessons. In this case, limiting choice is considered unjust because it harms a student's freedom to act autonomously and also unfairly burdens certain groups in society because of unchosen disadvantages like poverty, which may prevent them from attending extra lessons. Alternatively, the latter perspective contextualises the ethical dilemma to the circumstances of Cambodia, suggesting that justice may have actually been *served* because the teacher found ways of including poor students in the extra lessons that are typically populated by students from wealthy backgrounds. Through a progressive fee system, where costs are adjusted depending on households' economic situations or delayed until families have extra money, this teacher may be righting an injustice caused from an educational system that structurally disadvantages the poor. In both cases, distinct forms of social relations are constructed among teacher, student and parent that reflect particular understandings of educational justice, which in turn derive from different political philosophies. The former is within the tradition of liberalism, and based on the assumption that freedom, choice and fairness need to be upheld for a society to be considered just. The latter is within the tradition of egalitarianism, where

justice is believed to derive from societal equality, which is mainly achieved through the redistribution of resources and opportunities.

The ethical dilemma is thus threefold. First, there is the ethical dilemma for the teachers who must decide on a daily basis whether or not to engage in private-tutoring activities. When choosing to provide private tutoring to their own students, teachers must weigh the consequences of providing more instructional time and earning extra money against the risk of undermining the teaching profession because such actions may be considered corrupt by the community, government or broader society. Second, households must decide whether to participate in a system of private tutoring that may improve their children's academic success at the risk of increasing socioeconomic inequities because private tutoring excludes students who cannot pay. Third, there is an ethical dilemma for researchers and policymakers. In their attempt to understand shadow education, researchers and policymakers often – and perhaps unknowingly – use particular definitions of social justice that ultimately make value judgments on the situation under investigation. Without critically reflecting on our own philosophical perspectives on social justice, researchers may universalise their beliefs to all contexts. Likewise, policymakers may design policies without fully considering the structural issues people within local communities actually face.

It is with these ethical dilemmas in mind that this chapter seeks to address the complicated terrain of educational justice within the education marketplace in Cambodia. Shadow education is a valuable point of entry for discussing educational justice because it raises 'foundational questions over the political philosophy and the political economy that frame the distribution of educational resources, as public goods, and the organisation of society more broadly' (Mazawi et al, 2013, p. 212). By contextualising the system(s) of shadow education inside six schools in Siem Reap, Cambodia, we aim to provide a nuanced understanding of educational justice situated within particular (mainly liberal) political philosophies.

Methodology

In this chapter we are concerned only with the type of shadow education where teachers tutor their own students. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of such tutoring for the learning of a child or its ability to 'compensate for qualitative shortcomings' of public education (Bray, 2012), it is nevertheless considered detrimental to the common good of public education (Mazawi et al, 2013). Such an argument is two-pronged: it can be detrimental by (re)producing social inequalities 'because rich households can invest more easily than poor ones' and/or it can 'undermine regular school systems' (Bray, 2012). The latter occurs

because 'teachers who are also tutors may neglect their regular classes; and teachers who tutor their existing students may deliberately cut the curriculum in order to promote demand for private lessons' (Bray, 2012).

In this chapter we explore this argument in detail by examining the educational-justice issues that arise when teachers tutor their own students within one district in Cambodia. This chapter uses data collected between January and December 2011 within six schools in Siem Reap, Cambodia, including three schools in an urban location (i.e. areas where most families do not farm for subsistence and have brick/concrete homes and use motorbikes or cars) and three schools in a rural location (i.e. areas where subsistence farming, wooden homes and bicycles are common). Within each location, we worked with a 9th grade in a lower-secondary school. These schools were purposively selected out of the 13 lower-secondary schools in the district in order to represent different average hourly costs of private tutoring. We then worked backwards in each lower-secondary school, which corresponded to one urban (and a 'higher' cost for private tutoring) and one rural (and a 'lower' cost for private tutoring) school, to find two primary schools that fed into each lower-secondary school. Within the four primary schools that agreed to participate in this study, we worked with 6th-grade students and teachers. These grades were selected because the conclusion of the 6th grade signals the completion of primary school and the conclusion of the 9th grade culminates in a national examination, which is standardised and is not graded by a student's teacher, suggesting we would find higher rates of private tutoring. Within each school, we worked with students, parents and teachers, separately targeting 'private-tutoring' and 'non-private-tutoring' groups.

Over the 12-month period, we conducted focus groups, interviews and classroom observations, as well as grade and attendance tracking. A total of 21 focus groups were conducted, which included 118 students, parents and teachers. In these conversations, which lasted on average one hour, the participants discussed their various experiences with private tutoring and perceptions about the impact of private tutoring on education access and quality. In order to investigate some themes that emerged in the focus groups in more depth, we conducted a total of 21 informal interviews with parents, teachers, students and principals. In addition to the interviews and focus groups, a total of 28 classroom observations were conducted, including 14 in public-school classes and 14 in private-tutoring lessons. In the 6th grade, observations were conducted in classes that typically focused on mathematics and Khmer-language subjects. In the 9th grade, observations were conducted in Khmer Language, Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry classes. Data on academic achievement and attendance came from tracking a total of 444 students, including 162 6th graders and 282 9th graders. The goal of the

tracking was to examine whether (and how) private tutoring impacted students' academic achievement in different subjects.

The research design consisted of three parts, including: (1) an examination of the state structures, policies and local practices that enable teachers to tutor their own students; (2) the differences in the quality of education provision between public schools and private tutoring; and (3) the equity implications for education and Cambodian society because of any quality differences and cost barriers to accessing private tutoring. In this chapter, we will focus on findings related to the issues of social justice.

Findings: multiple perspectives on educational justice

In Cambodia, the form of private tutoring where public-school teachers double as tutors and students double as customers is called *Rien Kuo* (extra study). It can also be referred to as *Rien Boban Porn* (supplemental study) or *Rien Chhnuol* (study for hire). This type of private tutoring focuses on covering the required school curriculum, which is not taught during school hours, but can also include national examination preparation. Such lessons are typically conducted in school buildings or a teacher's home.

It is precisely this situation that is considered detrimental to mainstream education as found, for example, in Bray's (1999) previous research, which revealed that teachers were purposefully 'slowing down' the delivery of curricular content to create a market for private tutoring (p. 55). Such a practice is generally discussed from the perspective of educational corruption because there 'is a thin line distinguishing an investment in learning and an investment in the result of that learning' (Heyneman, 2011, p. 185) when a teacher tutors her own students for a fee (see also Klitgaard, 1988; Chapman, 2002; Bray, 2003; Hallak & Poisson, 2007; Heyneman, 2009). When 'attendance at private tutorial classes is the only way of acquiring knowledge that is essential for passing examinations' (Hayden & Martin, 2011, p. 13), it is perceived as a form of social injustice that undermines the institution of public schooling.

This form of shadow education has been found in studies conducted in other low-income countries. Teachers who tutor their own students in such countries have been labelled 'monopoly suppliers' who have 'the full discretion in what they supply' (Biswal, 1999, p. 223). In this context, the teacher acts as 'a price discriminating monopolist' by charging a fee based on parents' income for the same tutoring effort, while also partially controlling the demand for tutoring through the supply of her effort in the public education system (Biswal, 1999, p. 59). Similarly, teachers have been referred to as 'monopoly suppliers' in some countries of the former socialist bloc, where the proportions of students

tutored by their own schoolteachers reach 51% of students in Tajikistan, 40% in Kazakhstan and 39% in Kyrgyzstan and Mongolia (Silova et al, 2006). In Bulgaria, Croatia and Serbia, over 60% of surveyed university students 'knew of bribery for a grade or an exam among their faculty' (Heyneman et al, 2008, p. 5). In Moldova, it was reported as high as 80%. In all these cases, private tutoring has been understood and conceptualised as a form of corruption, which is detrimental to the public good of mainstream education.

In such situations, it is often structural deficiencies (i.e. limited funding, inadequate oversight, insufficient or dilapidated infrastructure, etc.) of the national education system that limit the supply of public education and thus create the need for private tutoring. In such situations, households often demand private tutoring from public-school teachers when the system of public education does not satisfy students' needs or desires to be educated. These structural issues, which contribute to the system of private tutoring, provide the context for understanding justice within the Cambodia system of education.

Structural Issues

The structural issues that affect the mainstream education system in Cambodia mainly centre on a curriculum perceived to be too long to complete during the official school day; limited educational expenditures that negatively impact teachers' salaries; and large class sizes that prohibit teachers form teaching effectively.

Private tutoring is partly needed because the national curriculum is perceived to be too long. Students and parents perceived private tutoring as a mechanism that enables teachers to properly teach the subjects included in the national curriculum. As one parent explained: 'There are many subjects in government school and teachers do not have time to teach them all.' In particular, many parents and teachers believe that there is simply not enough time in the school day or too many students in a mainstream classroom to cover the entire curriculum. This perceived lack of time leads to a perceived need for more instructional time simply to provide requisite coverage of the national curriculum. A teacher explained to us how she 'rushes' to finish the curriculum by saving some material for private-tutoring lessons:

> We rush to keep up with the curriculum. [During official school hours], we teach only theory and give only a few examples. If students go to private tutoring, they can practice [at the board] because there are fewer students ... We cannot get all students to practice [at the board] in government class. It requires a lot of time.

Low public educational expenditures also contribute to the demand for private tutoring. In countries financially unable to support public education adequately, private tutoring emerges as a mechanism to supplement low teacher salaries, provide smaller class sizes, and offer learning materials to students outside the national curriculum (Silova, et al. 2006; Silova, 2009; Bray, 2010; for the Cambodian case see Bray & Bunly, 2005; Brehm & Silova, 2014). The Cambodian government spends 2.3% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education, placing it among the lowest in Southeast Asia and below the world's average of 4.8% (European Commission, 2012). Although the budget allocation to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) for recurrent expenditures increased starting in the 2000s, there has been a steady decrease since 2007 (see Figure 1). According to the European Commission (2012), there was a downward trend in budgeted recurrent expenditures between 2007 (19.2%) and 2012 (15.9%), which has disproportionately affected teacher wages (Benveniste et al, 2008, p. 74). Meanwhile, studies have found that households spend a larger amount on education per child than does the government: whereas the government spends on average US$50 per child per year (Ratcliff, 2009, p. 11), households spend between US$48 (rural areas) to US$157 (urban areas) per child per year (NGO Education Partnership [NEP], 2007, p. 18). Of household education expenditures, approximately 38% goes to education fees, which includes the cost of private tutoring (NEP, 2007).

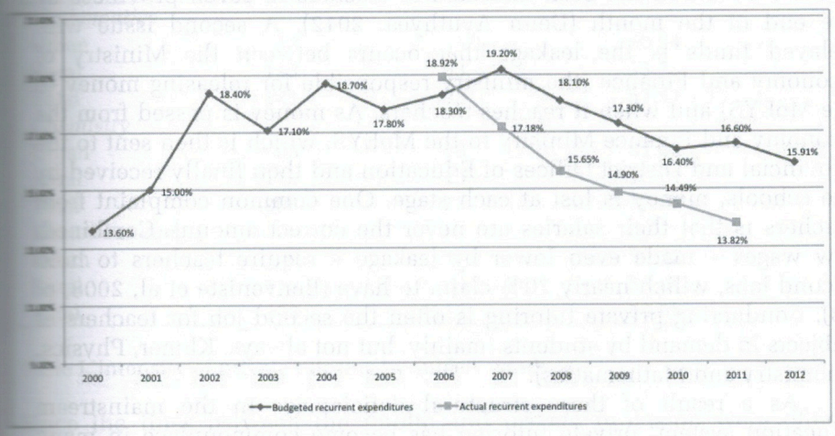

Figure 1. MoEYS budgeted and actual recurrent expenditures.
Source: European Commission (2012)

Consequently, the lack of educational resources disproportionately impact teacher wages. In Cambodia, there has been a broad consensus among educators, union leaders, administrators and society in general

that teacher salaries are insufficient to cover living expenses (Benveniste et al, 2008). In 2007, for example, a primary teacher's base salary was US$44 per month, which made it difficult (if not impossible) for many teachers to afford the basic necessities of food, housing and health care, as well as support any children or elderly family members (Benveniste et al, 2008, 59). Notwithstanding the recent increases in teacher salary, private tutoring has helped underpaid teachers generate additional income. For example, a common second occupation among Cambodian teachers, especially in urban primary schools, is private tutoring (41.5% of urban teachers identified tutoring as out-of-school work; [Benveniste et al, 2008, p. 69]). Earnings from private tutoring can represent approximately two thirds of the monthly average base salary with basic allowances (Benveniste et al, 2008, p. 38). Similar to teachers in other geographic areas (such as the Southeast/Central Europe and the former Soviet Union), many Cambodian teachers have adopted the logic of 'service provision', using private tutoring as a key income-generation activity (Silova & Bray, 2006).

Making matters worse, there is often a delay in the allocation of funds. In Cambodia, both teacher salaries and Programme-Based Budgeting (unallocated money intended for individual schools, which used to be called the Priority Action Programme, or PAP) are routinely distributed late. Teachers have claimed that the distribution of wages is typically delayed (VSO, 2008). For example, salary disbursement in January 2012 had not been allocated to teachers in seven provinces by the end of the month (Denn Ayuthyea, 2012). A second issue with delayed funds is the leakage that occurs between the Ministry of Economy and Finance (the ministry responsible for releasing money to the MoEYS) and when it reaches teachers. As money is passed from the Economy and Finance Ministry to the MoEYS, which is then sent to the Provincial and District Offices of Education and then finally received by the schools, money is lost at each stage. One common complaint from teachers is that their salaries are never the correct amount. Combined, low wages – made even lower by leakage – require teachers to hold second jobs, which nearly 70% claim to have (Benveniste et al, 2008, p. 68). Conducting private tutoring is often the second job for teachers of subjects in demand by students (mainly, but not always, Khmer, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics).

As a result of these structural deficiencies in the mainstream education system, private tutoring has become commonplace in many schools. In our study, education stakeholders commonly understood that a child's education requires *both* government and private-tutoring classes. As one parent said: 'You learn 50 percent in a government school and 50 percent in private tutoring.' Both are inseparable parts of one system necessary to receive a complete education. For this reason we conceptualised the education system as a 'public-private hybrid' (Brehm

et al, 2012), because mainstream schooling relies on private tutoring to complement what is defined as adequate schooling.

Students in the schools in this study heavily demanded the hybrid system of education. 'Private tutoring helps the children a lot,' a parent told us, 'because government school is not enough.' Within our study, 68.4% (193 out of 282) of 9th graders attended at least one private-tutoring lesson each month data was collected (see Table I for attendance rates by subject). In the 6th grade, although attendance was lower than the 9th grade, 41.3% of all tracked students (67 out of 162) still attended a private-tutoring lesson, which mainly focused on mathematics and/or Khmer Language. We found that during the day, students seamlessly moved between spaces of public and private educational provision. Often times the only distinguishing characteristic between the two spaces were student uniforms, worn in mainstream schooling but not required in private tutoring. Students typically attended one shift (four or five hours) of government school and then, returning to school (or teacher's home), attended another shift of private-tutoring classes (one to four hours, depending on the student) each day, sometimes including Sundays, public holidays and summer vacation, which costs roughly 300-1000 Riel (US$0.08-0.25) per hour.

	Students in government class	Students in private tutoring	% of students in private tutoring
Mathematics			
Urban	58	35	60.34
Rural	113	63	55.75
Total	171	98	57.31
Chemistry			
Urban	95	58	61.05
Rural	113	19	16.81
Total	208	77	37.02
Khmer Language			
Urban	90	47	52.22
Rural	113	64	56.64
Total	203	111	54.68

Table I. Intensity of private tutoring by subject, grade 9.

Since the lines between the public and private provision were often blurred, we found many continuities between private tutoring and mainstream schooling. Data collected from classroom observations and confirmed in the interviews and focus groups suggest that private tutoring is in many respects a continuation of government school in terms of teaching methodology and curriculum content (see Table II). For example, teachers assigned homework and even presented new material in private-tutoring lessons. Likewise, students appeared to be involved in

similar activities in both government classes and private-tutoring lessons, including answering multiple-choice questions and responding to teachers who give examples to the whole class.

However, there were some differences between private tutoring and mainstream classes. Not only were there fewer students in private-tutoring classes and teachers were able to offer examples outside the national curriculum, but teachers were also able to employ pedagogies tailored to individual students. In private-tutoring classes, we often observed teachers circling the room to help students complete individual practice examples, whereas in mainstream school students often worked on problems in groups. Although group work may be a preferable classroom-management technique (and recommended as part of the Child Friendly School modalities) in classes with many students compared to ones with fewer, it was not found to be an 'enjoyable' (a common word used during the focus groups) technique by students and teachers alike. One teacher explained: 'It takes students too much time to work in groups. It is not easy ... It is not like fetching water with a dipper. It is fine if we just asked them to raise their hand and answer our questions.'

Teacher pedagogy	Government school $n = 14$ % of classes observed (number of classes observed)	Private tutoring $n = 14$ % of classes observed (number of classes observed)
High-ability students work with low-ability students	28.6 (4)	14.3 (2)
High-ability students help teach whole class	71.4 (10)	50.0 (7)
Call on weak students to answer questions	50.0 (7)	42.9 (6)
Students answer multiple-choice questions	14.3 (2)	14.3 (2)
Students answer questions at board	100.0 (14)	71.4 (10)
Teacher assigns homework	64.3 (9)	42.9 (6)
Teacher presents new material	78.6 (11)	35.7 (5)
Teacher provides whole-class instruction	100.0 (14)	85.7 (12)
Students answer in chorus	71.4 (10)	64.3 (9)
Teacher gives example to whole class	78.6 (11)	78.6 (11)

Table II. Similarities between government-school and private-tutoring classes.

The Multiple Meanings of Educational Justice

Within a context of limited educational finances, classrooms too full for effective teaching, and a curriculum too long to compete in double-shift schooling situations, what issues of (in)justice arise from situations where teachers tutor their own students? We attempt here to unpack the various perspectives on educational justice in the context of teachers tutoring their own students. We will discuss the findings in relation to the most common argument that teachers who tutor their own students engage in and/or contribute to a form of educational corruption because it either reproduces social inequalities (i.e. rich students attend more private tutoring than poor students) or is detrimental to the institution of public school (i.e. causes teachers to act maliciously in order to manufacture demand for private tutoring). In both instances, when private tutoring is considered educational corruption, our study produces evidence for *and* against this claim.

A Reproduction of Social Inequalities?

Our findings reveal that rich students are perceived to attend private-tutoring lessons more often than poor students. Students who go to private tutoring are generally perceived to come from the upper-middle or upper classes of society, whereas those who do not attend tutoring come from lower-middle or lower classes. A primary-school student who does not attend private tutoring stated: '[Those students using private tutoring] are rich and have a medium-level living condition; very few are poor, [and] all have a budget and time [for extra classes].' This is obviously related to the costs of private tutoring, which was one of the main reasons cited why students did not attend private tutoring. One student who does not go to private tutoring observed: 'Students who go to private tutoring are the students from fairly rich families.' Agreeing with this student, another participant added: 'The students who go to private tutoring are the children from the families which do not have many members, are able to earn enough money to spend on food and education for their children.' Beyond the cost of tutoring, the amount of time students could devote to their education differed between groups of students. Students who did not attend private-tutoring lessons often had to work for their families after mainstream school had finished. Such work often includes farming, looking after siblings or participating in the informal economy through activities like weaving baskets. If and when students had the time and money, they would attend private-tutoring lessons.

The injustice arising from a system of private tutoring where only rich students can attend is precisely in the reproduction of inequalities along class lines, which manifests inside school. One teacher observed: 'Rich students hang out with rich students only.' Another example

offered by a teacher of the self-segregation along class lines was when a poor student asked a rich student to borrow a pencil. The teacher explained that the rich student in her class did not lend the poor student the pencil because of the class difference. A student reiterated this point by saying: 'The literate play with the literate; the illiterate play with the illiterate.' This theme resonates with the historical separation of people who are rich (*neak mean*) from those who are poor (*neak kro*) in Cambodia (see Brehm & Silova, 2014), and suggests schooling – and therefore private tutoring – both creates and reinforces the gap between the different socio-economic groups in Cambodia.

However, many teachers we worked with said they allow poor students to attend private tutoring for free or reduced fees. Among the teachers, students and parents interviewed, we routinely heard that students who cannot pay the fees for private tutoring are sometimes allowed to attend for free and, in some cases, owe their teacher for the private-tutoring lessons. One teacher told us she always announces to her class that private tutoring is available for all students even those who cannot pay. The teacher gave an example of what she tells her class each year: 'I want to conduct private tutoring. Whoever wants to use private tutoring, please go to my home. Whoever cannot pay can also attend.' Students also echoed this point. One student who did not attend private tutoring recalled a conversation she had with a friend who did: 'A private tutoring student asked me to go to private tutoring and I said I don't have money. She said it was fine because the teacher said if you have money, you could give it to him. But if you don't have money, there is no need to pay.'

A Detriment to Public School?

The main impact private tutoring has on mainstream schooling is the delivery of national-curricular content for a fee and the differences in academic achievement that result from some students receiving more curricular content. As mentioned earlier, the national curriculum is often continued in private-tutoring lessons, meaning that those students who cannot attend both mainstream schooling and private-tutoring lessons miss some of the required content. Consequently, students who attended private tutoring in our sample performed better on monthly examinations than those students who did not attend private-tutoring lessons. The grade tracking of 282 9th graders and 162 6th graders revealed that in general students who attended at least one private tutoring lesson during the month of May scored at least one grade higher than students who did not. The ability to attend private-tutoring lessons, therefore, had a negative impact on some students' scores in mainstream schooling as compared to others.

However, the notion that teachers were maliciously manufacturing demand was rare and only occurred in urban schools. Many urban parents told us that teachers who tutor their own students do it because of their desire to profit as much as possible off the structural problems plaguing the national system of education. An urban 6th-grade teacher confirmed this belief when she proudly told us she takes 'money from students because of ... [her low] living conditions'. She went on to warn: 'The government dare not blame [us for this].' Indeed, urban centres are more expensive than rural areas, thus making a second income or a partner who also works a necessity to survive. Moreover, in urban settings where teachers do not necessarily live in the same communities as their students, there is less of a conflict of interest to tutor their own students than in rural locations where teachers have to live in the same, small communities as their students. Although these perspectives echo the idea that teachers may be forcing students into extra classes purely for a financial gain, they are contextualised in the structural deficiencies of the public-school system.

In contrast, many rural parents found the extra lessons to be very useful to their children and community because they provided additional instruction time. In nearly all of our focus groups and interviews, parents and students believed private tutoring to be a positive experience because it increased the knowledge of the students. Even students who did not attend private tutoring framed it within the notion of increased knowledge: '[It] helps us be more knowledgeable [and] provide assistance for understanding.'

In the rural schools, it was often the community that pressured and convinced teachers to hold extra lessons. One teacher recalled a question from a concerned parent: 'Teacher, don't you conduct private tutoring?' The same teacher went on to explain: 'Those who use private tutoring are those whose parents want them to do so, [for] those whose parents did not want them to use private tutoring, we don't force them.' Another teacher raised a similar example of a primary school where parents hired a teacher to teach their children at home by paying US$30 each per month. In case after case, we discovered the demand for private tutoring was not being manufactured by teachers but rather by households. Although the rural teachers did profit from such classes, the motivation for holding them derived from the belief of community members that a teacher – through the means of private tutoring – could correct structural problems such as low teacher salaries or a short school day.

Discussion: liberal views of justice in private tutoring

How then do we understand educational justice in Cambodia *vis-à-vis* private tutoring? Since the type of private tutoring of interest here is often conceptualised as a form of corruption, it is worthwhile to

understand from where this viewpoint derives. When a teacher tutors her own students it is considered corrupt because it is a 'conflict of interest ... contrary to the professional standards of educators and should be punished with a fine and/or loss of teaching license (Heyneman, 2011, p. 186). In other words, the teacher who also tutors is corrupting the ideal form of a 'teacher', thus causing injustice. This line of reasoning is based on the political philosophy of liberalism because such a teacher corrodes an individual's capacity to make decisions freely and live life as he or she chooses.

Broadly speaking, liberalism suggests that individuals must respect a person's 'freedom to develop and exercise those capacities that are considered essential or important to being a person'; the good life, however defined, by 'protection from coercive interference'; and 'citizens' capacity for reason as well as their sense of reasonableness or fairness' (Shapiro, 1993, pp. 180-181). From the liberal perspective, then, justice in the context of private tutoring must be understood in terms of 'the extent to which parents from diverse social and economic backgrounds can effectively pursue their *choices* without being marginalised or excluded' (Mazawi et al, 2013, p. 212, emphasis added). In this understanding, social justice is essentially an idea based on the freedom of choice and the fair protection of groups who may be disadvantaged. Exactly how 'marginalised or excluded' groups are given choice is a question that generates divergent opinions within liberalism.

Liberalism contains two main, contemporary branches of thought: libertarianism and liberal egalitarianism. The former is based on thinking that sees free markets as the only way to achieve freedom and therefore justice. Libertarianism 'favour[s...] "procedural" theories of justice which emphasise individuals' entitlement to keep whatever resources or advantages they earn or inherit, passing this on to their children as they see fit with no right for state or society to intervene' (Exley, 2010). From this perspective, private tutoring is considered just if students are free to choose educational services without interference and are entitled to the benefits they may gain from such lessons. When it comes to excluded groups, the best remedy is government protection of the free market of educational services. Liberal egalitarians, by contrast, take a more active approach in protecting choice within society through a redistribution of resources in cases where unchosen inequalities or disadvantages are found to be the limiting factors of choice (called a 'patterned' theory of distributive justice; see Shapiro, 1993, p. 173). From this perspective, private tutoring is considered just only if everyone has an equal opportunity to attend extra classes and if students' intentions to attend these lessons are derived from a moral duty and not from self-interest.

Liberal egalitarianism stems partly from a Kantian notion of justice, which is based on the assumption that actions in the self-interest of an individual go against his or her moral duty. If the motive to achieve some

and derives from self-interest, then the moral worthiness of such an action is not achieved. For Kant (1785/1964), actions considered morally worthy are categorical and not hypothetical:

> If the action would be good solely as a means to something else, the imperative is hypothetical. If the action is presented as good in itself, and therefore as necessary for a will which of itself accords with reason, then the imperative is categorical. (p. 414)

Categorical imperatives are defined by two 'maxims'. First, for actions to be considered moral, individuals must be willing to turn that action into a universal law. That is to say, people 'should act only on principles that [they] could universalize without contradiction' (Sandel, 2011, p. 120). What is good for one, for example, must be good for all. Second, actions are moral only if they treat humanity as an end and not a means. Such thinking is the basis for notions of the universal declaration of human rights. These maxims taken together provided a way for Kant to determine whether actions freely taken by an individual could be considered moral and therefore just. This was a way to think about *social* justice because it embraces all of humanity unlike contemporary libertarianism, which is mainly concerned with *individual* justice.

More recently, John Rawls (1971) elaborated on the notion of moral duty *vis-à-vis* justice and freedom. He believed that freedom is best understood in an original position of equality. If we can put a 'veil of ignorance' over society, everyone would define the principles of 'moral duty' in a way that does not exclude one person if he or she is born into a poor family or lower class than another, but also does not limit someone if he or she is born with particular natural talents. The 'veil of ignorance' is another way of meeting both of Kant's categorical imperatives because through it a social contract can be agreed upon where 'no one would have a superior bargaining position, [so therefore] the principals [society] would agree to would be just' (Sandel, 2011, p. 141). From such a starting point, societal institutions like public education can be just by protecting freedom and choice through the equal opportunity granted to all members in society to use such institutions while limiting the negative aspects of a totally free-market society, which may result in some members *using* society as a means to gain a financial or other end. When unchosen disadvantages are present, it is considered just for a government to intervene to redistribute resources or opportunities accordingly.

Since there is a 'surprisingly thin line between strict egalitarianism and libertarianism' (Cappelen & Tungodden, 2004, p. 4), it is common to find mixtures of the liberal theories of justice. The notions of educational social justice found in the six schools under investigation offer an example of this. Within the notion of libertarianism, we found self-

interest present and accepted in many communities; for example, private tutoring was considered just for a student who can afford and was interested in attending private tutoring. Within the notion of liberal egalitarianism, there were cases of redistributive measures designed to include disadvantaged students into private-tutoring classes. Thus, the moral duty of teachers to act in ways that are good for all of humanity (Kant's second categorical imperative) was also present, particularly in rural communities where private tutoring was perceived to be righting a wrong. In addition, there were hints of utilitarianism when some people believed that the greater number of 'knowledgeable' people was good for society even if that meant excluding poor students from private-tutoring lessons. In the end, we found that the collective interests for society to provide education to all students were recognised, but ultimately displaced by the individual interests of households that could afford the extra lessons.

Conclusions: educational justice in an era of privatisation

In an attempt to overcome our natural proclivities towards a liberal theory of justice and acknowledge the complexity of shadow education, the case of teachers tutoring their own students in Cambodia was examined to show different theories of social justice within a context structural deficiencies. What we found was similar to Johnson's (2011) emphasis on context rather than corruption in his study of private tutoring in Kyrgyzstan, where 'students blame the context, not the culprits [i.e., teachers]' for corruption (p. 254), because 'workers perceived to be contributing to the greater good of society ... [are allowed to] deviate from the law' (p. 253). Our goal in this chapter was to overcome 'the immediate difficulty one confronts when examining the idea of social justice' by not thinking there is 'a single essential meaning' of social justice but rather see it as 'embedded within discourses that are historically constituted and that are sites of conflicting and divergent political endeavours' (Rizvi, 1998, p. 47).

The perspectives from teachers, students and parents in Cambodia made visible different perspectives on educational justice within private tutoring. This is apropos in today's climate of privatisation of public education, where 'private tutoring operates in relation to the larger field of private education' (Mazawi et al, 2013, p. 210). In this context, systems of mainstream education are like 'enterprises' that function as 'a self-maximizing productive unit ... in a market of performances' (Ball, 2012, p. 31). This system changes 'who we are and how we think about what we do' (Ball, 2012, p. 37). In other words, when the 'private sector is the model to be emulated' in schools (Ball, 2012, p. 30), the very social relations between people change, educational justice takes on new meanings, and political philosophies shift. Even the government's role in

education has been 'reconstitut[ed...] from that of service delivery to a combination of regulation, performance monitoring, contracting and the facilitation of new providers of public services' (Ball, 2012, p. 36). As this chapter has illustrated, this is clearly the case in the sites under investigation where the demand for private tutoring looks similar to the demand for education within the knowledge economy, which is 'driven by the production, distribution, and consumption of knowledge' (Kenway et al, 2006, p. 4).

In such a climate, the ethical dilemmas described in this chapter – teachers who may be perceived to degrade their profession, households who may exacerbate inequality and researchers/policymakers who may universalise their perspectives on shadow education – become profoundly important to future directions of public education in a society. That the meaning of social justice results in diverse understandings between urban and rural communities, between wealthy and poor families, is an expected outcome in a hybrid system of education. As choice and self-interest dominate conversations about education, it is important for teachers, households and researchers/policymakers to step back and ask: 'What virtues come from education that society should honor?' Such an Aristotelian question asking society to articulate a *telos* of education demands these diverse opinions about educational social justice to come into dialogue with each other.

Notes

[1] This quote was obtained during a yearlong 2011 study of private tutoring in Cambodia as part of the project entitled *The Hidden Privatization of Public Education in Cambodia: quality and equity implications of private tutoring* led by the authors in collaboration with Tout Mono and funded by the Open Society Institute Education Support Program.

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