

EMERGING FROM THE SHADOW

A Comparative Qualitative Exploration of Private Tutoring in Eurasia

Boris Jokić (Ed.)



NETWORK OF EDUCATION POLICY CENTERS

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EMERGING FROM THE SHADOW:
**A Comparative Qualitative Exploration
of Private Tutoring in Eurasia**

Azerbaijan

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Croatia

Estonia

Georgia

Boris Jokić, Tamar Bregvadze, Elmina Kazimzade,
Laura Kirss, Zrinka Ristić Dedić, Andrea Soldo

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Authors

Chapter I
INTRODUCTION
Boris Jokić

Mamed does not find it strange anymore that he is attending additional lessons at 8PM on a rainy November Wednesday in his hometown of Baku. For two years, he has been seeing a private tutor who is also a school teacher and he actually likes going to these lessons. Mamed and his tutor have established a good relationship, often joking but also working hard - something they both say is missing in what they call 'normal school'.

It is the same hour in Tbilisi, and Nino is waiting for the bus to take her to the office where she is tutoring a group of pupils preparing for national exams. She has worked the whole day in school and is really tired. She provides tutoring because her salary is very low and her family depends on this additional income. Although she enjoys both her job and tutoring motivated pupils, she also understands that her family life is suffering from this dual arrangement.

When 10 year old Siim began school, his parents Ingrid and Toomas had high levels of trust in the formal system of education in Estonia, and believed that their son's mild learning difficulties would be addressed within the regular system. However, as Siim progressed through his education, it became increasingly apparent that they would need to look for outside help due to the failure of the formal system to provide a flexible approach to meet the individual learning needs of their son. Although, at first, they felt that they could support Siim themselves, their working obligations and other roles did not allow them to provide any systematic or consistent help. For this reason, they decided to hire

a tutor who is now working with him to meet educational requirements and reach personal aspirations.

It is 5PM in Zagreb and although 17 year old Nikola has finished his regular school day, he still has a series of lectures to attend as part of a preparatory course for the high-stake external exams that he will sit in the coming spring. From early on in his education, both Nikola and his parents have wanted Nikola to study medicine and become a medical doctor. Although he is a high achiever and attends what is perceived to be a good school, Nikola and his family still see preparatory courses as a welcome and almost necessary supplement in order to fulfil educational aspirations and ensure that Nikola does not fall behind others who have also decided to use these services.

At the same time, 414 km to the southeast in Sarajevo, the mother of 13 year old Azra is attending a consultation hour with the head teacher of Azra's class. The head teacher tells her that Azra has been falling behind in Mathematics and that this has shown in her grades. She specifically states that the Mathematics teacher has recommended the use of private tutoring in order to fill the gaps in Azra's knowledge and to better systematise the course content. Azra's mother asks if the head teacher can recommend anyone she knows is of high quality. After some hesitation, the head teacher mentions a colleague from another school. Upon arriving home, Azra's mother discusses the situation with the whole family. Azra argues that she has 12 subjects that all require hard work and that the Mathematics teacher is not explaining content in an understandable manner. Despite Azra's insistence that poor teaching practices and the excessive number of subjects are to blame for her failure to master the necessary knowledge, a family decision is made to contact a tutor.

(Reconstructed on the basis of the researchers' research diaries and notes)

For a significant number of pupils and their parents, the decision to use private tutoring (PT) services has become a norm, rather than an exception. Empirical evidence suggests that this is not only the case in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia and Georgia, where the comparative qualitative research effort on which this book is based has been conducted, but probably in most parts of the world (Bray, 2009). As excerpts from research diaries of the present project suggest, the issue of PT is deeply personal and reflects both the struggles and aspirations of various individuals in both education and life in general. The aim of this book is to present and discuss empirical evidence, derived from all five participating contexts, illustrating and examining the multiple issues and elements related to the familial decision whether or not to use PT services.

Over the last two decades, questions concerning how, under what circumstances and with what implications did PT, often called shadow education (Bray, 1999; George, 1992; Marimuthu, Sing et al., 1991; Stevenson & Baker, 1992), emerge have been of interest in both academic and public policy communities. Although the PT phenomenon existed long before this current interest, and was indeed identified as a 'world megatrend' by Baker and LeTendre in 2005, it was not until the mid-2000s that more robust research examining PT in diverse educational, economic and cultural contexts arose (Bray, 2010). The international significance and relevance of the issue is further raised by the fact that many international and supranational organisations such as UNESCO (Bray, 2009), the World Bank (Dang & Rogers, 2008), Asian Development Bank (Bray & Lykins, 2012) and the European Union (Bray, 2011) have commissioned original research or published reviews examining the evidence currently available on the PT phenomenon. In addition, the regions in which the present research was carried out are not an exception to this increased interest in PT research.

The Open Society Institute's Education Support Programme (OSI-ESP) and the Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC) project 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring', carried out during the period of 2003-2006 and resulting in the edited volume *'Education in a Hidden*

Marketplace: Monitoring Private Tutoring (Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006), featured prominently in global research and policy scenes interested in PT. This is not surprising as this project represented one of the first comparative research efforts focused exclusively on the PT phenomenon. Furthermore, it was the first research endeavour to systematically explore and document the PT phenomenon in nine countries that had once been under various communist regimes: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine. As the first of its kind, this large scale quantitative research based mainly on the perspectives of pupils and students focused on the general characteristics of PT such as the scope, cost, geographic spread and subject matter of PT services as well as factors underlying the demand for PT and the impact of PT on formal educational systems (Būdienė, 2006). This initial project offered clear and intriguing findings regarding the characteristics and organisation of PT in all participating countries. It showed that PT was widespread, with researchers in all countries reporting that over half of participants participated in some form of PT in the final year of secondary education (Silova & Bray, 2006). In most of the researched contexts as well as in the follow-on study in Central Asia, these results instigated active and dynamic debate regarding the PT phenomenon (Silova, 2009).

Using the results of the initial study as a starting point, the new NEPC research project 'Private Tutoring Phenomenon: Developing Policy Options' emerged with an aim of moving forwards from the previously established 'diagnostic' picture of the PT phenomenon in individual countries towards an in-depth exploration of the foundations and implications of this complex phenomenon. It was believed that the results of such an exploration would serve as an appropriate basis for the development of relevant and contextualised policy options aimed at addressing the issues inherent in the PT phenomenon.

In addition to providing a quantitative foundation from which the aims and questions of the present research were developed, the initial PT study additionally served as a source for defining a number of constructs applied in the present research project. In the first

instance, the initial study's definition of PT was applied in the present research, where PT is defined as a *'fee-based instruction in academic school subjects that is complementary to instruction mainstream schools provide free of charge. PT includes lessons provided one-on-one or in small groups by individual instructors as well as larger classes provided by individual instructors and companies'* (Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006, p.13). This definition allowed for a broad and contextualised consideration of the PT phenomenon in different countries and incorporates several important elements worthy of mention here:

- *Instruction in academic school subjects* limits the discussion to the subjects taught within the formal system of education. As such, it excludes extra-curricular subjects or activities.
- *Fee based instruction* limits the discussion to tutoring provided by individuals or organisations for financial gain. As such, it excludes tutoring organised by schools or the education system that is not fee-based, as well as voluntary tutoring conducted by teachers, friends, acquaintances or family members.
- *Types of private tutoring* are defined to include various organisational forms including individual and small group tutoring as well as tutoring in larger classes.
- *Forms of private tutoring* are defined to include both lessons (provided by individuals or private companies) and preparatory courses for high-stakes assessment or exams for entrance into tertiary education.

The 'Private Tutoring Phenomenon: Developing Policy Options' project aimed to fulfil the following three overarching research aims:

- To explore educational stakeholders' perspectives regarding the PT phenomenon in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia and Estonia
- To compare educational stakeholders' perspectives across the researched contexts

- To develop, in partnership with participants, contextualised policy options for addressing the PT phenomenon in the individual countries

In order to fulfil these aims, a comparative qualitative methodological design was devised and applied with participants from governmental, political, professional, academic, PT provision, teaching and parental spheres. Arguably, the elaboration of the quantitative findings through an in-depth qualitative exploration of multiple perspectives is especially important for the still-emerging field of PT research (Bray, 2010). This is an argument supported by the claim that, in order to appropriately investigate complex issues like PT, a variety of methods are needed. More specifically, while effective debate about PT and the exploration of its foundations and implications would not be possible without the quantitative data arising from the initial project, it would similarly be impossible to fully understand the complexity of the PT phenomenon, as observed through the perspectives of various educational stakeholders, without the collection of the rich descriptive data arising from the second project.

This book presents the findings arising out of the exploration and analysis of educational stakeholders' perspectives regarding the PT phenomenon, and places its central focus on a comparison of these findings across research settings. As a comparative qualitative research effort conducted over the course of 18 months in five countries (2009-2010), it was of vital importance to first develop a sound and manageable research design. All stages of the research design were agreed upon by five research teams. Individual semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with selected educational stakeholders, a methodological choice deemed appropriate due to the designated number of educational stakeholders and a need for a deeper understanding of their perspectives. The complexity of the topic and the variety of professional backgrounds of the interviewees were some of the additional factors that further justified the decision to use semi-structured interviews and focus groups as main data collection

techniques. Criterion and purposive sampling were used to identify educational stakeholders from governmental, political, professional, parental, educational, PT provision, teaching and academic spheres. This inclusion of individuals and representatives of organisations from such varied contexts allowed for the gathering of a wider range of perspectives. Some of the covered themes included: personal experiences with PT; implicit conceptualisations and understanding of the PT phenomenon; the level of awareness of the prevalence of PT; factors influencing the decisions to use or provide PT services; reciprocal effects of the PT for the individual, educational system, society and economy; suggestions for the regulation of PT; and the development of possible policy options. In order to achieve even higher levels of comparability, interview and focus group protocols and approaches to data collection procedures were also commonly agreed upon. The project included two rounds of interviewing. In total, 105 individual interviews and 18 focus groups were conducted, recorded and transcribed, amounting to approximately 230 hours of recorded material. Data from all five countries were deposited in a common database and were subsequently analysed. The coding scheme was commonly developed and applied to the data from all five contexts.

This book has 10 chapters. In the next chapter, the conceptual framework developed in order to explore the educational stakeholders' perspectives regarding PT is presented. In this critical section of the book, the decision concerning the use of PT services is positioned at the core of the conceptual framework. This decision is further contextualised within a wider ecological system broadly based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological paradigm and resulting ecological models (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, 1976) starting from the most proximal sphere of the individual to the most distant sphere of society. In the third chapter, the methodological decisions and design behind the present research project are carefully explored and described in detail, which positions the research design in the fields of both PT and comparative education research. This methodological precision

is important due to the qualitative nature of the research and especially its comparative design. Chapters Four through Nine represent the core of this book and provide the research findings and an analytical discussion of the various elements stemming from the conceptual framework. Instead of placing a general review of literature prior to the presentation of the findings, relevant theoretical and empirical literature is incorporated into each analytical chapter in order to better establish a comparative basis for the topics under discussion. The concluding chapter provides an overview of the findings and offers a discussion of the implications of these findings for future research examining the PT phenomenon.

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CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE DECISION CONCERNING THE USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

Boris Jokić & Zrinka Ristić Dedić

From the beginnings of academic research private tutoring (PT) has been described as a complex phenomenon difficult to conceptually grasp under one overarching framework (e.g. Stevenson & Baker, 1992). In fact, Bray (2010) argues that 20 years of conducting research aimed at examining various facets of the PT phenomenon in numerous contexts has only just partially augmented conceptual homogeneity within the field. His persistent efforts in systemising the empirical and theoretical contributions exploring the phenomenon have been summed by him as *'assembly of a jigsaw puzzle with most of pieces missing'* (Bray, 2010, p.3). In many ways, this absence of broad conceptual and theoretical frameworks was, and still is, expected in light of the relatively short period of academic exploration and especially high level of complexity of the PT phenomenon itself.

In light of this complexity, Bray (2010) argues that no single study on PT can cover every dimension of the phenomenon. Indeed, the list of potential research themes in the field is arguably as extensive as that for general educational research. Consequently, researchers have necessarily focused their studies on specific elements related to the PT phenomenon, such as the prevalence, the effectiveness, cost, the educational impact, determinants of demand, social stratification or communication (e.g. Ireson, 2004; Silova, 2009; Baker et al., 2001; Mischo & Haag, 2002; Bray, 1999; Silova & Bray, 2006; Bray & Kwok, 2003; Kim, 2007; Tansel & Bircan, 2006; Southgate, 2009). In addition to concentrating on specific elements, researchers have also focused on the exploration of perspectives and behaviour of specific actors within the PT phenomenon. Consequently, research

efforts have focused more directly on pupils, teachers, parents or organised PT providers. Furthermore PT research has been characterised by disciplinary diversity, with research efforts applying varied approaches ranging from economic (Dang & Rogers, 2008; Kim, 2007), sociological (Aurini & Davies, 2004), psychological (Ireson & Rushforth, 2011) and ethnographic (Buchmann, 2002) to more interdisciplinary approaches (Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006). In conducting PT research, each individual approach has introduced concepts and orientations characteristic to the discipline itself. Together with the previously mentioned diversity in research foci and targets, this ontological heterogeneity has made the construction of an overarching conceptual framework extremely challenging.

In an attempt to address this challenge, in addition to fulfilling the stated research aims, the conceptual framework of the present research was devised as an open platform that would allow for an interdisciplinary exploration of perspectives on specific facets of the PT phenomenon at different levels, ranging from the individual level of pupil to a larger societal level. Before describing the conceptual framework in further detail, an important distinction, needs to be made between conceptualisations of PT usage and PT provision. This distinction, which relates to the use of economic concepts of demand and supply, is one that has at times been insufficiently emphasised in many PT research efforts. Arguably, although PT usage and provision represent different facets of the same phenomenon and are intrinsically and causally related, these two elements require separate conceptual frameworks in order to be adequately understood and examined through empirical study. In the following sections, the conceptual framework developed for the exploration of the elements related to the use of PT services is presented. The conceptualisation of the provision side of the phenomenon, focusing exclusively on teachers' motivation to provide PT services, is briefly discussed separately in Chapter Five.

In the present research, *the decision concerning the use of PT services* is located at the centre of the conceptual framework. At the outset, it is important to emphasise that this term includes both the

decision to use PT services and an equally conscious decision not to use PT. Furthermore, while the use of the noun *decision* might imply a position, opinion or judgment reached after consideration at a specific moment, it is used here in the more general sense as a tendency towards reaching a certain conclusion.¹

The placement of the decision concerning the use of PT services at the centre of the conceptual framework is different from the majority of previous quantitative research efforts examining PT, which have employed various indicators of actual PT use as a dependent variable and, as such, a central feature for all further conceptualisations. As a comparative qualitative explorative research aimed at gaining an in depth understanding, it was important to focus the investigation in the present research on the conditions influencing the decision to use (or not to use) PT services and the possible effects of this decision in and across five contexts.

The placement of this crucial decision at the centre of the conceptual framework also differs from other research efforts where the foci of conceptual frameworks were the actors involved in PT, such as pupils, parents or providers. Because the present research aimed to include the perspectives of a diverse range of educational stakeholders who would offer often conflicting views, it was important to place the decision concerning the use of PT services at the centre of any further conceptualisation. It should be noted here that this conceptual choice does not implicate a focus on the analytical exploration of the actual decision making process undertaken in choosing whether or not to use PT services, but instead of the varying perspectives of multiple educational stakeholders on the potential influences and impacts of this decision. Indeed, while the former is certainly a worthy research endeavour in itself, the orientation of the present research design and consequent methodological decisions do not allow for such an investigation.

¹ Throughout this book, the phrases 'decision concerning the use of PT services', 'decision concerning PT use', and 'decision whether or not to use PT services' are used concurrently under the presented definition.

By locating the decision concerning PT use at the centre of the conceptual framework, two central assumptions were made:

- The decision is almost exclusively made by pupils and/or their parents.
- Consistent with existing definitions of PT and the commonly-used metaphor of shadow education, this decision by parents and/or pupils is always closely related to both:
 - their perspectives on the formal system of education and,
 - their educational aspirations.

In the first instance, it has been assumed that the decision is almost exclusively made within the realm of the family home. Indeed, although the mechanisms of communicating and marketing an individual need for PT services are varied and complex (and sometimes very powerful), the final decision is nearly always made by parents and children together. Although there may be cases where the decision whether or not to use PT services is made by the pupil alone, such as in preparation for entrance exams for tertiary education institutions, it is plausible to assume that, in most cases, it is parents who pay for PT services.

Secondly, it has also been assumed that the decision is based on the interaction between the pupils' and parents' perspectives on the formal system of education and their educational aspirations. The diagram presented in Figure 1 represents this interacting influence on the decision.

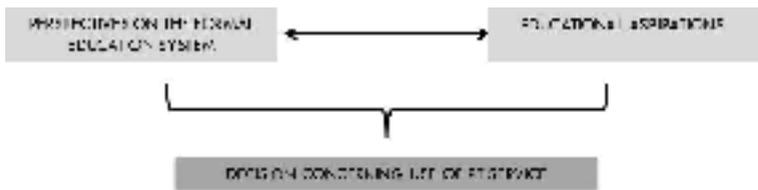


Figure 1: Elements affecting the decision concerning the use of PT services

Perspectives on the formal education system represent a complex and multifaceted concept of information, attitudes and beliefs that might include information about the pupil's educational achievement,

pupil and parental views on curricular content, perceptions of teacher delivery or the overall teaching and learning process, perceived adequacy of educational and psychological preparation for high stake assessment, beliefs regarding the quality of education offered in the formal education system, parental assessment of their child's motivation and work habits for fulfilling requirements set within the formal system of education, behaviour of other pupils or any other element incorporated within the complex system of formal education.

The educational aspirations of pupils and parents represent the ambitions and goals they hold with regards to both immediate and future educational experiences and outcomes. In many cases, educational aspirations are related to educational achievement, but they might also be tied to the curricular content being taught within the formal system, pupils' cognitive and conative development or various other educational and personal elements. Of course, the educational aspirations of pupils and parents are extremely diverse and constantly changing. In some cases, these aspirations do not extend further than achieving the minimum standards set by the formal education system to advance through the said system. In other cases, these aspirations might represent a more strategic orientation based on a conscious decision to invest in the pupil's personal development. This is perhaps particularly true in cases in which additional investment is made towards supplementary education, where the aim is to increase a pupil's chances for securing specific educational or professional experiences, such as enrolment into prestigious programmes of study at institutions of higher education.

Regardless of their scope, it is assumed that, when considering whether or not to use PT services, *these aspirations are always positioned in relation to parental and pupils' perspectives on the formal systems of education*. For example, in cases in which educational aspirations are to achieve the minimum standards required to advance within the formal system, the use of PT would not be deemed necessary as long as the pupil was able to acquire knowledge and skills within the formal system to achieve those minimum standards. Similarly, where more ambitious educational aspirations exist, the use of PT would not be sought as long as parents and children perceived

that the knowledge and skills gathered through formal education were sufficient for the fulfilment of these aspirations.

Clearly, in order to holistically understand the process through which the decision concerning the use of PT services occurs, one must consider the entire context in which it is being made. The conceptual framework of the present research was further developed in order to explore the elements from both proximal and distant spheres that might have an influence on the decision and, in turn, to a lesser extent the reciprocal effects this decision can have in each of these contexts. These elements have been contextualised within an ecological system broadly based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological paradigm and resulting ecological models (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1979). However, while Bronfenbrenner's model, originating from a theory of human development, positions the individual at the centre of the ecological system, it is the previously defined decision concerning the use of PT that is at the centre of the system applied in the conceptual framework of the present research. This ecological system, represented schematically in Figure 2, is divided into five socially organised subsystems, representing a set of nested and interconnected structures that all have a potential to influence the decision and upon which this decision can have a reciprocal effect. These structures range from the immediate individual characteristics of the pupil to the most remote setting of the larger society.

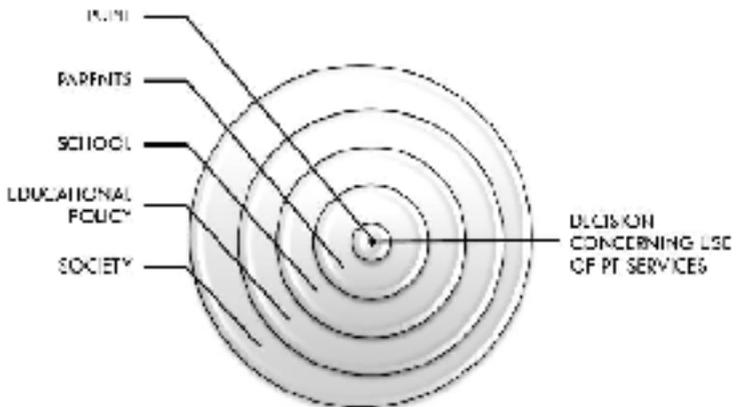


Figure 2: Conceptual framework of the present research

The most proximal sphere is that of the individual pupil. At this level, it is assumed that the pupils' individual characteristics, such as cognitive abilities, motivational patterns or work habits might influence the decision whether or not to use PT services. At the next level, parental factors are considered, including parenting styles, the quality of communication between pupils and parents regarding educational issues, and levels of parental monitoring of their child's educational achievement and performance. Thirdly, a clear and significant influence on the decision concerning PT use comes from the school, a sphere which is intrinsically connected with both parent and pupil levels. Here, elements such as teaching and learning practices within the school setting, school climate, assessment practices, class processes or teachers' competences all have the potential to contribute to the decision. The fourth sphere represents the educational system, which includes a consideration of constructs such as the overall structure of the educational system, educational policy, prescribed curricula, assessment arrangements, educational standards for national testing, and pre-service and in-service teacher training. While not directly related to the pupil and parents, these and other elements within the larger educational system might have an indirect influence on the likelihood of opting for PT services. In the fifth, and final, sphere, the wider societal and cultural influences on the decision are represented, which might include the instrumental value placed on education within a specific society, decisions and behaviour of others with regards to education and PT, levels of competitiveness, as well as trends with respect to both education and PT.

While factors at all levels have the potential to influence the individual's decision concerning the use of PT services, the decision itself similarly has a potential effect at each level. A substantial number of studies has indicated that the PT use for example can have direct influence on pupil's educational achievement, and also his or her motivation or work habits (Ireson & Rushforth, 2005; Tansel & Bircan, 2006). On the parental level, this decision can influence familial processes and be used as a way of structuring family life (Glasman, 2007). On the school level, the decision can affect the

work of teachers and influence teaching and learning processes within the formal system of education (Silova & Kazimzade, 2006). Although somewhat distant from the decision itself, the spheres of educational system and society can also be affected by the decision through influence on the assessment processes, and often mentioned conceptualisations such as the increase of the human capital or social inequity.

This conceptual framework is reflected in the development of the analytical framework presented in Chapter Three and is directly related to the presentation and discussion of results in each of the analytical chapters. First, Chapter Four explores the specific educational features from the sphere of educational policy that can influence the decision concerning the use of PT services. In this chapter, particular focus is given to issues of curriculum and assessment and the intrinsic relationship between them. In Chapter Five, elements contained within the sphere of the school are examined, focusing specifically on an exploration of the ways teachers, their practices and level of professional competences are related to the decision concerning the use of PT services. In Chapter Six, elements within the most proximal spheres, that of the individual pupil, are explored. Here, elements related to pupils' motivation, cognitive and conative abilities are related to the services provided within formal systems of education. Chapter Seven explores the ways in which various elements from the parental sphere are related to the decision concerning the use of PT services, while Chapter Eight explores the relationship between elements of the wider societal sphere and this decision. Finally, the last analytical chapter examines the patterns of PT use amongst families of differing socio-economic status and the effects that social stratification with regards to PT have on issues of social equity.

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CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGICAL
CONSIDERATIONS AND CHALLENGES
Boris Jokić

This chapter presents a thorough description of the research methodology. The chapter starts with an overview of the research on which the present volume is founded. This is followed by the methodological and paradigmatic considerations leading the research. The core element of the chapter is an elaboration of the different stages and decisions in the research process, starting from the development of the general sampling design, through a description of participant selection and the construction of data collection instruments and procedures, to a consideration of the decisions made in the process of data analyses. The chapter ends with a short discussion on the verification procedures aimed at ensuring quality in the present research.

3.1. A brief overview of the research

The basis of this book is a comparative qualitative research effort conducted over the course of 18 months in 2009 and 2010 in five countries: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia and Georgia. Individual semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions were conducted with selected educational stakeholders, a methodological choice deemed appropriate due to the designated number of educational stakeholders and a need for a deeper understanding of their perspectives. Criterion and purposive sampling were used to identify educational stakeholders from governmental, political, professional, parental, PT provision, educational, teaching and academic spheres. This inclusion of individuals and representatives of organisations from such varied contexts allowed for the gathering of a wider range of perspectives.

Interview schedules and focus group protocols were developed by research teams from all countries. In order to achieve even higher levels of comparability, interview and focus group approaches to data collection procedures were also commonly agreed upon. The project included two rounds of interviewing. In total, 105 individual interviews and 18 focus groups were conducted, recorded and transcribed, amounting to approximately 230 hours of recorded material. Data from all five countries were deposited in a database and were subsequently analysed using the NVivo software (NVivo, QSR International, 2010). In the analysis phase, a coding scheme was developed in which some codes were pre-determined based on the project's conceptual framework, interview schedules and focus group protocols, while other codes were established in response to the collected data itself. The coding scheme was applied consistently to the data from all five contexts. Data were coded in three waves of coding.

In the following sections, the research design, including methods used in interview development, participant sampling, data collection and data analysis, will be described and justified in full detail. First, however, a brief consideration of the methodological and paradigmatic frameworks informing the work are provided, with special emphasis on the relationship of the present research to the initial 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' project.

3.2. Methodological and paradigmatic approaches

There have been numerous calls for further empirical research examining private tutoring (PT) from diverse methodological approaches (e.g. Bray, 2003; Bray, 2010). To date, quantitative research focusing mainly on describing the PT phenomenon has been dominant, with fewer qualitative research efforts exploring the phenomenon. Further, although some of the quantitative research on PT has been comparative in nature, comparative qualitative efforts are less common, both in educational research generally and in PT research in particular. Some of the elements driving the methodological design of the present project aimed to address these methodological

deficiencies in the field. Specifically, the present study is defined by the following three methodological characteristics: a qualitative orientation, its relationship to the initial PT project 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' and a comparative emphasis. In the following sections, a more in-depth consideration of these elements is presented.

3.2.1. The qualitative nature of the present research and its connection to the research project 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring'

As previously mentioned, the present project was strongly tied to the 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' project, which explored the PT phenomenon in four out of five countries participating in the present research. This relationship stems not only from the fact that the Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC) financed both studies, and some institutions conducted both research efforts in each country, but also from the personal involvement of some of the authors of the present book in developing the initial project and its data collection instruments. The initial research was predominantly quantitative in its approach and included mainly perspectives of pupils and students, choices that corresponded adequately with its aims and research questions. The quantitative orientation was particularly appropriate in establishing, for the first time, the scope and features of the PT phenomenon in the participating countries. Using the results of the initial study as a starting point, the qualitative orientation of the present study was deemed appropriate in order to explore the foundations of the PT phenomenon and to consider the differing, and often juxtaposed, perspectives of different stakeholders across all countries.

Arguably, the elaboration of the quantitative findings through in-depth qualitative exploration is especially important for the still emerging field of PT research (Bray, 2010), an argument supported by the claim that, in order to appropriately investigate complex issues like PT, a variety of methods are needed. As previously mentioned, effective debate about PT and the exploration of its foundations and implications would not be possible without the quantitative data arising

from the initial project. At the same time, it would be impossible to fully understand the complexity of the PT phenomenon, as observed through the perspectives of various educational stakeholders, without the collection of the rich descriptive data arising from this project. This relationship between two research endeavours is consistent with the writings of Gorard and Taylor (2004), who proposed that, when examining complex topics, quantitative research should provide answers to questions of 'what' and 'how many', while qualitative research should answer questions of 'how' and 'why'.

At the core of the present project was the wish to discover multiple perspectives and the paradigmatic notion that, for each individual, reality with regards to PT is subjective (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). As such, it became critical to acknowledge that 'reality' is observed through the words of different stakeholders, selected on the assumption that they would hold different views about PT. In contrast to the foundations of the quantitative study in the 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' project, the notion driving the current project might be best summarized by the words of Bassey (1999):

'Instead of reality being 'out there', it is the observers who are 'out there'. They are part of the world they are observing and so, by observing, may change what they are trying to observe.' (p. 43)

This notion of the importance and imperative for change was essential to the present work, in which the heterogeneous profile of the interviewees not only suggested a need to appreciate and record the perspectives of each individual, but also to understand and advocate their potential role in formulating, shaping and altering the situation with regards to PT in each respective country.

Although the present research is characterized by a strong qualitative orientation, both research efforts, if considered together, might best be envisaged under the broad umbrella of mixed methods research. More specifically, and further to the previously posed argument from the work of Gorard and Taylor (2004), considered together both research efforts might best be described as employing

a multiple method design, defined by Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003) as *'research where more than one method or more than one worldview is used'* (p.10). This emphasis on the continuity of research and its position within a mixed methods framework is in line with the authors' overarching philosophy of holism as a core characteristic of research in the field of education. Arguably, this is of particular importance in the relatively under-developed field of PT research, where the use of diverse methodological approaches and focused attempts at integrating such approaches should be emphasized in order to move the field forward and develop accurate and deep understanding of its highly complex core concepts.

Based on these arguments, it becomes reasonable to claim that the core paradigmatic approach driving the present research is pragmatism. Pragmatism represents a way to reconcile the philosophical dualism promoted by purist positions of positivism and interpretativism (Morse, 2006). By rejecting dualism, pragmatism seeks to offer a more moderate and common-sense perspective on the issues of paradigms in social and educational research. It seeks ways of finding the most efficient way of solving problems, or in this case, answering research questions on the PT phenomenon. Gorard and Taylor (2004) state that the pragmatic researcher should accept arguments from both positivist and constructivist stances, recognizing the value of searching for an understanding of a universally 'true' reality, while also accepting that part of this reality is constructed and co-constructed amongst individuals and in the context of their environment.

3.2.2. Positioning the research in the field of comparative education

In his overview of the field of PT research, Bray (2010) makes a special warning concerning the conduct of PT research in cross-national and cross-cultural settings. His criticism is mainly aimed at worldwide assessment programmes such as Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), where items regarding PT serve as a

component of the background data and are not always formulated in line with existing body of knowledge on the PT phenomenon. If used non-selectively and without careful contextualisation, these items can lead to inaccurate conclusions and, consequently, have negative implications for the on-going development of the field. In line with the suggestions of Noah and Eckstein (1998) and Crossley and Watson (2003), Bray (2010) calls for clearer definitions and more careful consideration of the units of analyses in comparative cross-national and cross-cultural research. With this in mind, the present research applied Bray and Thomas's (1995) framework for comparative education analyses to determine units of analyses. Prior to describing this process further, it is perhaps first necessary to consider briefly the specific aims and purposes for conducting comparisons in the present research.

On a broad level, comparisons were undertaken in order to explore the PT phenomenon in five countries and to identify common and dissimilar forces and processes. The general aims of these comparisons were dual. First, as in the case of other academic comparison, the aim was the development of a conceptual understanding of the PT phenomenon. Second, in light of the overarching design the research additionally aimed to contribute to the amelioration of public policy and practice regarding this complex phenomenon in all five contexts.

Closely connected with these aims is the question of the duality of purpose in the use of comparisons in the present research. Specifically, while the research can be predominantly characterised by an interpretative purpose, it also incorporates elements directed towards a causal-analytic purpose (Manzon, 2007), a distinction which will be further clarified in the following paragraphs.

In the first instance, the interpretative purpose of the research was characterised by a focus on developing an understanding of the PT phenomenon in five countries. Here, the methodological decisions within the project can be tied to Bereday's four-step model for undertaking comparative studies: description, interpretation, juxtaposition and simultaneous comparison (Bereday, 1964).

As with other comparative efforts, the juxtaposition phase is of crucial importance, in which the researcher must establish 'tertium comparationis', or the criteria upon which valid comparisons can be made at different levels and units of analyses. In the present project, while the establishment of parameters for the initial comparability of the chosen units of analyses has been partially taken from the initial PT project, this process has been further developed within each stage of the research process as well as in each chapter of the present book. The researchers tried to avoid the mechanical identification of similarities and differences between contexts and stakeholders but rather to establish parameters for comparison in a more contextual manner with special emphasis on the complexities surrounding PT. Consequently, there is an emphasis on the identification of the extent and reasons for commonalities and differences between units of analyses as well as of the causes and effects of the PT phenomenon itself (Manzon, 2007).

In addition to its interpretative purpose, some elements in the present research design suggest a more causal-analytic purpose to the use of comparisons. Although the design and methodological choices do not allow for the establishment of true causality, the present research does aim to formulate models of the causal relationship within the conceptual framework and a coding scheme of the research. As such, the three-step approach to conducting causal-analytic research developed by Ragin (1987, p. 47 - 48) is also informative:

- find underlying similarities among units of comparison that have common outcomes;
- determine whether these similarities are causally relevant to the phenomenon of interest;
- on the basis of identified similarities, formulate a general explanation.

In addition to a consideration of the aims and purposes of comparisons, a discussion of the units of analyses is a central element of any

comparative research endeavour. As previously mentioned, the present project adopted the three-dimensional approach developed by Bray and Thomas (1995) for categorising foci for comparative research, conceptualized as a cube. In the first, geographic/locational dimension, seven comparative levels are identified ranging from Individuals to World Regions/Continents. The second dimension covers non-locational demographic groupings and includes ethnic, age, religious, gender and other groups as well as whole populations. The third dimension addresses educational and social elements such as curriculum, assessment, financing, teaching methods (Bray, Adamson & Mason, 2007).

In the following paragraphs, a brief discussion of the manner in which the ecological orientation of the current research fits in this multilevel model is presented.

Geographic/locational dimension – The complexity of the present study and comparative research in general is plainly evident in this dimension. At the most direct level, the aim of the study is to compare decisions concerning PT use in five sovereign states. Undoubtedly, Bray, Adamson and Mason (2007) are correct when emphasising that the sovereignty of a state does not guarantee the validity of comparisons and that the issue of intra-national differences is of crucial value. Arguably, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Estonia and Georgia represent states with centralised education systems that allow for cross-national comparison. In contrast, the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina is specific and demands special attention here. The country's constitution defines Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state consisting of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska, in addition to a separate administrative unit of the Brčko District. Further, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of ten cantons. Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is under autonomous rule of its separate entities (made up of the two aforementioned entities and ten cantonal ministries of education). As such, each of the twelve administrations has its own ministry of

education, laws in the area of education and educational budgets. In addition, each administration determines its own education policy and holds all other rights and obligations arising from the mandate of a competent educational authority responsible for the organization and functioning of the education system. This unique arrangement makes the inclusion of Bosnia and Herzegovina in cross-national comparisons highly problematic. In order to gain a more complete grasp of the political and educational complexity of the country, the research design envisaged a larger number of participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as targeted inclusion of spheres from both entities and several cantons. Arguably, this made the addition of perspectives from this country legitimate. At a higher level of generalisation, the five participating countries have been grouped and discussed in several ways. In the first instance, the distinction between Western Balkan countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia) and the three remaining countries is made. This distinction is geographical but also historical and political one based on shared history and strong linguistic connections.

Non-locational demographic groupings – As explained in the previous chapter, the present research was designed in order to collect the views of groups of stakeholders. This allows for a discussion of views of various groups (e.g. teachers, parents, high level politicians) both generally and across researched contexts.

Aspect of education and of society – As emphasised in the description of the conceptual framework, the decision concerning the use of PT services has been placed within an ecological system comprised of several subsystems. As such, the aspects of education and society that influence the decision are multiple and are discussed separately in each analytical chapter.

Of final note worthy of attention when discussing units of analyses is the viewpoint put forward by Manzoni (2007), who argues that the elements of Bray and Thomas' (1995) multi-level model should

be seen as having permeable boundaries, or as Bray, Adamson and Mason (2007) state, '*are in continuous dynamic flux*' (p.370). In line with the conceptual framework of the present study, it could be argued that, through an examination of the relationship of each ecological subsystem with the decision concerning the use of PT services, a comparison is made according to different geographic and demographic groupings as well as with regard to specific elements characteristic to each subsystem.

3.3. Research design

In the following section, the general sampling strategy is described. This is followed by a detailed elaboration of the samples in all five countries and the efforts made to establish sampling congruency across contexts. Next, a thorough description of the development and content of the interview and focus group schedules is presented, followed by a consideration of data collection procedures and efforts at achieving consistency in such procedures across all countries.

3.3.1. Sampling strategy

The selection and sampling of educational stakeholders for participation in the study were critical elements for establishing a basis for comparability. The first step in determining the sampling strategy was the identification of general spheres from which individual perspectives should be taken into account in the exploration of the PT phenomenon. Based on the projects' conceptual emphasis on the inclusion of multiple perspectives, individuals and representatives of organisations from a diverse range of spheres were included in the sample:

- persons responsible for educational governance
- other political representatives in charge of education
- educational professionals
- academics engaged in educational research and teacher training
- Non-Governmental and Inter-Governmental Organisations dealing with education

- teacher unions
- school principals
- PT providers
- teachers
- parents
- pupils

The inclusion of individuals and organisation from such varied contexts allowed for the collection of a wider range of perspectives and consequently resulted in a more holistic exploration of the causes and effects of PT in each context. In the following paragraphs, the rationale for the inclusion of individuals from each of these spheres is elaborated.

Persons responsible for educational governance

The rationale for the inclusion of perspectives from persons engaged in educational governance is based on the central relevance of the roles and responsibilities in governing the overall educational system. Furthermore, as governance holds a central regulatory role, the conceptualisations and awareness of the relevance of the PT phenomenon amongst representatives from this sphere represent a critical element for instigating potential change with regards to PT. In each of the five contexts, there existed somewhat different educational governance structures, characterised by varying roles and responsibilities at central and regional levels of government. As such, representatives in charge of educational governance from both governmental levels were included. Namely, in each context, the sample included high officials from the Ministry of Education and high officials from the regional and/or local government office in charge of education.

Other political representatives in charge of education

In addition to representatives from the sphere of educational governance, the perspectives of representatives from parliamentary groups in charge of education were included in order to ensure a more complete representation of political views in each context. Indeed,

while the formal system of educational governance represents the views of the political parties currently in power, the perspectives of other political forces are important for the exploration of the PT phenomenon in each country.

Educational professionals

Officials from professional institutions and organisations in the field of education represented another core element of the sample. Specific to each context, these included representatives from organisations such as Institutes of Education, curriculum authorities, assessment centres, pedagogical institutes, and inspectorates of education. The rationale for the inclusion of these perspectives in the present study was based on the assumption that their expert knowledge of the educational context and its characteristics would enable deeper insights into the underlying causes and effects of PT.

Academics engaged in educational research and teacher training

The perspectives of academics engaged in educational research and teacher training were similarly important to the research as they represented an important source of information regarding the conceptualisations of and evidence for the causes and the effects of PT in each context. Their inclusion was further justified by the fact that their perspectives can be critical of current governance and practices within formal systems of education. In addition, while their perspectives are necessarily subjective, the opinions of educational academics are perhaps less interest-led than those from other spheres.

Non-Governmental and Inter-Governmental Organisations dealing with education

Non-Governmental Organisations dealing with education were included in the sample as a potentially valuable and knowledgeable source of information on various aspects of each educational system. Because such representatives do not participate in formal governance, they often offer a critical perspective on the features of education systems. Furthermore, such organisations are commonly key players in the initiation of change to public policy and of public discourse on topics in education.

Teacher unions

As central organisations promoting the professional position of teachers, unions possess an expert knowledge of the educational context that was deemed highly relevant to the present research. Furthermore, because empirical evidence indicates that teachers are among the primary providers of PT services, it was important to include the perspectives of teacher unions regarding the causes and effects of PT in general, with particular attention to the provision of PT services by teachers employed in formal education.

School principals

The executive role of school principals in school leadership, together with their knowledge of the needs of educational organisations, teachers, pupils and parents, make their perspective important to a full understanding of PT. In addition, principals represent a bridge between educational policies determined at the central or regional level and educational practice occurring in schools. As such, they represent a source of valuable information regarding the potential for change in the formal education system and the regulation of PT.

PT providers

The perspectives of PT providers, as a critical source of information regarding the characteristics of PT service provision, were an essential element in the present research. Arguably, PT providers are in good position to describe the features and organisation of service provision in each specific context. Furthermore, they can offer an assessment of the elements in the formal system of education that potentially contribute to the decision concerning PT use. In addition, the role of service providers offers potentially interesting insight into the motivation of pupils and parents to use PT services. Because the provision of PT services is a heterogeneous phenomenon in all participating countries, the researchers aimed to include the perspectives of both directors of established institutions offering various forms of PT services and individual private tutors.

Teachers

Arguably, teachers are one of the most knowledgeable sources of information regarding the PT phenomenon, in that they are in a position to offer ecologically-valid perspectives on the various reasons for pupils and parents opting for the services of private tutors and to determine the features of the system that contribute to the emergence and growth of PT in each specific context. The perspectives of teachers are similarly important in light of the fact that they are also one of the main providers of PT services and, in many cases, the main source of communication to pupils and parents regarding such services.

Parents

The parental perspective was an important element in the present project. Most often, it is the parents who decide whether their child is in need of PT and in most cases, are those who finance this service. As such, their perspective on the causes and effects of the PT phenomenon and their personal role in the decision concerning the use of PT services is highly important and should inform any research examining PT.

Pupils

In the initial phases of developing the study, the inclusion of pupils' perspectives was designated as an optional element to the overall sampling strategy. This decision was based on the fact that the 'Monitoring Private Tutoring' project was based primarily on pupils' perspectives. While the quantitative nature of this project allowed for initial insight into pupils' perspectives regarding the causes and effects of the PT phenomenon, the option for each participating country in the present research to include pupils in their sample offered an opportunity to further probe their perspectives and understanding of the complexities of the PT phenomenon in each context.

All participant spheres were commonly determined and agreed upon by all country teams. Because any comparative research endeavour should allow for some flexibility, research teams were allowed to

add layers to the overall sampling strategy if they considered these inclusions would benefit the research in specific settings. In addition, if some segments of the overall strategy were not applicable in specific contexts, country teams were allowed to omit the conduct of data collection on a specific sampling level.

The selection of participants from all described spheres employed both criterion and purposive sampling. In accordance with a criterion sampling strategy, each research team identified the institutions and individuals whose perspectives should be included in the research. The criteria for their selection were based on one of two factors: the role and position held by the individual within a specific organisation (e.g. State Secretary for General Education, Director of the National Curricular Body) or the individual's experience and/or expertise in relation to the PT phenomenon (e.g. director of a centre providing PT services, researcher conducting academic research on PT). Purposive sampling was applied in the recruitment of participants for teacher and parent focus groups, where research teams were advised to contact those schools, teachers and parents willing to share their views on the PT phenomenon. As with any research employing purposive sampling procedures, the use of this strategy in the present research has implications for the generalizability of the findings and conclusions. These limitations have been carefully considered and will be discussed as they arise in the following chapters.

Once agreement on a common sampling strategy had been reached, each research team independently identified participants for its respective country. Throughout this process, considerable attention was devoted to the aim of addressing the challenging task of securing adequate comparability of participants across countries, whilst at the same time aiming to ensure strong national contextualisation. Through on-going and thorough discussion and collaboration, these seemingly contradicting goals gradually became less disparate as the sampling process proceeded. In the following section, a detailed presentation of participants in each context is presented.

3.3.2. Participants

In Table 1, the number of interviews and focus groups in each country for each group of educational stakeholders is presented.

Table 1. The number of interviews and focus groups conducted in each country for each group of educational stakeholders in both rounds of data collection

| <i>Educational stakeholders</i> | <i>Azerbaijan</i> | <i>Bosnia and Herzegovina</i> | <i>Croatia</i> | <i>Estonia</i> | <i>Georgia</i> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Educational governance – Ministerial level | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Educational governance – Local level | 1 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Other political representatives in charge of education | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | - |
| Educational professionals | 3 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| Academics engaged in educational research and teacher training | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Non-Governmental and Inter-governmental Organisations dealing with education | 5 | 3 | - | 2 | 4 |
| Teacher unions | - | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| School principals | 2 | - | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| PT providers | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| Teachers | 2FG | 2FG | 1FG | 2FG | 2FG |
| Parents | 2FG | 2FG | 1FG | 3 | 2FGs |
| <i>Optional</i> | | | | | |
| Pupils | 2FG | | National Committee of Pupils | Pupils' union | |
| TOTAL | 16+6FG | 27+4FG | 23 + 2FG | 18+2FGs | 21 + 4FG |

In total 105 individual interviews and 18 focus group discussions were conducted. The table reveals the high level of consistency between research contexts and only a few omissions with respect to groups of educational stakeholders. In order to protect the anonymity of the individuals who willingly participated in the study, the structure of the respondents in each of the stakeholder groups will be described only generally.

Educational governance – Ministerial level

In most countries, respondents were State Secretaries, Heads of Departments or Senior Advisers in the Ministries of Education. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, senior advisers of Ministries of Education from both Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska participated in the research.

Educational governance – Local level

In most countries, respondents were Heads or Senior Officers in the Education Departments of capital city governments. The only exception was in Bosnia and Herzegovina where, in order to adequately represent the educational governance in this country, participants were Senior Advisors from Brčko District, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.

Other political representatives in charge of education

In all countries, with the exception of Georgia, participants in this group of stakeholders were members of the parliament dealing with the issues of education.

Educational professionals

In this group, participants were from professional organisations in the field of education. In all countries, representatives of organisations responsible for the development and application of curriculum and assessment were included. In some countries, participants were representatives of organisations responsible for the professional development of teachers, school inspection and quality assurance.

Academics engaged in educational research and teacher training

In this group, participants were university professors or scientists from public research institutes in the field of education.

International and Non-Governmental Organisations dealing with education

In general, participants in this category were representatives from organisations such as the World Bank, parents' associations, teachers' associations and other NGO's in the field of education.

The only exception in this case was Croatia, which did not have any participants in this group. Although several NGOs operating in Croatia were invited to participate in the research, they all declined the offer because they did not feel competent with regards to the topic.

Teacher unions

With the exception of Azerbaijan, Heads or members of Teachers' unions participated in the research in all countries. In the case of Estonia, a member of the Mathematics Teachers' Association participated in the research.

School principals

Principals from both primary and secondary schools participated in the research in all contexts except Bosnia and Herzegovina.

PT providers

Participants in this group included Heads, Managers or Directors of private organisations providing PT services, with the exception of the Georgian case, where participants were individuals. In Estonia, PT providers who did not have an executive position also participated in the research.

Teachers

In all contexts, focus groups were conducted with teachers. In total, 71 primary and secondary teachers participated in focus groups. In Croatia, only secondary education teachers participated. In Estonia, where focus groups were not feasible, three individual interviews were conducted.

Parents

In all contexts, focus groups with parents of secondary education pupils were conducted. In most instances, participants were parents of pupils in secondary education.

Pupils

For this group, the Azerbaijani research team conducted two focus groups, one with university students and another with secondary pupils. The Croatian team conducted an interview with the elected

presidents of the National Committee of Pupils, while the Estonian research team conducted a group interview with three Board members of the Estonian Association of Pupils' Unions.

In total, the data collection conducted did not stray significantly from the data collection plan. As such, it allowed for both cross-national and intra-national comparison as well as for a comparison between groups of educational stakeholders. While the sampling procedure and the structure of participants do not grant grand generalisations, they do allow for an exploration of the elements influencing the decision concerning the use of PT services.

3.3.3. Data collection techniques and methods

Apart from teacher and parent participant groups, data from participants in all sampling spheres was collected through the use of semi-structured interviews. For parents and teachers, it was agreed that the main data collection technique would be focus groups. The decision to conduct semi-structured interviews was informed by Patton's (2002) observation of the lack of mutual exclusivity between different types of interviews, as well as Bogdan and Biklen's (2003) comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of structured and open-ended interviews. In addition, the complexity of the topic and the variety of professional backgrounds of the participants were a few of the factors that further justified the decision to use semi-structured interviews. In the first instance, a certain level of structure was required in order to ensure a constant focus on the topic and a certain level of comparability across countries (Fontana & Frey, 1998). However, a degree of freedom on behalf of the researcher was necessary in order to make the data collection process flexible, to adjust interview discussions to the characteristics of the PT phenomenon in specific contexts and to probe interesting responses and leads that had the potential to add to the depth of the interviews (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The decision to use focus groups with teacher and parent groups specifically was justified by the researchers' wish to include multiple perspectives from these heterogeneous groups. The economical nature of this data collection technique allowed for the gathering of

these varied perspectives in a short time span. In addition, it was expected that focus groups would represent a medium through which teachers and parents would more fully engage and interact with varied perspectives and would perhaps be more willing to openly discuss potentially sensitive issues within the PT phenomenon.

In the interest of comparability of findings across countries, all data collection was carried out during the period between May 2009 and September 2010. Consistency in data collection procedures was also ensured through the development of specific protocols and procedures for contacting potential participants and for conducting interviews and focus group discussions. These processes will be described more fully in the following sections.

Semi-structured interviews

Interview schedules were developed by country teams working together, and aimed to incorporate various aspects of existing knowledge regarding the PT phenomenon and an elaboration of the conceptual framework of the present research. The source interview schedule was developed in English and then translated to the language of each participating country.

The development of the interview schedules had several stages. First, interview themes were identified. Second, specific questions or probes under each theme were mutually agreed upon. However, true to the nature of semi-structured interviews, flexibility was incorporated into the interview schedules by allowing each country team to develop further probes specific to their contexts. In the initial phase of interview schedule development, twelve interview themes were formulated. These general themes are presented in Table 2, and further described in the following paragraph.

Table 2. General interview themes

| <i>GENERAL THEMES</i> | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Personal association with the PT phenomenon | 5. Characteristics of users | 9. General assessment of the significance of the PT phenomenon |
| 2. Perception of the scope of the PT phenomenon | 6. Characteristics of providers | 10. Assessment of the position of the PT phenomenon in the overall scheme of educational issues |
| 3. Relationship between PT and different educational levels | 7. Factors behind use and provision of PT services | 11. Possible policy options and assigned authority over the development and implementation of possible options |
| 4. Forms of PT | 8. Impact of PT | 12. Personal involvement in the development and implementation of PT policy options |

The first theme focuses on the personal association and experiences of participants with the PT phenomenon. Here, the aim was to explore whether participants, or someone in their immediate families, provided or used PT services. The second theme aimed to explore participant perspectives on the overall scope of PT in a specific country and any perceived changes to this scope over the previous five years. In the third theme, the focus was on participant perspectives of the varying degree to which PT is present at various educational levels (i.e. primary, secondary, transition points etc.). The inclusion of this theme was deemed important in light of the fact that the initial PT project almost exclusively focused on the transition between secondary and post-secondary education. The fourth theme aimed to explore participant perspectives on the different forms of PT in each specific context. More concretely, this theme aimed to examine the manner in which participants described and differentiated the scope and functions of various forms of PT services: individual tutoring, group tutoring, organised preparatory courses and other forms of PT services. Themes five and six aimed to explore participants' perspectives on the characteristics of typical PT users and providers and of the potential reasons for using or providing PT services. This topic is further elaborated under the seventh theme, which aimed to explore participant perspectives

on the various factors influencing provision and usage of PT services within a specific society. Here, factors were classified according to categories derived from the PT literature (Bray, 2001) and included economic, socio-cultural and educational factors. The eighth theme focuses on participants' estimation of the overall impact of PT in terms of both its positive and its negative consequences. Finally, the last four themes of the interview schedule were developed to collectively explore participant perspectives on the need for change in relation to the PT phenomenon and the development of possible policy options within a specific context. In the themes nine and ten, an exploration of participants' overall assessment of the PT phenomenon is followed by an estimation of the need for policy options aimed at regulating the phenomenon. This is followed by an exploration, in the last two themes, of participants' opinions on possible policy options and the roles individual stakeholders might play in the conceptualisation and implementation of such policy change. Once interview themes had been collectively agreed upon by all research teams, the aims for each theme and a suggested approach for examining each theme during interviews were developed. These elements served as an additional guide for interviewers in order to make interview process consistent across countries and to ensure a consistent approach to the interviews. These elements of interview development are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Specific aims and suggested approaches for interview themes

| <i>INTERVIEW THEMES</i> | <i>AIM</i> | <i>APPROACH</i> |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Personal association with the PT | Interview opener; relating PT to the personal experiences of the interviewee | Unstructured and open; allow interviewee space to describe his or her associations/history with PT |
| 2. Perception of the scope of the PT | Aimed at exploring interviewee's personal impression of PT's prevalence. An opening question, setting the scene for other elements probing perspectives on PT. | Direct; accept short answers. |
| 3. Relationship between PT and different educational levels | Aimed at probing perspectives on different functions of PT on different educational levels. | Open, encourage a personal perspective; probe for perspectives concerning different educational levels if not automatically mentioned. |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 4. Forms of PT | Aimed at probing perspectives on different forms of PT and their function. | Lead from the previous question; probe for various types of PT and the interaction between type and organization. |
| 5. Characteristics of users | The aim here is not just to name the types and characteristics of users and providers but to engage the interviewee in a discussion of their views on the reasons for using and providing PT services. | Direct questions; probe for views on various types of suppliers and users if they were mentioned before but not here. |
| 6. Characteristics of providers | | |
| 7. Factors behind use and provision of PT services | Two central and related issues in which the aim should be to explore the interviewee perspective. Do not attempt to solely follow literature findings, but to explore the interviewee's personal view of PT. | Delicate and open. Let the interviewee focus on the issues central to him/her. Can probe gently to explore views on differing factors (edu, eco, soc) but try not to be too direct or leading. |
| 8. Impact of PT | | |
| 9. General assessment of the significance of the PT | General assessment of the PT, probing for a discussion of both positive and negative elements. | Allow divergent views and the exploration of both positive and negative aspects of the PT. |
| 10. Assessment of the position of the PT in the overall scheme of educational issues | Exploring the issue of competing problems and PT's position in the overall scheme of current educational issues. | If interviewee underplays the problem, allow it.. In this case, probe for reasons why interviewee feels it is not a central issue and for views on more central issues. |
| 11. Possible policy options and assigned authority over the development and implementation of possible options | A central theme to the interview. It may be too optimistic to get sound policy options but, for the purposes of developing shared policy options, the participants' views are crucial. Responsibility for change may be shared, but probe for perspectives on who has the authority and power to make changes if they are needed. | Do not impose set views. Allow the participant space to formulate possible options. For each proposed option, probe for elaboration in relation to its content, feasibility, aimed impacts, possible side-effects, and involved stakeholders. There may be an opportunity to tentatively raise other issues discussed in the first part of the interview. |
| 12. Personal involvement in the development and implementation of PT policy options | Here, the goal is to identify specific stakeholders responsible for implementing policy options and to position the participant in an authorship role for the proposed options. | Approach should be structured and direct in asking interviewee to name stakeholders, but more exploratory in the examination of his or her own role. |

In addition to the development of interview themes and the suggested interview approach, an important element in the development of the interview schedules was deciding on the amount of information to be communicated to participants at the outset of the interviews.

Specifically, in light of the content of the interview schedules, the research team was conscious of the potential risk posed by providing information regarding the PT phenomenon and the aims and goals of the research project itself. The main concern was that the presentation of such elements had the potential to significantly influence interviewees' responses and consequently result in biased data. After careful consideration and discussion, it was decided that all research teams should provide the following general information prior to each individual interview:

- a commonly agreed definition of PT;
- mention of the widespread global character of the phenomenon;
- explanation of the importance of conducting research and reporting on the phenomenon;
- description of the projects' orientation towards the exploration of the perspectives of educational stakeholders;
- assurance of the importance of including the interviewees' particular perspective;
- a statement about the emphasis of the project towards developing policy options.

The research team felt confident that the provision of this information adequately oriented participants to the nature of the research and the reasons for their involvement, while avoiding any potential influence on participant responses during the interview.

As with the development of interview themes, the interview schedule used in all semi-structured interviews was commonly developed by all research teams. This schedule is presented in the Appendix.

The suggested interview procedure was that the stakeholder was officially invited to participate. Upon agreement, interview time was set up. In the most cases interviews took place in the working spaces of interviewees. Interviewer provided previously agreed upon information, then used schedule and approach guidelines to conduct interview. At the outset participants were asked about the recording of the interviews. None of the participant from all five contexts objected to this.

Focus groups

As was the case for interview schedules, focus group protocols were commonly developed through the mutual collaboration of research teams. Because focus groups discussions were being administered with both parent and teacher groups, two focus group schedules were developed that differed with respect to each groups' respective role within the PT phenomenon. Once again, general themes were first agreed upon, which was followed by the formulation of more specific questions and probes. Focus group protocols were initially developed in English, followed by a process of translation. In developing focus group protocols for teachers, country teams were given the option to focus on a specific group of teachers (e.g. elementary or secondary education teachers) and, as such, make modifications to protocols in order to ensure their appropriateness for a specific group.

In order to ensure adequate triangulation with data collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group protocols included similar themes and aims to those in the interview schedule. In order to ensure adequate levels of congruence across country teams, a suggested approach for addressing each theme was formulated. These are presented together with the protocol themes in Table 4 (for teachers) and Table 5 (for parents).

Table 4. Focus group themes and approaches (Teachers)

| <i>THEME</i> | <i>APPROACH</i> |
|---|---|
| 1. General impression of PT | A focus group opener. Approach should be wide and encompassing. Moderator should make an effort to reach all participants. |
| 2. Personal experience with PT | Be explorative here. Aim for the description of the participants' actual situation/experience with PT. If necessary, allow participants to go into specific details. Ensure inclusion of various perspectives. |
| 3. Reasons for PT usage | These are two central themes. The initial question in the schedule will likely open many streams of discussion, many of which are included in sub-questions and prompts. Allow the discussion to flow, but also take care to thoroughly explore differences and similarities between perspectives. It is of vital importance to collect data on participants' perspectives on the various reasons for PT use and provision. |
| 4. Reasons for PT provision | |
| 5. Differentiation of PT from mainstream education | Here, it is important to explore the manner in which participants distinguish between these two forms of educational endeavour. Be open and probe for teaching and learning differences in two settings. |
| 6. Effectiveness/impact of PT at the individual level | As above. Explore participants' personal perspective and assessment of the effectiveness/impact of PT. Include as many varying perspectives as possible. |
| 7. Impact of PT on mainstream education & society | Here, teachers are perhaps most likely to mention specific elements of the teaching/learning process affected by PT. The perspectives of teachers on this matter are of central interest, so use probes to facilitate deep discussion of these topics. Also make use of probes to expand the discussion to other areas in which PT has an impact in education and society |
| 8. Required actions and possible options | Be explorative. Facilitate group discussion of specific actions proposed by participants. Aim to discover which stakeholders participants hold responsible for possible actions and their own role in the possible actions. |

Table 5. Focus group themes and approach (Parents)

| <i>THEME</i> | <i>APPROACH</i> |
|---|--|
| 1. General impression of PT | A focus group opener. Approach should be wide and encompassing. Moderator should make an effort to reach all participants. |
| 2. Personal experience with PT | Be explorative here. Aim for a description of the participants' actual situation/experience with PT. If necessary, allow participants to go into specific details. Ensure the inclusion of various perspectives. |
| 3. Reasons for PT usage | This is a central research theme. The initial question in the schedule will likely open many streams of discussion, many of which are included in sub-questions and prompts. Allow the discussion to flow, but also take care to thoroughly explore differences and similarities between perspectives. It is of vital importance to collect data on parents' perspectives on the reasons for PT usage. |
| 4. Differentiation of PT from mainstream education | Here, it is important to explore the manner in which participants distinguish between these two forms of educational endeavour. Be open and probe for teaching and learning differences in two settings. |
| 5. Effectiveness/impact of PT at the individual level | As above. Explore parents' personal perspectives and assessment of the effectiveness/impact of PT Include as many varying perspectives as possible. |
| 6. Impact of PT on mainstream education & society | Here, it might be less likely that parents will mention specific elements of the teaching/learning process affected by PT. In this case, make use of probes to facilitate discussion. Similarly, use probes for an exploration of the impact of PT on society. |
| 7. Required actions and possible options | Be explorative. Discuss actions proposed by participants in the group. Aim to discover those stakeholders that participants hold responsible for possible actions and to determine whether participants would be in favour of an educational system without PT. Finally, aim to discover views on parents' own role in possible actions. |

Focus group protocols were developed collaboratively by all country teams. As previously mentioned flexibility was afforded to each research team to develop specific probes or questions relevant to the needs of each research team. Focus group protocols for both teachers and parents are presented in the Appendix.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the methods used in the data analysis phase of the study, a final note regarding the manner in which interviews and focus groups were carried out is warranted. As the basis of all data collection, these tools were developed in order to ensure a certain degree of consistency and comparability across

contexts. However, as mentioned previously, interviewers were given the freedom to adapt both the interview schedule and focus group protocols to the specific characteristics of the participants in each country. It was also agreed by all research teams that interviewers would be allowed to develop and use prompts not mentioned in the schedule and protocols and to follow specific thematic leads arising from the responses of participants, even if they were not included in the commonly devised schedules. Finally, in light of the diverse backgrounds of participants, the interview process needed to be adequately flexible in order to allow for the consideration of the specific field of expertise of each participant. This meant that, for any particular participant, differing parts of the interview schedule or focus group protocols were emphasized.

3.3.4. Data analysis

The data collected from all five countries were deposited into a database and subsequently analysed using the NVivo software. The coding scheme was commonly developed by all participating research teams and applied to the data from all five contexts. Some codes were pre-determined based on the project's conceptual framework and data collection instruments, while others were developed in response to the collected data itself. The coding process occurred in three waves. The first wave was based mainly on thematic coding of the data at higher, more general levels of the coding scheme, while a more interpretative approach to coding was adopted in the latter two waves. From the outset of the analytic process, research teams agreed that data could be multiply coded, or that the same data could be coded under more than one code within the coding scheme. The basis for this decision is the fact that codes did not represent orthogonal structures and, as such, there existed significant overlap between different elements of the coding scheme. Arguably, the use of multiple coding allowed for a more complex and intricate representation of the data and the manner in which varying elements represented in the coding scheme are related to one another. The coding procedures were designed in a manner that each research

team coded their data. The results of the coding from each team were then entered into formulated matrices which were shared between groups and commonly reviewed.

The coding scheme

Based on the project's conceptual framework, existing knowledge in the field of PT and the data collection instruments developed for this project, a hierarchical coding scheme consisting of five levels was developed. The first two levels of the coding scheme are presented in Figure 3.



Figure 3. First two levels of the coding scheme

At Level 1, the two central elements of the coding scheme are represented. Together, they represent the duality in the overall orientation of the present project, which aimed to explore, in the first instance, the perspectives of educational stakeholders regarding the PT phenomenon and, secondly, the development of policy options. Because the former theme is the central focus of the present book, more detailed attention will be devoted to the development of subsequent coding levels under this supra-code.

The overarching 'Perspectives on PT' code was further subdivided into three codes: 'Characteristics of PT', 'Users and Providers' and 'Causes and Effects'. These three codes represent three main clusters applied in the exploration of educational stakeholders' perspectives on the PT phenomenon, and were further divided into more specific codes for more in-depth analysis. This process of the gradually increasing specification of codes across numerous levels is described in the following paragraphs.

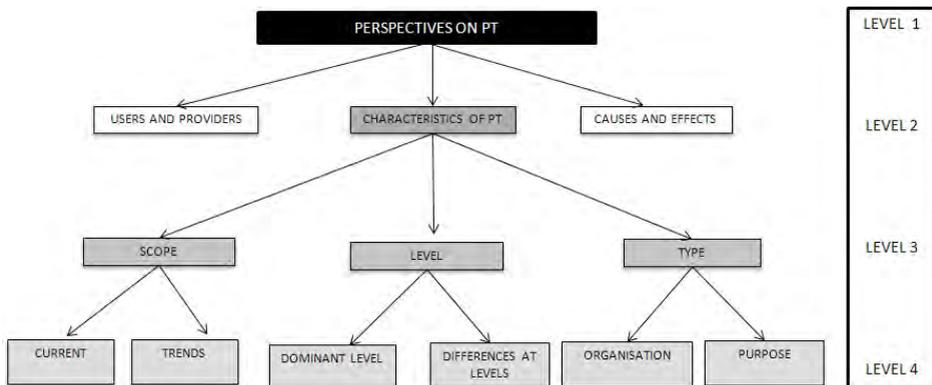


Figure 4. Coding scheme for the Level 2 code 'Characteristics of PT'

The coding scheme developed for the Level 2 'Characteristics of PT' code is presented in Figure 4. At the third level, this code is divided into codes describing the participants' evaluation of various aspects of the PT phenomenon: its scope, issues regarding the educational levels at which PT occurs, and the different types of PT in a given context. Perspectives on the scope of PT are further classified at Level 4 as those related to the current scope of the PT phenomenon or participants' evaluation of the trend in PT in the last 5 years. Similarly, the 'educational level' code is further differentiated into views concerning the educational level at which PT is dominant and the differing nature of PT at various educational levels. Finally, the 'type of PT' code is further divided into codes describing the differences in organization and purpose of various forms of PT in a specific setting. During analytical coding, Level 4 codes have undergone further refinement, a process which is elaborated upon in the following chapters devoted to the study findings.

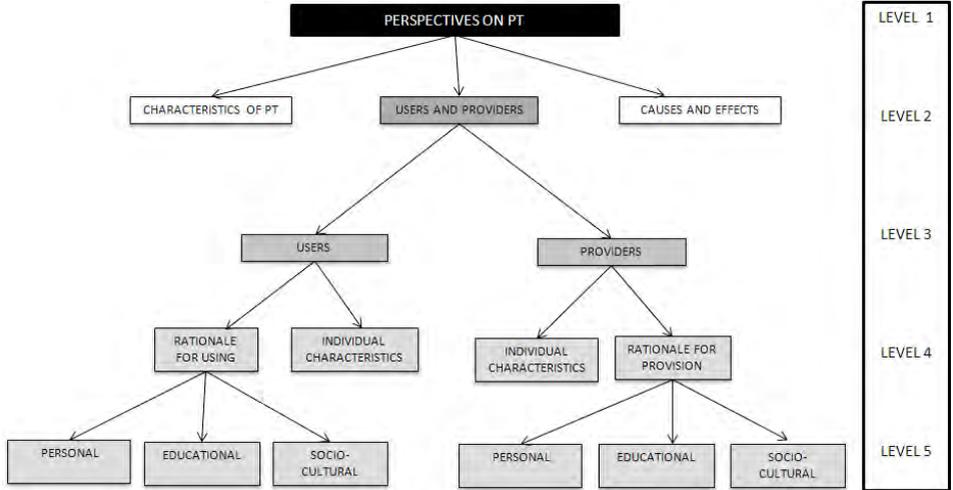


Figure 5. Coding scheme for the Level 2 code 'Users and providers'

In Figure 5, the coding scheme for the Level 2 'Users and providers' code is presented. In this section of the coding scheme, the hierarchical split of the overarching codes is symmetrical. Namely, both 'Users' and 'Providers' codes are further split into two codes: 'Rationale for using/provision of PT' and 'Individual characteristics of PT users/providers'. In turn, the Level 4 'Rationale for using/provision of PT' codes are further classified into codes describing personal, educational and socio-cultural reasons for PT use or provision. Under the 'Individual characteristics of PT users' code (Level 4), data on the motivation of pupils to use PT was coded, as well as the source of this motivation. Individual characteristics of users were further analytically split into cognitive, conative and social characteristics. In the case of PT providers, the issue of individual characteristics (Level 4) was closely connected with the profession, employment and social status of providers.

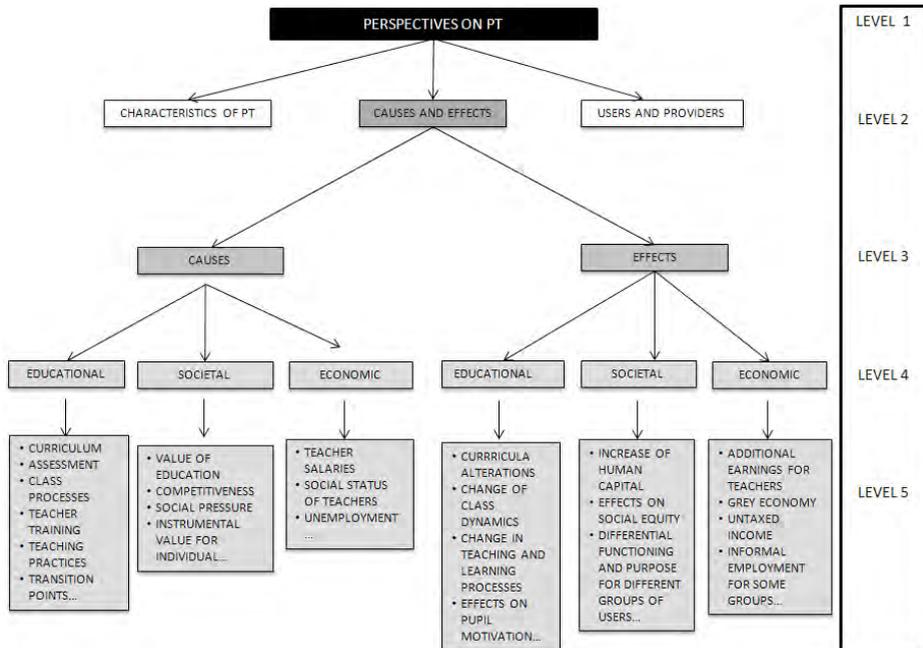


Figure 6. Coding scheme for the Level 2 code 'Causes and Effects'

Figure 6 depicts the coding scheme developed for the Level 2 code 'Causes and Effects of PT'. At the third and fourth levels, this section of the coding scheme is consistent with current understandings of the PT phenomenon in the literature by splitting both 'Causes' and 'Effects' codes into educational, societal and economic factors. However, it is at Level 5 where the results presented in this book have been predominantly coded. At this level, coding adopted a more interpretative approach and was driven primarily by the data itself, rather than by pre-existing knowledge of the nature of the PT phenomenon. Further details of this process, and the resulting development and refinement of additional codes, are presented in the following chapters devoted to exploring the study findings.

While the differentiation of the 'Users and Providers' and 'Causes and Effects' codes into more specific codes was presented separately, it is important to make special note of the relationship and differentiation between the Level 4 codes in these two categories. Namely, while

the basis for both categories is the exploration of the various causes and effects of using and providing PT services, the focus under each category is different. Under the 'Users and providers' code, coded data was more closely related to the personal characteristics of individual users and providers, while data related to more systemic elements of the causes and effects of the PT phenomenon were coded under the 'Causes and Effects' code. However, it should be recalled that, based on the decision regarding the 'double coding' of data, some material could fall under both of these perspectives.

3.4. Verification procedures used in the research

Because the aim of the research was to gain insight into the individual perspectives of educational stakeholders regarding the PT phenomenon, the verifiability of the research findings were considered by ensuring and examining trustworthiness, confirmability, transferability, credibility and dependability as qualitative equivalents for the psychometric indicators of reliability and validity in quantitative data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). First, the strength of the argument enclosed in the results should demonstrate both transferability and credibility (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Here, transferability of data occurs at two levels: the level to which the findings are transferable to other elements of the specific contexts, and the degree to which the results are transferable to other contexts. Extensive interview excerpts should further contribute to data verification in that, due to the high level of provided detail, the reader is permitted to make decisions regarding the transferability of the findings to other settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The dependability of results relates to the issue of ensuring data collected is stable and consistent over time, a condition that is met in the present research by the application of two data collection periods. The dependability and confirmability of the present research have also been enhanced through the use of audio-taping and verbatim transcriptions (Maxwell, 1996). Arguably, confirmability is also evident in the manner in which sufficient details of the research design are presented to allow for external assessment and reproduction of the data. The trustworthiness of the data is

strengthened by the use of multiple methods (Patton, 1990) and by the inclusion of a relatively large number of interview participants, both which serve to provide supporting evidence (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Finally, the credibility of the results is strengthened by the consideration, analysis and exposure of cases opposite to the general patterns emerging from the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

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CHAPTER IV

CHARACTERISTICS OF FORMAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND THE DECISION CONCERNING THE USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

Tamar Bregvadze & Boris Jokić

In a somewhat poetic manner, the metaphor of a 'shadow education' emphasises the relationship between a formal education system and the private tutoring (PT) (Bray, 2011). Indeed, it is difficult to find any research examining PT that, regardless of context, scope or orientation, does not emphasise the importance of characteristics of formal education systems in shaping the nature and scale of PT services and, even more directly, in determining its structure, value, and eventual impact. One of the most frequently cited educational features emphasised as contributing to the decision to use PT services is the existence of high-stakes examinations (e.g. Bray & Kwok, 2003; Tansel & Bircan, 2006), labelled by Baker and LeTendre (2005) as 'a gatekeeper to education and labour market opportunities' (p.62). In these situations, it is argued that pupils and parents decide to use PT services in order to increase their chances in such examinations. However, in an exploration of organisations providing PT services in Canada, Aurini and Davies (2004) offer a different element to this argument by noting that interest is growing despite the fact that no nationwide or province-wide high-stakes examinations exist in this country. Similarly, based on an analysis of TIMSS data, Baker and LeTendre (2005) argue that the size, prevalence and role of PT are not related to the existence of high-stake assessment in any particular country. This finding was criticised by Bray and Silova (2006) in light of the fact that, while high-stakes testing is usually applied in the final grades of secondary education, Baker and LeTendre's analyses were conducted using data from the TIMSS study in which respondents were 7th grade pupils.

In a further exploration of these issues, Davies (2004) stated that school reforms, which include the introduction of standardised curricula alongside increased assessment procedures, might affect parents' anxiety about their children's educational advancement and therefore results in an increased likelihood of deciding to use PT services. Furthermore, Bray (2003) noted that PT might become more necessary in 'systems that are teacher-centred rather than pupil-centred and/or are intolerant to slow learners' (p.26). In an international collaboration aimed at monitoring PT across a number of countries, individual country reports from Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia hypothesise that curricular and other elements of formal education systems might also be contributing to the emergence of the PT phenomenon in these contexts (Husremović & Trbić, 2006; Klinger, 2011; Matiashvili & Kutateladze, 2006; Ristić Dedić, Jokić & Jurko, 2006; Silova & Kazimzade, 2006).

However, although factors related to formal education systems are given a significant position in the categorization of determinants underlying the demand for PT in the literature, there is still limited empirical evidence examining the nature and specific characteristics of formal education systems that contribute to the decision concerning PT use. Further, there is currently limited understanding of the extent to which these specific characteristics are consistent across different contexts.

This chapter presents the analyses of stakeholders' perspectives concerning the relationship between various characteristics of the formal education system and the decision concerning the use of PT services. Throughout this discussion, emphasis will be placed on bracketing the congruent perspectives arising across different stakeholders and countries while also singling out particular narratives suggestive of characteristics unique to specific contexts.

On the whole, analyses of the collected data illustrated a consistent tendency across all five contexts suggesting that participants link the decision concerning the use of PT services to two core pillars of any education system – curriculum and assessment. The analyses also revealed considerable variation across contexts in the stakeholders'

evaluation of the relevance and importance placed on the role of curriculum and/or assessment issues in the decision concerning PT use. In Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia, the analyses clearly indicated that respondents placed emphasis on both curriculum and assessment. In Azerbaijan, the focus was predominantly on various features of assessment processes as a primary factor influencing the decision concerning the use of PT services. Finally, Georgia represents a specific case in which the characteristics of PT, and consequently the likelihood of deciding to use PT services, are being continuously re-shaped in response to on-going changes to the formal education system. Data analyses also highlighted consistencies and dissimilarities between stakeholders' positions. For example, analyses of responses from stakeholders representing educational authorities in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are suggestive of a very open and occasionally self-critical discourse concerning the intrinsic relationship between characteristics of the formal system of education and the decision concerning the use of PT services. In contrast, some educational authorities and policy makers in Georgia and Azerbaijan took a somewhat defensive position. On the whole, parents, teachers and PT providers in all countries provided a more critical perspective to the overall picture and further enriched it with personal observations from within the system.

In the following section, various features related to the curriculum, and their perceived relationships with the decision concerning PT use, are described. This is followed by a discussion of assessment practices and their vital role in shaping the PT phenomenon in each respective country, as well as their influence on the decision to use PT services. The final section offers an exploration of the apparent lack of coordination between curriculum and assessment practices and the manner in which the decision concerning the PT use is related to this disparity.

4.1. The formal curriculum: What features play a role in the decision concerning the use of PT services?

Analyses of the respondents' perspectives from all five contexts suggest that various features of the curriculum are related to the decision concerning PT use and, consequently, have a considerable impact on the nature and scope of PT in each country. In depicting this relationship, respondents use a variety of descriptors to depict curricular characteristics contributing to the decision concerning PT use, including '*overloaded curriculum*' (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina), '*thick curriculum*' (PT provider, Estonia), '*extensive curriculum*' (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina), '*prescriptive curriculum*' (State secretary for education, Croatia), '*overly sophisticated curriculum*' (Teacher, Azerbaijan) and even '*irrelevant and boring curriculum*' (University professor, Croatia). Modern theories of curriculum design postulate that, amongst other things, curricula should be challenging, enjoyable and relevant to pupils, be of sufficient breadth and depth according to pupils' abilities and characteristics, be coherent and progress in a logical and straightforward manner, and include elements of personalisation and choice (White, 2004; Beane, 1993). While it is plausible to argue that a curriculum which encompasses all of these characteristics does not exist, evidence suggests that, in the case of all countries considered in the research, many of these characteristics are not present. Indeed, an exploration of the responses from participants suggests significant diversity in stakeholders' estimations of the relative effectiveness of various elements of the curriculum. In addition, stakeholders' responses stress a number of different curricular issues as main drivers of the PT phenomenon. In this section, the focus will first be on an examination of various structural characteristics of a curriculum, including the depth, breadth and relevance of curricular content, influencing the decision concerning PT use. This will be followed by a discussion of the perceived deficiencies in the functional interrelations between different segments of the curriculum that, in the opinion of respondents, might increase the likelihood of deciding

to use PT services. Throughout the discussion, special emphasis is given to issues specific to mathematics, which has been previously demonstrated to be the subject generating the greatest share of PT use in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia (Silova & Bray, 2006).

4.1.1. Breadth and depth of the curriculum: Its influence on the decision concerning the use of PT services

The breadth of any curriculum is measured by the degree to which pupils are exposed to a broad and balanced range of learning experiences and contents. Ideally, this learning should be organized in a variety of contexts both inside and outside classrooms. The delicate balance of curricular breadth is of critical importance. On one side, opportunities for effective learning are limited if curricular content is too narrow and learning experiences are not sufficiently varied. On the other hand, an overly extensive curriculum characterized by a large number of subjects and numerous, fragmented knowledge claims can also have a negative impact on pupils' learning experiences (Newman, 1988). Consistent with current trends in curricular design, all countries involved in the current study have recently experienced curricular changes resulting in the reshaping and, in some cases, expansion of curricular borders. In other cases (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia) recent efforts aimed at reducing curricular load in teaching plans and programs have been met with limited success. Although it might be argued that curricular expansion aims to broaden the scope of pupils' acquired knowledge and skills, such curricula have the potential to produce an increased burden on pupils and, consequently, an intensified demand for external help in the form of PT.

Further to the issue of curricular breadth, the depth of a curriculum is also of vital importance and intrinsically connected with the decision concerning PT use. Ideally, pupils should have opportunities to develop competence for different types and levels of thinking and learning. As they progress, pupils should be encouraged to connect various strands of learning together and achieve more advanced levels of understanding. In order to do so, curriculum should be varied,

adjusted to the cognitive level of pupils and not excessively based on any single way of teaching and learning. Especially dangerous are cases where there is a strong orientation towards factual knowledge claims with high emphasis on detail, as these curricular arrangements can produce superficial learning and result in a lack of understanding amongst pupils.

Analyses of data from all five contexts suggested that respondents considered an excessive quantity of subjects and contents (breadth) as well as a strong orientation towards content and detail (depth) to be important aspects of the curriculum that may contribute to the decision concerning the use of PT services. Although this view was present in all five contexts, the largest emphasis on this issue was observed in the data from Croatia, Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the first instance, respondents from these countries highlight this issue by suggesting that there is an excessive number of compulsory subjects in formal education. In Table 6 the number of compulsory subjects in primary and secondary education, as well as the number of elective subjects chosen by pupils in addition to their compulsory subjects, is presented for each country.

Table 6. Number of compulsory and elective subjects in primary and secondary education across all participating countries

| | <i>Primary level</i> | <i>Lower secondary level</i> | <i>Upper secondary level</i> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Azerbaijan | 10 compulsory | 12-17 compulsory | 14 compulsory 3 electives |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | 6 – 10 compulsory 1 elective | 12 – 13 compulsory up to 2 electives | 8 – 14 compulsory up to 3 electives |
| Croatia | 7 compulsory up to 2 electives | 10 – 12 compulsory up to 3 electives | 10 – 16 compulsory up to 3 electives |
| Estonia* | 9-12 compulsory | 15-16 compulsory | 15-16 compulsory |
| Georgia | 6-11 compulsory | 14 compulsory | 12 compulsory 2 electives |

* Not regulated by law. The number and provision of electives depends on the school.

Although the countries under consideration have somewhat different systems of education, it is evident from the data presented in the table that the number of compulsory subjects ranges from six or seven at the beginning of formal education upwards towards 13 and more in some forms of secondary education. Undoubtedly, the sheer number of subjects in a single school year, and the consequent demands faced by individual pupils, might have serious implications for the ability of pupils to adequately devote attention to all subjects in a meaningful manner. This is very aptly demonstrated in the following quote from an university professor from Croatia:

Our schools, especially gymnasium programs, include 15 parallel subjects on average and it is impossible for pupils to concentrate on all subjects. At the same time, all subject teachers think that their subjects are equally important. They are constantly demanding something, each day - six or seven teachers place demands on pupils, which makes it hard for them to focus. (University professor, Croatia)

The words of a parent in Bosnia and Herzegovina, when speaking about the reasons for her son's use of PT, confirm this sentiment:

... and it does not help that he, as an eighth grade pupil, when he adds all the electives, has 16 subjects. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

These quotes illustrate several interesting elements. First, they suggest that the sheer number of subjects, coupled with the limited electiveness, can affect the ability of pupils to focus on specific subject demands. Consequently, competing demands imposed by different subjects place pupils in a position where they might require external assistance from private tutors in order to achieve educational success and fulfil personal educational aspirations. In other words, the likelihood of deciding to use PT services increases. Consequently of this apparently excessive curricular breadth.

According to participants, this problem is amplified by the high volume of prescribed subject content pupils are expected to process. The words of a Croatian PT provider illustrate this point of view:

Some would say OK – 16 subjects, but if we have a look inside the programs of these subjects and explore the width of the content in these subjects, then we would realize it is completely surreal... It is important to reduce the load put on pupils because it is tremendous. (PT provider, Croatia)

This quote is a clear illustration of an argument made by many respondents across all five contexts, in which the overall volume of prescribed content to be covered in a given subject is often perceived as too great and not well adjusted to realistic expectations of what pupils might reasonably acquire. The result of this is that many pupils cannot absorb and integrate new knowledge without external help.

In light of the reportedly excessive number of subjects and dense curricular content, it is perhaps not surprising that stakeholders additionally reported the view that available teaching hours are insufficient to cover obligatory content in enough detail and in a pace that would allow all students to master it. Arguably, one method of resolving these issues would be to increase teaching hours. However, students, parents and private tutors in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia all felt that the number of hours students currently spend at school had already reached maximum reasonable levels. This quote from a Croatian PT provider exemplifies this opinion:

Seven hours in school each day. I would force someone who makes these regulations and programs for schools to sit in the class for seven hours... (PT provider, Croatia)

Arguably, these sentiments are consistent with generally-held views about the amount of time pupils spend at school, making it rather unlikely that the number of school hours would be extended any further. As result, the increased volumes of curriculum reported

here inevitably lead to a decrease in available teaching hours for each curricular segment (i.e. subject, topic, content element). This sentiment was voiced openly by an advisor for Mathematics teachers from the Education and Teacher Training Agency in Croatia, who argued that the quantity of knowledge claims and content to be covered in each subject is often poorly matched to the number of available teaching hours:

I would dare to say that one of the main culprits for PT is our teaching plans and programmes. There is definitely too much content in it, and teaching hours are diminishing. (Educational professional, Croatia)

Or, in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

There are subjects with a well-designed curriculum but there are not enough lessons for its adequate implementation. (Educational governance – local level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In a reformulation of this argument, another education official from Croatia presented a more specific problem, where teachers cannot devote enough time to each topic or accommodate the diverse learning capacities of pupils. Unsurprisingly, this limitation produces gaps in knowledge and understanding amongst pupils that, in turn, contribute to the need for PT services:

I doubt that they [teachers] are doing it deliberately, but they simply do not have enough time to teach all the required content. I see it from my own perspective as a parent – my child is now learning Geometry, and as I can see some gaps in her understanding, I'm working additionally with her...Otherwise, the gap would be bigger and she would not be able to follow the lessons. (Educational professional, Croatia)

This argument is further supported by the words of teachers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia:

We have a problem because our lessons are overloaded, so in the fourth grade we have a situation where 20 % of the teaching material cannot be taught because we have an insufficient number of lessons. Therefore, we only have time to teach/lecture and no time to consolidate what has been taught. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Topics are skipped... I guess there is not enough time or topics are passed too quickly. One topic is taught once but the pupil needs more revision for the knowledge to 'stick'. (Mathematics teacher/PT provider, Estonia)

These perspectives from educators themselves confirm the sentiment voiced by other stakeholders that the curriculum is overloaded with content. Furthermore, this subject content is covered in a rapid fashion due to time constraints and, consequently, is taught in a manner that limits the depth with which this content can be learned. It could be expected, therefore, that opportunities to consolidate and develop a deep understanding of taught content are scarce. Consequently, only a limited number of pupils would be expected to be able to adequately acquire content knowledge or fully develop skills related to subject content. Arguably, those pupils who find themselves unable to do so may opt to seek the help of private tutors. The issues of objective obstacles inhibiting effective teacher delivery are covered in more detail in Chapter Five.

Chapter Six will examine the manner in which individual diversity amongst pupils is not sufficiently addressed by existing features of formal systems of education. Interestingly, both content overload and the ineffective rhythm devoted to teaching and learning processes were two such features. This issue is well illustrated in the responses from representatives of the National Committee of Pupils in Croatia, who provide further insight into the adverse effect of an overloaded curriculum on teaching and learning processes in general as well as the special relevance of this problem to students with relatively modest learning abilities:

I think that, in our school, the content is covered because this is how it is supposed to be and not because they want pupils to learn

something and to really master the subject. You can imagine this if you think about subjects that we have once a week in one year, like Psychology, Sociology, Logic. You cannot master the whole textbook if you have these subjects only once a week, while at the same time general gymnasiums have two year programs for the same subjects. Overloaded programs are an obstacle for pupils who cannot learn and remember everything. (Pupil, Croatia)

Another important issue related to the depth and breadth of a curriculum is the problem of new, recently added topics and themes to curricular framework documents. While the issues discussed thus far have been observed in most participating countries, this issue was specific to Georgia alone. In 2005, a new National Curriculum was introduced in Georgia, which added an extra year of schooling and led to the inclusion of additional themes within particular subjects. Here, the expansion of the curriculum alongside a lengthening of the time spent at school meant that there was a sufficient number of teaching hours for the delivery of new content knowledge to pupils. Instead, teachers reported feeling unable to provide sufficient depth in teaching the new topics because these themes were not properly outlined in curricular documents and textbooks:

New topics have been added to the curriculum such as statistics, for instance, or probability theory. There are also other minor issues that are present in the exams to HE, but not present in the curriculum. These themes haven't been taught properly during my university years and I need to improve my knowledge and pay more attention to them. (Teacher, Georgia)

This statement from a Georgian teacher is indicative of a situation in which educational policy reforms are not followed by adequate teacher training for responding to these changes. Arguably, in a situation in which centralised external assessment practices include some of the newly added topics not being competently taught within regular classes, pupils may become more likely to use PT services in order to better prepare for examinations.

4.1.2. Content orientation of the formal curriculum, its lack of relevance and the coordination with development of pupils and the decision concerning PT use

The content-oriented nature of curricula was another important and frequently reported curricular aspect contributing to the decision concerning PT use. Once again, this issue was most evident in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia. In fact, in all three countries, the majority of respondents emphasised the content orientation of the curriculum as a factor directly related to the decision concerning PT use. This is usually described as a situation where subject content is at the centre of the entire teaching and learning process and knowledge claims are directly taught by teachers and pupils, in turn, are expected to repeat and reproduce such claims in the same manner in which have been taught. Indeed, in the opinion of respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Estonia, current curricula retain all the characteristics of a highly traditional program with an extremely prescriptive content, divided into different subjects with a predominantly non-dialogic approach to teaching. In their description of this particular aspect of current teaching and learning practices, respondents in each country frequently used terms such as *'rote learning'* and *'memorization'*. An official from the Pedagogical Institute in Bosnia and Herzegovina describes this further:

... the curriculum is overloaded with facts that are supposed to be memorized and reproduced, and there is not any great intellectual benefit in that. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In a somewhat humoristic way, the words from an Education Ministry official from Bosnia and Herzegovina confirm this:

It is all so silly! I mean we do not need to teach our students how many sheep there are in New Zealand, we need to teach them how to learn. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Together, these quotes depict the strong content orientation of curricula in the formal systems of education in all contexts. Regrettably, this is in stark contrast with the educational aims laid out in the national framework curricula from all five countries, documents rich in their use of modern educational terms to describe a system that is ‘*competence based*’ and ‘*outcome oriented*’, and that employs an ‘*individualised approach*’. This paradox is further described in the words of a PT provider from Estonia, who described the gaps in competencies exhibited by his clients:

Children need the teaching of learning the most. They seem to be focused on facts and content. I try to direct them to see the interrelations, focus on important issues, check what they already know and balance their weaknesses. (PT provider, Estonia)

This statement suggests that pupils experience difficulties in systematizing the fragmented facts and information provided to them through the highly content-oriented curricula of the formal education system. Arguably, an overreliance on content in mainstream education contributes to difficulties in understanding and the integration and complex application of new knowledge. This, in turn, raises the demand for PT. This perspective is repeated in the words of a Croatian politician through an impressive example of how the excessively content oriented curricula and inadequate teaching practices lead to a failure in achieving set outcomes. The resulting gaps in pupils' competencies are a trigger for seeking the support of PT services:

Do you know what chemistry is? Formula to formula, process to process, equation to equation...and then it happens that the child does not recognize the basic compound - e.g. he knows that H₂O is water, but does not know what its elements are. Then we are at square one and the decision is to use PT. (Member of Parliament, Croatia)

Respondents additionally paid special attention to one specific issue related to a content-oriented curriculum: the lack of relevance of some

of content to the actual real-life experiences, needs and interests of pupils. In her discussion on this issue, a school principal from Croatia suggests the need to revise curricular content in order to adjust it to the real-life experiences and needs of pupils and how, without such reform, pupils are more likely to seek PT services:

Pupils should receive much less information, but more useful information... Now they are bombed with too much content, too much information. You cannot add any more to their heads, everything is too complicated and pupils do not have time to learn all this, and they search for outside help. (Principal, Croatia)

Similarly, a university professor from the same country describes the irrelevance of some curricular elements to the real life experiences of pupils and, in a somewhat brazen manner, explains the essential problem behind the content-oriented teaching programs in Croatia:

The curriculum as it is now operates in favour of PT. There is an expectation that everybody in compulsory school should learn, for example, all the enemies' offensives, all kings and whoever ruled in the past, what the names of their wives were... all kinds of facts that are totally irrelevant for their (pupils) future life. (University professor, Croatia).

This bleak characterization of the knowledge provided in schools as irrelevant, futile and meaningless was similarly evident in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and, to a lesser extent, in Estonia:

Curriculum should be relieved of this burden of unnecessary facts. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In reality, there are topics in the curriculum that could be left out to bring mathematics closer to real life. (Teacher, Estonia)

Parents and students in Azerbaijan similarly pointed to the problem of the high content-orientation of the curriculum, describing it as

'consisting mostly of facts and theories'. However, stakeholders in this country did not go into further details in their discussion of the issue.

Thus far, the discussion of stakeholders' perspectives concerning curricular issues might incite the conclusion that the main curricular issues related to the decision concerning the use of PT services are a high emphasis on curricular content and the inclusion of excessive subject content. However, the Georgian case brings a somewhat different perspective to the issue and clearly illustrates the danger of introducing radical changes into systems not fully ready to absorb them. In Georgia, the new National Curriculum places excessive emphasis on outcomes, while giving teachers a substantial degree of freedom in defining what and how to teach. Theoretically, this autonomy should allow teachers to adjust the teaching and learning process to pupils' individual needs and characteristics. In line with the evidence presented thus far, this move from a prescriptive to more open curricular design might be expected to result in a reduction in the likelihood of deciding to use PT services. However, both teachers and parents from Georgia reported that the lack of detailed description of content in curricular documents and textbooks was a source of confusion and uncertainty that placed limits on teaching effectiveness. Arguably, this problem has the potential to be an important contributor to an individual's decision to use PT services, where pupils seek external support to better understand and acquire new knowledge not adequately covered in the regular classroom. The following statement from a school teacher is a good illustration of this point:

The emphasis in the curriculum is diverted from the content to... who knows what. I remember everything [content] was bound like a bead. But now...to tell you frankly, I personally don't know what and how to teach anymore. (Teacher, Georgia)

This honest statement, while certainly not representative of all Georgian teachers, hints towards the challenges in developing effective

educational reform. More importantly, it depicts the difficulties faced by educators in implementing such reforms. Undoubtedly, finding an effective balance between content and outcome orientations in curricular documents is a very important prerequisite for efficient teaching and learning, and is an issue that demands careful and thoughtful planning on the behalf of policymakers. The opposing perspectives offered by Georgia, on one side, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia and Croatia on the other, demonstrates how a move too close to either extreme both have the potential to increase the likelihood of making a decision to use PT services.

Another issue repeatedly emphasised by various groups of stakeholders in all participating countries was the poor fit between curricular content and the developmental stage of pupils, a sentiment illustrated in these words from an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Curriculum is not properly adjusted to students' age and a lot of the problems come from there. (Educational governance – local level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Arguably, this poor fit means that, at a given grade level, some curricular content is overly challenging for some pupils while other content is not sufficiently challenging. In an argument related to this problem, participants from all countries frequently reported the problem in which curricular documents focused on a hypothetical 'average' pupil. While this topic will be explored in further detail in the Chapter Six, the finding of note here is the manner in which stakeholders related this feature of the curriculum to PT use, indicating that a curriculum that does not take into account the heterogeneity of individual differences may contribute to the decision to use PT services for some pupils and parents. The views of the Croatian State Secretary for Elementary Education serve as an open indication of this issue:

Our system is very rigid...sometimes I am personally ashamed when I need to talk about it from my current position. Everything is fixed – the

age when the children start schooling, what you learn in the first week of the first grade, in the eighth week of the seventh grade...the result is that a lot of learning is too early for some pupils or too late for others. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Croatia)

Here, the manner in which overly prescriptive and inflexible curricular arrangements might contribute to the decision to use PT services becomes clear. As it will be exemplified by the empirical evidence presented in Chapters Five and Six, a system in which pupils' needs are secondary to the carefully planned and timed delivery of rigid curricular content is one in which the decision to use PT services is more likely. Data analyses additionally revealed the special relevance of these problems to certain subjects, and most especially to mathematics.

4.1.3. The curricular issues and mathematics

Previous research has demonstrated that mathematics is perceived to be among the most difficult and important subjects for future educational success and therefore generates the biggest share of demand for PT services. In Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan and Georgia, the percentage of students attending PT lessons in mathematics ranges between 30 and 60 per cent (Silova and Bray, 2006, p. 76). Consistent with this finding, teachers and PT providers from Estonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia participating in the present research frequently provided examples from mathematics when speaking about problems of depth and breadth in the curriculum. In all three countries, these two groups of stakeholders focused specifically on the limited number of teaching hours devoted to mathematics. The words of teachers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia serve as an example:

Eighth grade students used to have three math lessons and now they have two. The curriculum stayed the same, just the number of lessons is reduced and that is why we have a situation where most

of the students use PT because mathematics is part of the entrance exams in every high school. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The official number of math lessons is relatively small in the curriculum. I don't know if you read the survey that showed that most schools teach mathematics with a larger number of lessons than required. It shows that it is a difficult subject and additional lessons are needed. (Teacher, Estonia)

Both statements raise the argument that more teaching hours than what is currently devoted to mathematics are required in order to master the content prescribed by the subject curriculum. The quote from the Bosnian and Herzegovinian teacher is also indicative of poorly coordinated educational policies in which a reduction in teaching hours was not followed by a similar reduction in course content. Interestingly, neither quote suggests such a reduction in curricular content. This was similarly true of the majority of responses given by teachers on this issue. In contrast, PT providers make this connection quite explicitly, as evidenced in the following quote from a Croatian PT provider who used to work as a mathematics teacher:

In my subject, mathematics, in gymnasiums that have a small number of teaching hours, it is absolutely incredible how much is being taught – I would throw out half of it, because nobody would ever need it anywhere (no university faculty would need it). (PT provider, Croatia)

This statement suggests that the central issue related to subject content and number of teaching hours is the manner in which these two elements are coordinated. Arguably, the poor coordination of content-heavy subject awarded limited teaching hours is a situation that severely limits learning and, as such, is a powerful driving factor behind the decision to seek PT services.

While the discussion of curricular features contributing to the decision to use PT services has thus far focused primarily on findings consistent across multiple contexts, analyses additionally

revealed the presence of curricular characteristics unique to specific contexts. One such feature arose in the data from Croatia, where respondents raised the problem of varying levels of difficulty across compulsory subjects within the formal education system. This issue will be explored further here. In their discussion about the perceived variance in difficulty levels across compulsory subjects, Croatian respondents most frequently singled out mathematics as a subject perceived to be more difficult than all other subjects. Further, this high difficulty level was used by respondents to explain the fact that pupils in this context use PT services more frequently and more intensively for mathematics than for any other subject:

Parents say that mathematics is difficult. Teachers also say so. This image is made in advance and changing it becomes 'mission impossible'. Parents warn the children, the small ones at preschool age, that mathematics is difficult and that a catastrophe is just waiting to happen. And fear is always the factor that contributes to the insecurities of pupils for moving on. Mathematics is always presented as a scary thing and mathematics teachers have of course accepted the role and act as the witches. (Educational professional, Croatia)

This illustrative statement raises several issues worthy of further focus. First, it indicates that the perceived difficulty level of mathematics is partially founded on preconceptions introduced within the family home. Once pupils enter school and first encounter the subject in a classroom context characterized by a strong content orientation and severe time limitations, it is perhaps not surprising that these preconceptions become easily realised. Consequently, some pupils are perhaps more likely to develop an overly negative image of the subject, to become less confident in their mathematical abilities and, in turn, might seek the external help of private tutors.

Undoubtedly, there are a number of factors unique to the subject of mathematics contributing to its perceived difficulty level. In addition to its reliance on symbolic language and the innately abstract characteristic of this subject, data analyses revealed two features of the mathematics curricula that contribute to the perceived difficulty

level of this subject and, consequently, to the probability of using PT services. The first factor is the manner in which mathematical competencies are scaffolded one on top of the other, where the mastery of basic competencies is required to acquire skill and knowledge at higher levels. A teacher from Croatia explains the importance of this characteristic for the acquisition of curricular content in mathematics:

The thing with mathematics is that you cannot learn it the way you can learn biology or geography. You can learn biology or geography by heart. It is not so with mathematics, math is a system. It begins with certain rules and principles in elementary school, which is built upon at later stages of education, going deeper into the topics. And it forms a network or system and then there is this ... when there is a gap in knowledge, then there is no continuity and one blank follows another. And then there is a situation where there are no pillars on which to build your knowledge. (Teacher, Croatia)

This statement, consistent with the voiced perspectives of many stakeholders from a number of contexts, illustrates the conceptualisation of mathematics as a complex and multi-related system. Arguably, pupils that have problems with some elements within this system will also have problems in later stages of learning if no additional effort is invested. This is of course particularly problematic if these problems appear early, where a failure to master foundational mathematical competencies quickly expands to very widespread difficulties in developing further mathematical understanding and skill. Together with the curricular characteristics discussed earlier in this section, this situation undoubtedly represents a fertile ground for PT services. This problem is further augmented by the lack of practice time in an already dense curriculum, an issue supported by the words of a Croatian parent:

If you do not show pupils how to solve items and if you do not practice, you cannot expect that everyone will automatically start solving these

tasks, because not everyone is talented in mathematics. Pupils need schemes and practice. (Parent, Croatia)

While this viewpoint raises concerns about the construction of knowledge and lack of practice time with respect to mathematics specifically, these issues are certainly relevant to many other subjects in formal education and could potentially contribute to the decision to use PT services. However, it is perhaps the unique nature of mathematics which most readily emphasizes the importance of devoting enough time to practicing skills and of constructing curricula in such a way as to support pupils in successfully building upon and systematizing knowledge.

In addition to the issues raised concerning the mathematics curricula in particular, this section has presented a number of more general curricular issues raised as potential contributors to the decision concerning the use of PT services. On the whole, the tendency towards overloaded, content-oriented curricula with little emphasis on more complex understanding and skill development, significant time constraints, and the poor fit between curriculum and the developmental stage of pupils are issues observed across all contexts to be contributing to the PT phenomenon. Stakeholders additionally raised problems related to inconsistencies in the curriculum, an issue that will be explored further in the next section.

4.1.4. Inconsistencies in the curriculum: How do they contribute to the decision concerning PT use?

Data analyses revealed a number of issues related to inconsistencies in the curriculum as potential influences on the decision concerning PT use. In particular, participants from a number of countries identified a lack of coordination between different subjects at a single educational level as well as a lack of continuity across educational levels within a specific subject. In the following paragraphs, the role of these *vertical* and *horizontal* inconsistencies, respectively, on the decision concerning PT use will be further examined.

A prominent issue contributing to PT use widely present in the collected data was the perceived vertical inconsistency of the

curriculum (i.e. subject content does not build on previous knowledge, has poor connections to content from previous levels, and poorly prepares pupils for acquiring subject content in forthcoming levels). This sentiment is very simply expressed by a former teacher from Estonia:

The problems occur when students transfer from one school level to another. (PT provider, Estonia).

This quote illustrates an opinion frequently observed throughout the data and across all countries, in which respondents related the decision concerning the use of PT services with transition points in the educational process. In a very succinct explanation, an educational professional from the Pedagogical Institute in Bosnia and Herzegovina describes this lack of coherence within the formal system of education:

Educational levels are indeed separate entities. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Similarly, a university professor from the Faculty of Teacher Education in Croatia discusses this issue as it relates to the Croatian education system:

Teaching plans and programs are not designed at different educational levels with the same vision and in continuity. So we have a very high 'jump' from one level to another and higher levels do not take into account changes that have been implemented at the lower level. (University professor, Croatia)

More detailed analyses of the data from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia and Croatia further indicated a prevailing opinion that entrance requirements to each subsequent educational level are higher than what is actually covered by the curriculum at previous levels:

The biggest difference is between primary and secondary schools, as secondary schools are not aware of the primary education and do not want to be aware and they are constantly complaining that primary schools send them lousy pupils who do not know anything, while actually this content is not in the program. (University Professor, Croatia)

Similarly, the president of the Parents' Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina expresses this idea in the form of a suggestion for policy makers:

It is necessary to define and crystallize what kind and amount of knowledge children in elementary education need to acquire in order to be able to continue their education in high school without problems. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Together, these quotes depict the poor, or even absent, coordination of subject curricula at different levels and the virtually non-existent communication between educators from different educational levels. Consequently, there seems to be a lack of awareness of the curricular content and criteria at educational levels other than one's own. Arguably, the resulting discrepancy between the competencies and knowledge expected of pupils at a given level and the actual teaching and learning practices at lower levels might increase the likelihood of deciding to use PT services. Arguably, in an educational context characterized by little practice time, dense curricula and the lack of an individualised approach, pupils and parents caught in this discrepancy may opt for the services of private tutors in order to reach their own educational aspirations.

This vertical inconsistency was observed not only between educational levels, but also across single grades. This is described by a parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina, who speaks of the sudden 'jump' in the difficulty of subjects across grades:

The first grade passes fine, it's, like, for socialization. Wonderful. The second grade passes as well. Wonderful, parents and children

are not burdened, and then comes the third grade of the nine-year primary education, which is suddenly bugaboo, where they suddenly start to learn multiplication tables, division tables, where textbooks are directly re-written from the previous eight-year primary education. Did they take a load off our children? They did not. They have only imposed even more (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Apart from portraying the personal difficulties experienced as a result of current curricular arrangements, this parental statement is suggestive of the inability of the system to coherently implement policy changes across different segments of the system. Arguably, this lack of coordination within the system is mirrored in an increased likelihood of PT service use. In addition to the inconsistencies across educational levels, participants also indicated problems related to the horizontal inconsistency of curricular documents, or the poor interrelation between different subjects at a single education level. Interestingly, such arguments came primarily from parents and PT providers, who related this issue directly to the decision to use PT services. In their discussion of these inconsistencies, respondents from Bosnia and Herzegovina talk in particular about the poor coordination of the expected and covered knowledge across different subjects:

The curricula... in some cases are not adjusted: it is wrong that third-grade students in English language are learning the verb 'to be', while they still do not know what the word 'verb' means in the Bosnian language. (PT provider, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

My kid is learning about alternating current in physics, and in mathematics he still has not started to learn about a sinusoid. Now imagine how it is when, in one subject, you have not learnt the basics, while at the same time you are already applying these basics in another subject. That is absurd. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In both quotes, respondents emphasize the importance of accurately adjusting curricular content across subjects in order to help pupils

better apply existing knowledge and to understand the systemic linkages between different disciplines. Respondents further argue that, if linkages between the subjects were clearer and curricular content was more consistent, pupils would perhaps have an easier time learning subject material and, as a result, be less likely to need the support of PT services.

In general, the input from participants from all participating countries clearly illustrates that curriculum is considered to be one of the most important factors related to the decision concerning PT services. In their discussion of this issue, respondents provided rich evidence and interpretations for the complex interrelations between the formal curriculum and the PT phenomenon. While nearly all respondents agreed that features of the curriculum influence patterns of PT use, there were also significant differences across countries. Indeed, stakeholder perspectives on this issue might be used to group the countries involved in the study into two clusters. In the first cluster, which includes Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia and Croatia, stakeholders attached greater levels of importance to the curriculum as a driving factor behind PT use. More specifically, respondents here constructed their arguments around the following issues: the insufficiency of teaching hours to cover the prescribed volume of information, a lack of spiral characteristic of curriculum, an overloaded curriculum with a considerable amount of unnecessary content, and numerous types of curricular inconsistencies across grades, subjects and educational levels. According to participants in these countries, these negative features of the curriculum all play a role in the decision concerning PT services. In all contexts, these opinions were congruent across various groups of stakeholders, suggesting that such perceived deficiencies in the system are far-reaching. In a second country cluster, respondents from Georgia and Azerbaijan reported curriculum to be a less important influence on the PT phenomenon, a sentiment most clearly emphasized amongst parents and teachers. Particularly distinct from this first cluster of countries was the perspective raised by participants from Georgia in which an excessive emphasis on outcomes, rather than content

was viewed as the main problem in Georgian curricular documents. The recent addition of new topics to the curriculum was another issue raised specifically by Georgian respondents, who argued that the poor development and description of these topics in curricular documents and textbooks contributed to challenges in teaching and poor learning outcomes. This curricular shortcoming, in turn, was argued to be related directly to pupils' decision to use PT services.

4.2. The role of assessment in the decision concerning the use of PT services

In line with the empirical evidence from the existing literature, issues related to assessment emerged as a significant and powerful element of formal systems of education influencing the decision concerning PT use. As was the case in the discussion on curriculum, rich data from all five contexts revealed substantial similarities across countries in stakeholders' evaluation of the overall influence of assessment on the scope of the PT phenomenon. However, different groups of countries provide differing answers to two more specific questions: which types of assessment *most* influence the decision concerning PT use and why is the decision so strongly related to the assessment processes of formal education?

In order to support and further illustrate the observed disparities in participants' perspectives regarding the role of assessment practices in the decision concerning PT use, Table 7 describes assessment practices in each participating country.

Table 7. Assessment practices in each participating country

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Grade to grade transition</i> | <i>School exit/entrance examinations</i> | <i>Tertiary education entrance examinations</i> |
|------------------------|--|--|---|
| Azerbaijan | Decentralized: administered by schools | Centralized: administered by the State Student Admission Commission (SSAC). | Centralized: administered by the State Student Admission Commission (SSAC). |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Decentralized: administered by schools | Decentralized: final high school examinations (i.e. Matura) and high school entrance examinations administered by schools and relevant (cantonal/entity) Ministries of Education | Decentralized: administered by universities |
| Croatia | Decentralized: administered by schools | Centralized, administered by the National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education. | Centralized, administered by the National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education. Additional exams administered by faculties |
| Estonia | Decentralized: administered by schools | Lower to upper secondary school transition (Grade 9 to 10); Tests compiled centrally but administered by individual schools Upper secondary school exit examinations: centralized | Decentralized: administered by universities |
| Georgia | Decentralized: administered by schools | Decentralized and not obligatory: administered by schools | Centralized: administered by the National Assessment and Evaluation Center (NAEC) |

4.2.1. Types of assessment and their impact on the decision to use PT services

Types of assessment in formal education vary in terms of the importance of their consequences to those who are assessed and, in turn, their influence on the familial decision to use PT services in order to ensure success. Arguably, the motivation to use PT in order to increase a favourable outcome on a particular assessment is directly related to the size of the benefit or sanction pupils might receive based on the assessment results. It is not surprising, therefore, that

analyses in the present study supports the already well-documented notion that high stakes examinations (i.e. examinations that have a substantial impact on pupils' future) might be related to the decision concerning PT services (Bray, 2011; Buchman, Condrón & Roscigno, 2010).

Tertiary education entrance examinations fall into this category and were reported by stakeholders in all participating countries as a highly influential force in the decision concerning PT use.

This influence seems most significant in Georgia and Azerbaijan, where tertiary education entrance exams are considered to be the foremost determinant of the overall need for PT services. This trend may be at least partly explained by the lower enrolment rates into tertiary education in these countries, as illustrated in Figure 7.

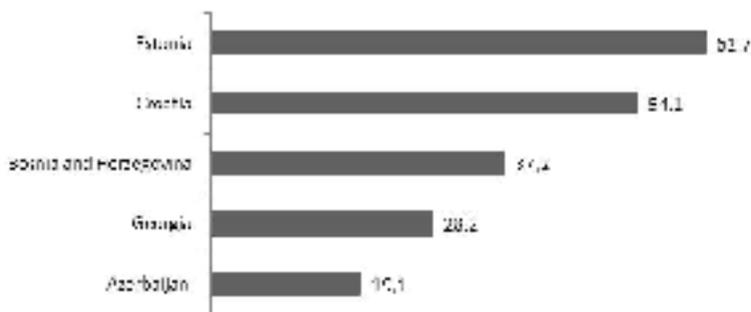


Figure 7. Percentage of pupils enrolling in tertiary education. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics in EDStats, 2011

In Georgia and Azerbaijan, PT is seen not only as an effective supplement to mainstream education that increases pupils chances for success in examinations for entrance to higher education, but is perceived by many PT users as a necessity to ensure at least a small chance of success. The following quote from an Azerbaijani pupil illustrates this point:

That is the reality. If you do not take private lessons, you will not be able to enter a university. It is obvious that what we learn at school is not enough. Everybody is pushing to take private lessons – teachers

at school, parents at home. Actually PT lessons are based on the school curriculum. I know for sure that in the eleventh grade all pupils take PT lessons to enter university. (Pupil, Azerbaijan)

Similarly, an educational official from the Georgian Curriculum Center states:

In the opinion of the majority of parents, the knowledge that is required for higher education entrance exams can be obtained only with tutors. (Educational professional, Georgia)

These views are consistent with the findings from the previous quantitative PT study (Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006), which demonstrated the extensive scope of the PT phenomenon in both countries in the final grade of schooling. In Georgia, 79 percent of surveyed university entrants and pupils in the final grade of secondary education reported taking private lessons to prepare for entrance exams to tertiary education. The situation was similar in Azerbaijan, where 87 percent of the same group of respondents reported using PT services for this purpose. These figures are in stark contrast to those of other participating countries who did not have centralised examinations, where students reporting the use of PT in order to prepare for exams were significantly lower: 31% in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 28% in Croatia (Silova, Būdienė and Bray, 2006, p. 86). Perhaps even more alarming is the finding from the present study, illustrated in the quotes above, suggesting that, six years after the initial study, there has been little, if any, progress in addressing this issue. However, there is evidence of some efforts aimed at addressing these high rates of PT use in preparing for entrance examinations. In Georgia, a comprehensive reform of the university entrance system was introduced in 2005, which aimed to reduce corruption then considered to be the main driver of PT use. The reform has proven to be very effective in reducing corruption at HE exams, as suggested by an educational official from the National Examination Center in Georgia:

Parents can no longer use mechanisms of bribery and social links to guarantee places in higher education institutions for their children. (Educational professional, Georgia)

However, analyses from the present research suggest that, despite this reform, the scope of the PT phenomenon in the final grades of compulsory education remains high. This opinion was voiced by numerous stakeholders from various spheres, including parents, PT providers, non-governmental organizations and educational decision makers. A school principal from Georgia further describes the changes to the scope of the PT phenomenon after the reform:

Immediately after aptitude tests were introduced, the scale of PT dropped for a while. It was a novelty for everyone. None of the existing tutors had experience in preparing students for such tests. It always takes time to adapt to a new reality, but now we returned to the initial rate of PT. Practically everyone uses the service before the exams (Principal, Georgia).

This quote illustrates an interesting process in which, after a short-lived decline in PT use that is mostly explained by the adaptation of the PT market to new assessment requirements, the rate of PT gradually returned to its initial parameters. Arguably, this suggests that, apart from the high pressure and uncertainty characterized by high-stakes examinations plagued by corruptive practices, there are other factors that influence the demand for PT services in the final year of compulsory education. Some of these factors are discussed later in this chapter and throughout the book.

In a second cluster of countries, respondents in Croatia, Estonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina considered exams related to the transition to higher education as important, but not primary, contributions to the decision concerning PT use. In these countries, stakeholders viewed the use of PT services for the purpose of preparing for entrance exams for tertiary education as a supplementary mechanism to mainstream education that enabled pupils to more effectively systematize

knowledge, reduce stress and increase self-confidence. This argument is illustrated in the following quote from an Estonian parent:

You do learn at school but also need another point of view, just to be sure. (Parent, Estonia)

While this notion of PT use as a mechanism to reduce fears and anxiety associated with high-stakes assessment is considered more extensively in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight, here it serves as a clear juxtaposition to the Georgian and Azerbaijani situation in which the decision to use PT services in such instances might more accurately be characterized as normative behaviour. In Croatia, the situation was slightly different, where the system of entrance to higher education was undergoing significant changes at the time of the first round of data collection. Here, the State Matura, a high-stakes assessment with the dual role of providing certification of the completion of secondary education and determining entrance to higher education programmes, was introduced as a substitute to university entrance exams previously developed and administered by individual faculties and universities. As a result, the interviews conducted during this period were filled with many assumptions, expectations and even fears:

As Matura is something new and unknown, people are scared and I think that is the reason why they will turn more to PT. (Teacher union, Croatia)

Interestingly, in the second round of data collection occurring after the changes had been implemented, stakeholders' responses indicated that most of the fears related to the difficulty level of the tests and their fit with secondary school programs and the capacities of pupils to succeed proved to be wrong:

Previous University Entrance Exams were very different from State Matura Exams, in terms of the depth and width of knowledge, and in terms of the type of items. State Matura is conceptualized

completely differently...what we have noticed is a complete change of the structure of our clients – we do not have excellent pupils any more, we only have bad or very bad pupils, predominantly from gymnasiums. Before we had the best pupils, who just wanted to build their confidence. Now these kids have realised that State Matura is ridiculously easy and that they do not need to prepare for the exams. (PT provider, Croatia)

In addition to demonstrating the important role played by assessment, and the manner in which it is conducted, in the decision concerning the use of PT services, the above quotes from Croatia and those from Georgia also illustrate the manner in which changes to the formal assessment system can quickly reshape the overall PT market, as well as the specific goals and characteristics of PT users. In Georgia, efforts aimed at reducing corruption in the system of HE exams actually provoked changes in the type of support provided by PT services rather than reducing the need for PT itself. In Croatia, the introduction of the State Matura similarly prompted a shift in the PT market, which seems to adjust its services to accommodate the specific goals and needs of new users.

Specific assessment practices during transition periods between levels of general education was another issue identified by a number of participants as an influence on the decision concerning PT use. This was observed in all countries except Georgia, where there is no separation between primary and secondary schools and, as such, the transition between educational levels is a smooth one.

In Azerbaijan, the decision to use PT services as a source of support during transition periods was true only in cases in which pupils were planning to enter prestigious private high schools, a situation described by an Azerbaijani parent:

This year my son was admitted to the Turkish Lyceum. It was clear to me from the beginning that help from a private tutor is needed to pass the admission exams to the Lyceum of our choice. And so we did that and hired a good tutor. There is no guarantee that Lyceum

admission would be possible with his school knowledge only. Many parents who are dreaming about seeing their children in Lyceums do the same thing. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

This frank statement portrays many interesting elements of parental behaviour and strategies with regards to children's education, a theme more closely examined in Chapter Seven. For the purposes of the present discussion, it is an important illustration of the sentiment of a certain segment of the population that feel PT is absolutely necessary for progression through the education system. Even more importantly, it provides support for the foundational notion of the conceptual framework developed in the present study, which depicts PT as a function of the interaction between perspectives of the formal system of education and the educational aspirations of pupils and their parents.

In Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia, the transition period between educational levels was viewed as a significant influence on the decision concerning PT use at numerous educational levels:

When your child is between grades 7 and 8, and you know that the final grade she gets is the ticket to high school from primary school, you will do everything you can to enable your child to enter the school she wants. (Educational professional, Croatia)

PT services are most frequently used in the final grades of elementary school and before entrance exams that, for some high schools, are quite demanding. Parents do not want to take a risk and in a way they are forced to use the services, it gives them security and it is a kind of guarantee that their child will pass the exam. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

At the basic school level, [PT clients] are mostly those who, in March, compete for places at secondary schools. Hence, in February, we practice entrance assignments. (PT provider, Estonia)

Thus far, the analysis has revealed the context-specificity of the role played by assessment practices in the decision concerning PT use. Namely, the influence of assessment practices on the PT phenomenon seems largely dependent on the type of assessment structures that exist within a particular education system. However, a commonly reported perspective in all countries is that the decision concerning the use of PT services is most directly influenced by so called 'high-stakes' assessments, where results have direct consequences on whether a student will progress to the next grade level or receive a diploma.

However, more striking differences across countries are observed when participants' responses concerning patterns of PT service use are compared. In Azerbaijan and Georgia, interviewees suggested that PT use started early and lasted for relatively long periods:

I was taking PT lessons for four subjects that were needed for my specialty group. I have been going to PT for the last two years of my schooling (grades 10-11). Now my youngest cousins are beginning to attend PT classes from the 9th grade. They have to be prepared for school-leaving exams, which include 8 subjects. (University student, Azerbaijan)

In contrast, pupils in Croatia, Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were reported to attend PT lessons for shorter periods, usually in the two months before the end of school year. It seems that, in these countries, PT is a seasonal phenomenon that intensifies at the end of a school year:

Just a few teachers are having these lessons in continuity, throughout the school year... (Teacher union, Croatia)

And similarly, another educational professional confirms this view when talking about the difficulties experienced by an acquaintance who works as a private tutor as a result of the seasonal character of PT in Croatia:

It is hard for him (a tutor) to survive, as this is his only job. One month and a half before the end of the school year there is a peak... Only a few are taking PT from the beginning of the school year – these are easy ones, as the tutor is constantly monitoring them and provides the support they need. (Educational professional, Croatia)

Amongst stakeholders from Croatia, Estonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, this apparently seasonal character of the PT phenomenon was related to an excessive emphasis on summative assessment. In addition to the reported influence of transitional periods on the decision to use PT, participants from these countries also reported that PT services were frequently used in preparation for final examinations taken by pupils who have failing grades as a means to proceed to the next grade level. These school based examinations take place in the summer, a few weeks after the end of the regular school year. Those students who have failing grades in more than two subjects have the option of sitting final exams in the failed subjects (as a means of progressing to the next grade level) or to repeat the previous school year. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this situation was reported to prompt a surge of PT use in the weeks prior to the examination period as pupils attempt to secure their progression to the next grade level.

The absence of this particular form of PT service use in Azerbaijan and Georgia can be explained by the fact that school grades are assigned less importance in the vertical mobility of students within the educational systems of these countries and, as such, the motivation to correct a failing grade through the use of PT services is not present.

The responses from participants suggested that the predominantly summative and infrequent assessment practices in formal systems of education has a direct negative influence on the study and learning habits of pupils and, arguably, makes the use of PT services in the brief period before examinations a convenient shortcut to achieving intended outcomes:

A lot of grades are required and the best way to get the grades is through short tests... The assessment system is conducive to superficial learning to some extent. (Teacher, Estonia)

Similarly, the principal of a vocational school in Croatia explains the role played by infrequent assessment practices on the decision concerning PT use:

I think that occasional, infrequent assessment influences the unfavourable working habits of a majority of pupils – they work less continuously and have more condensed learning, learning to the test. And then, pupils cannot learn alone, because a lot of content is on the pile, and then they search for PT- I think more continuous assessment in all subjects would help. (Principal, Croatia)

4.3. Curriculum and assessment: The issue of poor fit

The participants' reflections often indicated a perception of a poor fit between examination requirements and the actual outputs of the formal education process. Analyses from the present study demonstrate that, in some cases, examinations require significantly more knowledge than what is actually presented in the curricula. Consequently, PT services are used as a mechanism to assist students in acquiring the additional knowledge necessary to successfully complete examinations. In Azerbaijan, respondents reported the belief that examination requirements are simply different from what is being taught at schools:

School education is superficial, consisting of theories and it does not match test questions. We don't learn test taking skills at school and the method of learning for answering the [test] questions is different from the methods we learn at school. Tests are more specific. (University student, Azerbaijan)

In Georgia, participants linked the high demand for PT services in the final grade of secondary education to the ambiguous requirements of higher education entrance exams. In these exams, characterised by many open questions and complex tasks, pupils' results are referenced according to the group of pupils taking the exams (i.e. exams are norm-referenced). As a result, the more a student knows

beyond that set out in the curriculum, the better his chances are of achieving a good score. This situation is described further by a Georgian university professor who had also previously worked as a head of the central curriculum agency:

The difficulty of tests is based on a norm rather than on criteria. Students cannot control their results. In other words, no matter how well he or she is prepared, there is always a chance that others are better prepared. For this reason, students are forced to acquire as much knowledge as they can, there are no limits and this generates the demand for PT. (University professor, Georgia)

A similar problem was reported by Bosnian participants, although it was linked to another assessment issue – the transition between two educational levels.

The whole assessment issue is related to the fact that our students do not know what and how much they are supposed to know to get a D and how much to get an A. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In both Croatia and Estonia, PT providers raise another aspect related to the apparently poor fit between the requirements of tertiary education entrance examinations and curricular content and the manner in which this is a direct influence on the decision to use PT services:

The national examination is a pure surprise. (PT provider, Estonia)
Many faculties do not have any clue about what is taught in schools... (PT provider, Croatia).

Analyses further indicated that, in all countries, this disparity between the expected outcomes of the previous level and the entrance requirements of the next level are evident even in cases in which these requirements are explicit. In these cases, while examination

requirements are known, they are nearly impossible to achieve in existing systems of formal education:

Currently the situation is such that when you attend the required lessons, you still cannot get a high mark at the exam. You need additional work. For instance, we have many more lessons that the curriculum requires and our teachers did extra work with us but we still did not get more than 90 points (at the exam). (Pupil, Estonia)

On entrance exams for high schools, more than half of students have just five out of ten points in mathematics, and that is for gymnasiums, we are not talking about technical and vocational schools. They are supposed to have no less than nine points in order to be able, without bigger problems, to attend mathematics lessons. So with that kind of prior knowledge, the highest grade they can have in high school is D. What else can we expect? (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This frustrated sentiment speaks to the manner in which current curricular and teaching arrangements still cannot meet the requirements of entrance exams. Not only is this highly illustrative of the complete lack of coordination between curricular outcomes and entrance examination requirements, it also illustrates the manner in which such disparity makes a very direct contribution to the decision to seek PT services in order to compensate.

Thus far, the discussion examining the role of assessment practices on the decision concerning PT use has clearly demonstrated that, in all participating countries, an inherent disparity between the expected outcomes of previous educational stages and the entrance requirements of subsequent stages is a powerful and far-reaching force driving the use of PT services amongst pupils in transitional periods. Arguably, in order to reduce such assessment driven PT use, stakeholders on both sides of the transition between levels of formal education should have a clear understanding of the required competencies and knowledge necessary to proceed to the following educational level and additionally must be sure that these

requirements are achievable within the processes and practices of mainstream education.

Regrettably, analyses of participants' views revealed that these two preconditions are rarely met and, as a result, assessment-driven PT is widespread in all contexts. While the types of assessment deemed directly responsible for PT use differed across countries, one particularly striking and critical finding resonated strongly in all contexts: assessment generates the need for PT only in cases in which it plays an important role in the vertical mobility of students across levels of formal education.

4.4. Conclusions

The findings presented in this chapter have demonstrated the manner in which characteristics of formal education systems play an important role in the decision concerning PT use. On the whole, perceived deficiencies in curriculum arrangements and assessment practices were reported to be the most influential aspects in a complex set of system-related factors influencing the decision concerning the use of PT services.

According to participants, the specific features of curriculum that generate the need for PT in different contexts include: (i) a poor balance between the depth and breadth of curricula, expressed through a mismatch between available teaching hours and the prescribed volume of curricular content; (ii) a poor balance between the content and outcome orientation of curricula; (iii) the irrelevance of curricular content to real life experience; and (iv) numerous functional deficiencies and inconsistencies across grades, subject and educational levels.

In addition, the scope of the PT phenomenon was reported to be largely influenced by the type of assessment structures existing within a particular education system. The findings presented in this chapter are consistent with the results of previous research from diverse parts of the world demonstrating that so-called high-stakes examinations at different levels are a major force influencing the scale and shape of 'shadow education' (Bray, 2011; Bray & Lykins, 2012; Buchmann

et al., 2010). Furthermore, infrequent and predominantly summative forms of assessment, along with a lack of consistency between curriculum and assessment requirements, were demonstrated to further increase the need for PT services.

It seems clear that, in all participating countries, a number of elements within current educational systems act as clear and powerful influences on the decision to use PT services. It might be argued, therefore, that any effort to address the scope of the PT phenomenon needs to make careful and informed consideration of these issues in order to develop effective policy option and plan for reform.

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CHAPTER V

THE ROLES OF TEACHERS IN THE DECISION CONCERNING THE USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

Andrea Soldo & Boris Jokić

The crucial role of teachers in the quality of teaching and learning processes occurring in the classroom and education in general is acknowledged in numerous policy documents and academic publications (e.g. Townsend & Bates, 2007; OECD, 2005). Special emphasis is given to the professional competences of teachers and the quality and effectiveness of teaching practices (Coolahan, 2002; Lewis, Prasad, Carey, Bartfai & Farris, 1999; Muijs & Reynolds, 2011; UNESCO, 2005; UNICEF, 2011). Undoubtedly, the professional competences of teachers represent a multifaceted concept most often linked to the knowledge, skills and values gained and developed through formal and informal education and, equally importantly, actual teaching practices (Fredriksson, 2004; OECD, 2005, 2009). Conversely, while the quality and effectiveness of teaching practices is of course a function of teacher competences, it is also influenced by various elements related to the environments in which teachers work, including the amount and quality of instructional resources available, pupil characteristics, physical and interpersonal work conditions, staffing, and support from administrators and parents (Lewis et al., 1999; Mitchell, Robinson et al., 2001). Issues related to the professional competences of teachers and the quality and effectiveness of teaching practices become even more important in contexts in which the demands placed upon schools and teachers are becoming increasingly great and complex. In addition to their critical role in conceptualising and directing the teaching and learning processes occurring in the classroom, teachers are expected to be able to deal effectively with an increasingly diverse number of

issues, including teaching students from different backgrounds, teaching students with learning or behavioural problems, using new technologies and keeping track of developing fields of knowledge and approaches to various issues related to education (OECD, 2005).

When the professional competences of teachers and the quality and effectiveness of teaching practices are considered in the conceptual framework of the present research, it might be argued that these elements represent one of the most important factors influencing parental and pupil perspectives regarding the formal system of education. Indeed, if pupils and parents perceive that teachers are professionally competent and that teaching practices are effective and of sufficient quality, their educational aspirations are likely to be met within the context of formal education and, consequently, families may be less likely to use private tutoring (PT) services. In contrast, if parents and pupils perceive that the professional competences of teachers are insufficient and/or teaching practices are not effective or of sufficient quality, the likelihood of seeking PT services becomes higher. In this case, it seems plausible to expect that the discrepancy between familial perspectives on the formal education system and educational aspirations would increase the likelihood of deciding to use PT services.

Given the intrinsic relationship between the formal system of education and the PT phenomenon, it is perhaps not surprising that issues related to teachers and their practices emerged as important issues in investigations of the PT phenomenon across many international contexts (Bray 1999, 2006; Ventura, Neto Mendes, Costa & Azavedo, 2006; Silova, 2009b). Within this body of research, teachers have generally been recognized as one of the main providers of PT services, while their roles and motivation as PT providers have typically been discussed within the wider theme of the provision of PT services (Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006). The survey data from the 'Monitoring of Private tutoring' study (Silova et al., 2006) indicated that pupils reported that school teachers were providers of 'one-on-one' PT lessons in 70 to 80% of cases in Azerbaijan and Croatia and in over 40% of cases in Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In addition, school teachers in all countries were employed as tutors and lecturers in privately organized preparatory courses for high-stakes assessments and university entrance exams. In the Eastern European and Central Asian contexts in particular, the role of teachers and their motivation to provide PT services have been contextualised within the wider framework of the transitional and transformational processes characteristic of these post-socialist contexts (Silova, 2009a; Popa, 2005; Zgaga 2006). In some countries, issues related to ineffective teaching practices have been connected to corruptive practices (Bray, 2011). Furthermore, teachers' motivation for providing PT services has been related almost exclusively to their economic status, albeit more in a theoretical rather than empirical sense. To date, the manner in which the professional competences of teachers, established through pre-service and in-service training, and teaching practices within the formal education system are related to the PT phenomenon has gained less attention within existing academic research.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section, the focus of the discussion is aimed at an exploration of the relationship between the characteristics of pre-service teacher training programmes and the continuous professional development of teachers that may indirectly contribute to the decision concerning PT use. The second section of this chapter explores objective obstacles to the delivery of effective and quality teaching practices and the ways in which they contribute to the parental and pupil decision concerning the use of PT services. The third section of this chapter is somewhat specific for the present book in its exploration of participants' perspectives regarding teachers' motivation for PT provision. Here, the focus is distanced from the familial decision to use PT services lying at the centre of the conceptual framework, and instead centres on an exploration of the motivation of teachers employed in formal education to provide PT services. In each section, a number of specific elements are identified and provide a basis for broader and deeper discussion regarding the teacher-related influences on the PT phenomenon.

5.1. Relationships between pre-service and in-service teacher training and the decision concerning the use of PT services

Pre-service and in-service teacher training are, or at least should be, focal points of every system of education. Arguably, both of these educational forms are the foundation of the professional competences of the teaching workforce, which in turn influence the quality of teaching practice as well as the overall quality of education. In any given society, establishing and maintaining adequate levels of competences in the teaching workforce depends on a number of factors: the selectivity in pre-service teacher education and teaching employment, the overall quality and relevance of teacher training programmes in higher education, the regular evaluation of teaching practices and on-going professional development, the recognition of effective teaching through incentives and rewards, and the provision of the necessary resources and support to teachers in order to successfully meet high expectations (OECD, 2005, 2009; UNESCO, 2005).

In almost all educational contexts, the attractiveness and selectiveness of teacher training programmes has been raised as an important issue related to overall competence and quality of the teaching workforce (OECD, 2005; UNICEF, 2011; Silova, 2009a). Here, the inability of teacher training programmes to attract highly qualified or skilled applicants, which might be argued to be a reflection of the lower status of the teaching profession in general, later becomes evident in the overall competence level amongst new and prospective teachers. Perhaps even more critical than this problem of selectivity are issues related to inadequate pre-service teacher training programmes, which might result in the insufficient preparation of new and prospective teachers for the challenges they will face in the classrooms. As a result, prospective teachers might be unprepared to formulate and guide the teaching and learning processes necessary in order to produce favourable educational outcomes for pupils. Similarly, the lack of effective in-service teacher training might also contribute to a limitation in the continuous

professional development of teachers and teaching practice. The arguments raised here similarly emerged through analyses in the present research, where educational stakeholders from all countries recognised numerous issues related to pre-service and in-service teacher training as potentially contributing to the decision concerning the use of PT services.

Undoubtedly, the educational pathway towards becoming a teacher and the structure of educational programmes are important elements related to the quality of pre-service teacher training programmes. For this reason, an overview of the existing systems for pre-service teacher training in all participating countries will first be provided. This will be followed by a review of in-service teacher training programmes in all contexts. Next, an exploration of findings regarding the features of pre-service teacher training programmes reported by participants as potential contributors to the decision concerning PT use will be presented. Finally, this section will conclude with a short discussion on issues related to in-service training programmes and the decision to use PT services.

5.1.1. Overview of pre-service teacher training programmes in all five contexts

In all countries, higher education systems, including teacher education, have undergone significant changes since the 1990s. In all cases, wider societal changes also included educational reforms aiming to improve the quality of education and to adequately respond to new educational and market needs as well as wider global trends. The introduction of the Bologna process in 1999, aimed at creating a European Higher Education Area, required a comprehensive transformation of study programmes. Such reform implied deep structural and conceptual changes, to which teachers' colleges and faculties, as well as other faculties training teachers, were not exceptions. While the Bologna process has been introduced in all countries participating in the present research, this implementation process has begun at varying time points in accordance with the reform paths of each country. In Estonia, the Bologna process was

implemented in the academic year 2002/2003, while Bosnia and Herzegovina initiated this implementation in 2003/2004. In Croatia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, implementation of this process began in 2005/2006. Further details of the structure of teacher training programmes in each participating country are provided in Table 8.

According to the Bologna process, the initial training of teachers is to be carried out at a higher education level organized in a two-cycle specialist degree structure (Bachelor-Master structure) otherwise known as the '3+2' system or, in the case of Azerbaijan and Georgia, a '4+2' system. According to this process, prospective teachers can be trained at Teachers' Faculties, Pedagogical colleges/Faculties of Pedagogy as well as at faculties not specifically oriented towards teacher training (Table 8). In Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, students attending faculties not specifically oriented towards teacher training and who wish to enter the teaching profession are required to participate in further training in the fields of pedagogy, psychology, didactics and methodology (parallel to their training in their specific discipline), as these subjects are not systematically integrated into all prior study programmes. Further, prospective teachers obtain their teaching qualifications depending on the type and duration of study programme they have chosen. Teaching at different educational levels (pre-primary, primary and secondary) requires different qualifications. In Estonia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the initial training of subject and class teachers in general education is conducted at the Master's level, while pre-primary teacher training can be achieved at the Bachelor's level or as part of some professional higher education courses. In Azerbaijan and Georgia, prospective teachers can begin their education within the framework of pre-bachelor degree programmes. Upon their successful completion of such programmes, graduates can teach in primary schools. The next stages of preparation are the subsequent two cycles of higher education (Bachelor's and Master's degrees) introduced in line with the Bologna structure (Table 8).

Table 8. Overview of the initial teacher training in all participating countries according to the Bologna process

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Year of introducing Bologna process</i> | <i>Duration of the initial teacher training (BA/MA structure)</i> | <i>Teacher training education institutions</i> | <i>Required teacher qualifications</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Azerbaijan ² | 2005/2006 | '4+2' system | Pedagogical colleges Pedagogical Universities Teachers Institutes | - primary school teachers (pre-bachelor degree programmes which last from one to four years of study) - secondary school teachers (BA/MA level) |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina ³ | 2003/2004 | '3+2' system | Pedagogical Academies/ Faculties Universities Professional higher education institutions | - pre-primary teachers (BA level) - subject and class teachers in general education (MA level) |
| Croatia ⁴ | 2005/2006 | Integrated 5 year or '3+2' system | Teaching Faculties Other Faculties Professional higher education institutions | - pre-primary teachers (BA level) - subject and class teachers in general education (MA level) |
| Estonia ⁵ | 2002/2003 | '3+2' system | Pedagogical College Universities Professional higher education institutions | - pre-primary teachers (BA level) - subject and class teachers in general education (MA level) |
| Georgia ⁶ | 2005/2006 | '4+2' system | Teaching Universities | - primary school teachers (BA level) - secondary school teachers (BA/MA level) |

In all countries, educational reforms, both planned and already implemented, have included legislative, financial and managerial changes, as well as changes to aspects related to educational content. While reformative measures and priorities regarding teacher education slightly differ between participating countries, they are all generally linked to efforts aimed at modernising teacher training

² Bologna Process – National report 2005 – 2007; Duda & Clifford-Amos, 2011

³ Bologna Process – National report on higher education: 2005 – 2007; Kafedžić et al., 2010

⁴ Bologna Process – National report 2004 – 2005; Vizek Vidović, 2012

⁵ Vaht et al., 2010

⁶ Bologna Process – National report 2005 – 2007; Duda & Clifford-Amos, 2011

programmes, better defining teacher standards and competences, advancing research in and about teacher education and improving international cooperation.

5.1.2. In-service teacher training programmes in five contexts

According to common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications, professional development programmes, or so-called 'in-service teacher training', should be multi-disciplinary and provide teachers with '*extensive subject knowledge, a good knowledge of pedagogy, the skills and competences required to guide and support learners, and an understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education*' (European Commission, 2010). In all countries participating in the present research, programmes for in-service teacher training have been developed and are organised by a wide range of institutions such as universities, centres and agencies for professional development, specialised centres for continuous education or by international and non-governmental organisations.

A general overview of the organization of in-service training in each country is presented in Table 9. As is evident in the table, the topic areas covered through in-service training are similar across all countries. They are generally related to specific academic (subject) knowledge and disciplines, professional skills (teaching methods and pedagogical skills) and national and/or school educational priorities/specificities (e.g. new curriculum, innovations in education, legislation etc.). The manner in which training is organized is also quite similar: in schools (e.g. on-the-job workshops, activity groups/subject councils, attendance of sample or experimental lessons); outside the school environment (e.g. seminars, conferences, lectures, excursions) and independently by teachers themselves (e.g. individual study, online learning, consultations).

Table 9. The organization of in-service teacher training in all five participating countries

| COUNTRY | APPROACH | TRAINING AREAS | ORGANIZERS/PROVIDERS |
|---|---|--|--|
| Azerbaijan (Source: Duda and Clifford-Amos, 2011) | Internal (e.g. on-the-job workshops; professional partnerships; participation in conferences, seminars, courses, apprenticeships) External (e.g. courses, apprenticeships, counselling, distance learning) Self-development (e.g. individual study, communication during meetings, conferences, etc.) | General components of classroom teaching Subject-related education Innovations and new trends in education New primary and secondary education curriculum (since 2008) | Universities, specialised centres for lifelong education, institutions for professional development, and non-governmental organisations for continuous professional development |
| Georgia (Source: Duda and Clifford-Amos, 2011) | Accredited teacher training courses, seminars, working groups, online resources, workshops, and conferences | Subject area training Professional skills training, New developments and legislation | Ministries for Education (i.e. Pedagogical Institutes) and international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina (Source: Zgaga et al., 2006.) | Individual or group attendance of exemplifying lessons Involvement in activities of expert school bodies (e.g. 'teachers' activity groups' organised by teachers from within the same educational field) Attending consultations, seminars, conferences etc. | Technical, methodical and pedagogic/psychological training | Education and Teacher Training Agency, higher education institutions for pre-service teacher education and NGOs |
| Croatia (Source: Zgaga et al., 2006.) | Training courses, conferences, lectures, excursions, methodology days, and subject councils in each subject | a) Training needs of individual teachers are based on b) development needs of the school as an organisation c) national educational priorities (e.g. implementation of new, outcome-based curricula) | Universities, professional higher education institutions, privately owned in-service training institutions, general education schools, vocational schools, hobby schools and individuals |

Despite the existence of numerous programmes of professional development as well as both recent and ongoing reform, pre-service and in-service teacher training is still critically evaluated in many of the participating contexts (e.g. Duda & Clifford-Amos, 2011; Vizek Vidović, 2005; Zgaga, 2006). In the present research, an examination of stakeholders' criticisms of the education of teachers reveals numerous features of current training programmes that have the potential to affect the quality and effectiveness of teaching practice and consequently contribute to the decision to use PT services.

5.1.3. Features of pre-service and in-service teacher training related to the decision concerning PT use

Data analyses indicated several features related to pre-service teacher training programmes which could contribute to the decision regarding PT use. In the first instance, the exploration of this issue revealed generally low levels of attractiveness of teacher training programmes, reflected through insufficient numbers of applicants aiming to be prospective teachers in some countries and, in some cases, applications and participation from less competent candidates. Secondly, analyses indicated that pre-service teacher training of subject specialists often places emphasis on the mastery of disciplinary academic knowledge rather than on acquiring competences related to teaching practices and methods. Finally, data analyses indicated that pre-service teacher training programmes were often characterised by inadequate exposure to classrooms and real school life. These issues will be considered in turn in the following paragraphs. A short discussion examining participants' perspectives regarding in-service teacher training will follow.

In some contexts, the issue of the inability of teacher training programmes to attract the most competent applicants emerged as one of the elements potentially related to the decision concerning PT use. Although this relationship may seem distant and indirect, the core argument behind it states that some of the deficiencies of formal system of education are a result of the fact that individuals choosing the teaching profession are not always the most competent

applicants from within the student body as a whole. Arguably, this inability to attract the most competent applicants is a reflection of the lack of attractiveness of the teaching profession in general and is most directly reflected through the lower number of prospective applicants aiming to become teachers. For instance, according to an Estonian study carried out by the Praxis Centre for Policy Studies in 2011, only 4% of Estonian students who completed secondary education expressed a wish to continue their studies in the field of education (Mägi & Nestor, 2012). The limited attractiveness of the teaching profession is also indirectly reflected through the expressed wishes of current teachers to have pursued alternative professional pathways. Research conducted on the status of teachers in Azerbaijan in 2010 revealed that 50% of school teachers and 86.7% of young teachers expressed an interest in other professions and reported that they would not have chosen teaching if they had had the opportunity to continue their studies in another field (Kazimzade & Ismayilzade, 2011).

The analyses of data from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina also suggested a lower number of applicants in the teacher training programmes for some subjects and that the appeal of alternative careers for those studying to become teachers may further jeopardise the number of potential teachers. This is clearly evidenced in the words of a Croatian university professor who is directly involved in the training of prospective mathematics teachers at the Mathematics Department of the Faculty of Science:

The problem is that there are not enough students who want to become teachers. We know that, for years now, the numbers for our subject are too small. Of those that we have, I think they would advance mathematics teaching if they would decide to work in school. However, knowing it is currently quite easy for mathematicians to find more attractive jobs in financial, material and social sectors, it is questionable how many of them will be teachers in the end. (University professor, Croatia)

This interesting quote incorporates several important elements. First, it confirms the issue of the limited attractiveness of certain teacher training programmes, as expressed through the number of applicants and consequently the number of qualified students. Secondly, it emphasises a worrying trend in which some potential teachers, especially those from study programmes such as science, mathematics and information technology, may decide to change their professional pathways during the course of their studies. Indeed, this stakeholder argues that prospective teachers in some disciplines may be lured by and select better-paying jobs related to their discipline rather than pursue a career in teaching. According to this stakeholder, this might contribute to a situation in which schools struggle to find teachers with adequate professional competences.

This is clearly evidenced in the continuation of her statement:

There is a huge number of uneducated teachers... what else is there to say? It is not easy to find a mathematics teacher even in the big cities, I mean even in Zagreb. That is a reality, not only in small schools, it is happening in the centres of bigger towns. For a period, whole regions could not find any mathematics teacher, let alone a quality teacher of mathematics. This definitely has a reflection on the quality of teaching practice and pupils' knowledge. (University professor, Croatia)

Consistent with the arguments put forward previously, data analyses further revealed that, even when there are sufficient numbers of applicants, those applicants selecting the teaching profession are not among the most competent. This appeared to be particularly relevant in Bosnia and Herzegovina where participants perceived that only low or average performing students enter teaching programmes. This point is clearly made by an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the following statement:

Because of the negative selection in teaching faculties, we have people who are not suited for being teachers at all. The criteria for teaching faculties should be much stricter, so schools can rely on

the fact that the teacher likes his/her profession, is well-educated, is ready for further professional development, knows how to apply new teaching methods, is tolerant, knows how to lead students. At this point in time, we can talk about teaching staff which vary from very good, excellent and creative teachers to absolutely the wrong people who are ruining one generation after another. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Beyond serving as an illustration of the perceived quality of applicants to teaching faculties and lacklustre selection procedures, this statement is also illustrative of the negative consequences of these elements on selection processes in schools. Furthermore, the quote serves as an apt illustration of the complexity of skills, knowledge and characteristics required of a competent teacher. While it is perhaps not realistic to expect that any single pre-service teacher training programme can establish and develop all of the mentioned characteristics, the perceived low abilities of prospective teachers makes this task almost utopian. Finally, through the stakeholder's use of the words '*absolutely the wrong people who are ruining one generation after another*', this statement offers a bleak illustration of the potentially severe consequences that less competent teachers and teaching practices can have not only on individual pupils but on whole generations.

It was previously argued that the general quality of pre-service training programmes, even more than the selectivity and attractiveness of such programmes, is a critical influence on the development of the professional competences of teachers. Participants in the present research reported several important elements related to programme quality that could seriously negatively affect the professional competence level of teachers and the quality of their teaching practices that, in turn, might influence the decision concerning the use of PT services. In general, pre-service teacher training typically includes four areas of study: academic knowledge (subject content); pedagogical content or methodological knowledge; educational content or professional knowledge; and teaching practice or practical

skills (OECD, 2005). Presently, criticism of the curricula in pre-service teacher education has been aimed mainly towards the tendency to place too much emphasis on academic knowledge or subject content) while neglecting the remaining three areas (OECD, 2005). In the present research, educational stakeholders offered similar criticisms of the pre-service teacher training programmes in their respective countries, arguing that the curriculum and teaching in these programmes are mostly theoretical, fact-oriented and strongly leaning towards academic disciplinary knowledge. Consequently, prospective teachers are trained to be subject experts rather than educators.

One of the most frequently reported elements emerging from data analyses was the inadequate training in the fields of psychology, pedagogy, didactics and teaching methods. This issue was recognized and identified as relevant in all participating countries, as evidenced in the following quotes from different countries and different types of stakeholders. First, a principal at a Baku Lyceum in Azerbaijan speaks about issues in hiring young teachers with adequate levels of professional teaching competences:

Today, the level of teaching does not meet the expectations of some segments of society. In my view, graduate teachers are not well prepared for teaching. They may know the subject content but they do not know how to teach, which negatively influences the level of education in schools. I am always searching for good teachers, but in reality I really do not have a big choice. Particularly among young people who just came into the profession. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

Whilst triangulating with previous statements from Croatian participants regarding the challenges in finding competent teachers in some subjects, this quote further serves to illustrate the discrepancy between sufficient levels of content knowledge related to a specific discipline, and the under-development of the core characteristics necessary for effective teaching and learning. A similar sentiment is evident in the following words of an Estonian PT provider who previously worked as a school teacher:

Some teachers, fresh out of university, teach the subject at a very high level. I mean, just like she would teach university students and not pupils in school. They do not seem to understand that in front of her are very diverse individuals, including some less bright pupils who cannot understand what is taught. They just teach at their own level and require that from all others. (PT provider, Estonia)

Here, the failure of the teacher to consider the diversity of pupils' abilities and individual characteristics, perhaps stemming from inadequate pre-service teacher training, produces inflexible and inappropriate teaching practices. Arguably, this inflexibility has the potential to produce various undesirable educational outcomes and, in turn, contribute to the decision concerning PT use. This opinion regarding the lack of adequate training for effectively steering and controlling teaching and learning processes, especially in a classroom environment in which there are many pupils, is also evident in the following words from a Georgian parent:

My child is in the ninth grade. A young class instructor called me recently and complained that the whole class, including my daughter, is doing nothing at school. They are not interested in anything – she said. They don't like any of the subjects. If it was a problem for my child only, I would agree that this is her fault. In my opinion, the teacher may know her subject but it is for nothing if she doesn't know how to involve students in classroom activities, how to keep them interested in at least some of the subjects. I cannot believe that none of them [students] have personal interests or that there is no way to attract their attention. (Parent, Georgia)

Together, these quotes confirm the opinion that, in pre-service training, some prospective teachers are not provided with the necessary resources, knowledge and skills to function effectively in classrooms, to work with students and to respond to the differing educational needs and expectations of pupils, schools and parents.

A more personal perspective on this issue is shared by the Director of a leading Croatian firm organising preparatory courses, who had also previously worked as a mathematics teacher at the secondary level:

It is not only sad or funny; I think it is even painful that I didn't hear anything about how to teach mathematics to children during my studies at our Faculty. I was taught everything about mathematics for sure, but not how to teach it to children. I did not receive anything that would prepare me to be a high-quality teacher. I think that is one of the key problems of our education. The teachers are maybe experts in their field, but they know nothing about their job, i.e. teaching. (PT provider, Croatia)

This very critical statement provides a succinct summary of the points raised here by many stakeholders regarding the lack of development of educational competence, in which current pre-service teacher training programmes fail to provide adequate training in such critical fields of psychology, pedagogy, didactics and teaching methods.

In his reminiscence of past student days, this participant further presents the notion that, in some pre-service teaching programmes, the development of discipline-specific academic knowledge is given higher prominence than other elements of professional teacher competence. This was especially evident in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, where prospective subject teachers concurrently study both discipline subjects and those more closely related to teaching. In these countries, participant responses confirmed that, on the whole, non-discipline specific topics related to teaching practice and competence are not perceived as relevant, an observation seen to be especially true in mathematics and science faculties. As is evident in the following quote from a Croatian educational stakeholder, university professors in these faculties tend to focus primarily on providing academic knowledge rather than on mastering skills in the transfer of this specialised knowledge in a way that meets learning needs of pupils:

I have a feeling that university professors are totally oriented towards academic disciplines and preparing scientific articles, while they don't really care about the problems and needs of schools. It seems to me that the professors think that it is below their status to work

on pedagogy, teaching methods or any other subject that is more directly related to teaching in schools. (Principal, Croatia)

The following words from a Bosnian educational expert further illustrate the discrepancy, characteristic in some disciplines, between a strong emphasis on the mastery of the discipline and little attention to elements aimed at the development of teacher competences:

I think that our teachers do not receive quality education. They are getting knowledge from specific areas of expertise, mathematics for example, but they are not adequately taught when it comes to didactics and teaching methods. When I was a student, I also used to think that teaching methods were irrelevant. I used to say 'I am a mathematician, I don't need that' and now I know I was totally wrong. Unfortunately, even today, the situation isn't much different. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In a very personal and powerful manner, this statement depicts the core problem inherent in the approach, typical in the Western Balkans, of training teachers as subject specialists. Here, there is a clear division between academic disciplinary knowledge and teaching competences in which both students and faculty attach more value to the mastery of the former over the latter. This observation is supported by the words of a Croatian university professor at a Mathematics Department who speaks about the position of teacher training within her institution:

At our Faculty, there still exists an elitist view that positions the teachers' programme and all related subjects as irrelevant and reserved only for less able students. Some professors still treat these students as second class and the so-called 'teaching subjects' as something that maybe do not belong here. We made a big step forward in the last several years, because the program was in my view completely inadequate – this was actually a program of theoretical mathematics and prospective teachers were educated as if they would be

scientists in the most classical term, indeed in very classic theoretical mathematics from the 19th century to the 1960s. There was no training in teaching methods and the general attitude was that this was something totally irrelevant and that being a good mathematician is a sufficient prerequisite to being a good teacher. There was also a great emphasis on mathematical content... Now things are changing, but not fast enough I would say. (University professor, Croatia)

Regrettably, this first person quote clearly indicates that traditional attitudes, in which a strong expert in the field does not need any additional knowledge or education in the areas of teaching competence, are still present in many educational circles. Furthermore, the quote also suggests the potential stigmatisation of prospective teachers in departments in which they are studying alongside students pursuing the core, more disciplinary-oriented programmes. However, this stakeholder does provide reason for optimism through her discussion of the changes occurring within the faculty that, although may not be occurring as quickly as would be hoped, will perhaps prompt a change in opinions towards teaching programmes as well as a more competent teaching workforce.

These findings are additionally supported by the results of previous research demonstrating that science subjects, and mathematics in particular, provoke the highest demand for PT worldwide (Bray, 1999; de Silva, 1994a; Hussein, 1987; Ventura, Neto-Mendes, Costa & Azevedo, 2006; Sujatha, 2007; Tseng, 1998). This is confirmed by the results from the initial study examining the PT phenomenon across several former socialist countries (Silova, Budiene and Bray, 2006), implying that the manner in which mathematics is being taught and learned in mainstream schools represents a global problem. Arguably, the inadequate preparation of mathematics teachers in pre-service training programmes is a significant contributor to this issue.

In addition to the issues mentioned thus far, educational stakeholders also reported the notion that teachers often lacked communication skills, an element to which insufficient attention is devoted to in pre-service teacher training. Arguably, this gap in the competence of teachers might have a negative effect on the teaching

and learning processes occurring in the classroom, as well as in communicating information regarding pupils' education to parents. This sentiment is reflected in the following quote from an Estonian PT provider who had previously worked as a teacher:

I get more students from some teachers. One of my students asked, 'Why can't our teacher teach like this? Our teacher talks in a quiet voice in front of the class, hardly breathing, nobody understands anything. She does not talk to us. Why can't she talk like you?' I must admit, some people are not suited to be teachers. (PT provider, Estonia)

Although it would be unrealistic, and potentially dangerous, to require all teachers to conform to some idiosyncratic ideal, adequate communication skills is especially important if there is to be effective cooperation between teachers, pupils and parents. If teachers are not provided with the skills in order to effectively and clearly communicate strengths and challenges in relation to the educational progress of a particular pupil, it becomes improbable that all interested parties will be able to work collectively in promoting and supporting the pupil's achievement. This issue was highlighted by the advisor for mathematics teachers at a Croatian Teacher Training Agency:

They are not educated to talk to parents nor to pupils. I teach them how to talk to people.....how to shake hands, how to say good afternoon, how are you, what is the problem, take a seat, come in two weeks, etc..... (Educational professional, Croatia)

Indeed, in extreme cases of poor communication, messages concerning a pupil's academic performance might be limited to the transcript of grades alone. Consistent with the arguments raised in the exploration of parental decisions related to their children's education in Chapter Seven, the decision to use PT services might seem an effective and convenient option to compensate for the inadequate communication skills of teachers in formal education.

Another shortcoming of pre-service teacher training programmes affecting the professional competences of teachers and the quality of teaching practices and, consequently, potentially contributing to the decision concerning PT is the varying quantity and quality of practical teaching experience. More specifically, respondents reported an insufficient exposure to actual classrooms during formal teacher training programmes and an overall lack of practical experiences.

In all participating countries, students in pre-service teacher training programmes spend a set number of hours engaged in practical teaching experience. Following graduation, prospective teachers are additionally obligated to undergo an on-the-job qualifying period (called an induction period/year). However, in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia, this exposure to work context is considered to be overly formal and the number of hours to be insufficient, especially in comparison to those devoted to theoretical lessons and lectures. Consequently, the preparation of future teachers in these countries typically lacks sufficient opportunities to obtain practical experience. Instead, teachers accumulate knowledge and develop skills in isolation from the real issues and problems of a school. One of the primary causes reported to underlie this situation is insufficient or weak partnerships between schools and universities, a situation evident in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Zgaga, 2006). In the case of Azerbaijan, the School of Education and the Department of Elementary Education reserve the right to be selective in admitting students to work experience on the basis of criteria such as student academic achievement (Duda & Clifford-Amos, 2011). This failure to provide sufficient practical experience to trainee teachers is concisely and clearly captured in the words of an educational expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

You have students who are finishing college and they have never entered a classroom or even given one or two lessons. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

And similarly, in the words of the Education and Teacher Training Agency's advisor for mathematics teachers in Croatia:

When students are finishing at the faculties, they actually don't know what to expect when they enter classrooms. And when people start working at school, they are starting from scratch....I think that there is not enough practice during the course of pre-service study.... (Educational professional, Croatia)

Somewhat surprisingly, the first quote suggests that, upon entering the teaching profession, some students had not yet had an opportunity to experience realistic classroom situations in the role of teacher nor to familiarise themselves with the possible challenges and issues faced by a teacher conducting lessons with a diverse group of pupils. Even in instances in which students are provided with an opportunity to experience an actual classroom environment (and in most cases they are), the number and continuity of those opportunities, as indicated in the second quote, is insufficient.

Undoubtedly, this lack of practical experience and exposure makes prospective teachers highly unprepared to develop and implement strategies for addressing typical challenges that might potentially arise in their own classrooms. Arguably, this is a severe handicap to their readiness as future teachers and their capacity to cope with the often complex and demanding tasks faced in the everyday work of teachers.

The discussion thus far has provided evidence to suggest that the imbalance between subject-specific, theoretical knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and practical skills seems to be an on-going shortcoming of pre-service teacher education in most of the contexts. The consequence of this imbalance is that prospective teachers may not be sufficiently trained to work in classrooms, to communicate effectively with pupils and families, or to manage classroom processes. As a result, when new teachers enter the classroom, their approach is usually teacher-oriented rather than pupil-centred, which potentially results in a situation where the individual educational needs of students are often not recognized and addressed. It is reasonable to suggest that, in such a situation, a need for additional support often arises. For many students, this support often takes the form of

PT services. This notion is supported in the words of a representative of the Croatian Association of School Principals:

If we want to reduce PT, we have to introduce better university programs, more practice in schools and higher quality in-service training focused on teaching methods. All our teachers have good subject knowledge, but do not know other things... (Principal, Croatia)

However, it is perhaps unreasonable to expect that teachers will possess all the necessary competences and knowledge for effective teaching upon completion of their initial teacher education. Indeed, beyond initial training, the lifelong learning experience of teachers includes an induction period as well as continuous professional development. It is expected that, through various professional development programmes, teachers have the opportunity and obligation to further gain and improve their knowledge, skills and practice. Nevertheless, the question remains whether this is in fact the case. More specifically, do professional development programmes adequately respond to the needs of teachers? And further, do they influence teacher quality and, if so, to what extent? The perspectives of stakeholders regarding these questions are discussed in the following paragraphs.

At a general level, educational stakeholders from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia assessed existing in-service training programmes as inadequate. More specifically, stakeholders reported that programmes of professional development insufficiently respond to both teachers' needs and the needs of the school. As a consequence, the influence such programmes have on teaching effectiveness is questionable. The words of Georgian and Bosnian teachers illustrate this:

There is also another issue and that is the professional development of those of us working in schools. Few of us manage to attend really useful and effective professional development programmes and improve our teacher competences. Sometimes, the school sends us

*or we pay for it ourselves but it really is neither systematic nor useful.
(Teacher, Georgia)*

They renovated school buildings but they also need to invest in teachers. They need to invest more in professional development because, unfortunately, teachers still don't apply modern teaching methods, they are relying on textbooks to a great extent. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

At a more specific level, few reasons were provided by educational stakeholders to explain this perceived inadequacy of in-service training. Issues raised included a *limited choice of available training options and a lack of consistency/sustainability*. These issues are evident in the words of two Croatian participants, one a university professor in the Mathematics Department and the other a secondary school teacher:

What we have now is not enough, not systematic and more pro-forma. Teachers come to receive a certificate, and they listen for 4-hours to a lecture, and nothing is expected from them...The agency does not have people who offer something new. I see professional associations and faculties as potential leaders in this area... (University professor, Croatia)

If you ask me, this (professional development courses) is just ridiculous. We just come there. They invite someone to speak and we listen. Usually it is not useful and is contradictory to what teaching should be. (Teacher, Croatia)

Undoubtedly, the preparation and qualification of teachers is one of the important parameters influencing teacher quality. This, in turn, greatly affects the quality of teaching practices. This section has provided an overview of the characteristics of teacher training (formal and informal) identified by various educational stakeholders to be problematic and the manner in which these characteristics are related

to the decision concerning the use of PT services. On the whole, the perspectives of stakeholders from all spheres suggest very strongly that the preparation of quality teachers during pre-service training and the maintenance of high teacher quality through in-service training are plagued by numerous difficulties. These weaknesses, in turn, were reported to be a direct and strong influence on the decision to use PT services.

5.2. Elements stemming from the teachers' professional context and working conditions impeding effective teaching delivery

In the previous section, the characteristics of pre-service and in-service teacher training potentially influencing the decision concerning the use of PT services were examined. It has been argued that these characteristics have the potential to seriously affect the professional competences of teachers and result in inadequate teaching practices and unsatisfactory management of teaching and learning processes in the classroom. In turn, these deficiencies have a serious influence on parental and pupil perspectives towards the formal system of education and their belief in the ability of the formal system to fulfil their educational aspirations. Unfortunately, the end result, as reported by stakeholders participating in the present study, is an increased likelihood of deciding to use PT services. In the introduction of this chapter, it was argued that effective teaching practice and adequate management of teaching and learning processes occurring in the classroom are a function of the professional competences of teachers, but are also directly influenced by various elements related to the characteristics of the formal system of education, educational policies, and especially the working environments of teachers. In the latter instance, issues related to the amount and quality of instructional resources available, pupil characteristics, physical and interpersonal work conditions, staffing, and support from administrators and parents become important considerations when examining the quality of teaching practices.

In this section, factors related to teacher's professional context and working conditions, and the manner in which they potentially impede efficient teaching practice and management of teaching and learning processes, will be discussed further. According to participants, these 'objective' obstacles contribute to the decision concerning PT use by hindering effective teaching practice aimed at producing favourable educational outcomes attuned to the educational aspirations of pupils and parents.

In relation to the ecological model of the present study, this section will examine elements related to both the distant sphere of education and educational policy and the more proximal sphere of the school context and their influence on the overall competence and performance of teachers. Arguably, the work of teachers represents a critical construct informing parent and pupil perspectives regarding the formal system of education and additionally acts to indirectly shape their educational aspirations. As a result, teacher competence and teaching practice serves as a direct and strong influence on the decision to use PT services.

The discussion in Chapter Four highlighted several of the elements recognized by educational stakeholders as potentially impeding effective teaching practices and included the depth and width of curriculum coupled with a maladjusted number of teaching hours determining the pace and rhythm of classwork, an over-reliance on curriculum and textbooks and high numbers of pupils in a single class. In fact, amongst stakeholders in all participating countries, the number of pupils in a single class (class size) was most frequently identified as an obstacle for effective teaching. This is perhaps unsurprising in light of numerous studies demonstrating significant positive effects of small classes on classroom performance, school behaviour and the attitudes of pupils and teachers (Cotton, 1996; Eberts et. al, 1982; Finn & Pannozzo, 2003; Finn et. al., 2001). In small classes, there is more interaction between teachers and pupils and teachers have more opportunities to recognize and adapt teaching content to the individual needs and interests of their pupils (Achilles, 1999; Glass, Cahen, Smith & Filby, 1982; Parrett, 1982).

Further, there are generally fewer disciplinary problems, students are more active and more focused on tasks and learning and their work is more systematically monitored and evaluated (Burke, 1987; Cohen, 1994; Gregory, 1992; Kershaw & Blank, 1993).

PISA data demonstrate that, in OECD countries, there are (on average) more than 21 students per class at primary levels, with class sizes in public institutions ranging from more than 29 in Chile and China to fewer than 20 in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Poland, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Switzerland (OECD, 2012). Maximum class sizes in all countries participating in the present research are controlled by national regulations. For example, according to regulations the maximum number of students in classes in Croatia is 28; in Estonia, 24; in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 30; and in Azerbaijan and Georgia, 24. However, despite these regulations, the situation in schools often looks drastically different and the number of pupils often exceeds both national averages and the legal upper limit. Unfortunately, this pattern, reported by stakeholders in all contexts, could have a direct and negative impact on the perceived quality of classroom teaching that, in turn, is a direct influence on the decision to use PT services. This is evident in the following words of teachers from each of the researched contexts:

There are 36 pupils in my class this year. 36. Do you know what it is to work with 36 pupils? You just cannot work with all of them as effectively as with an individual. (Teacher, Estonia)

The thing is quite simple: try working with 30 of them together in a set manic pace of covering everything you need to cover at exactly the right time. If there were 15 I would say it is ok, but like this...you just can't do it. (Teacher, Croatia)

I can't deal with each one of them when there are so many in the class. It is impossible to address them all. (Teacher, Azerbaijan)

Private tutors are necessary because it is impossible to teach mathematics in large classes. I don't know the reasons; there are so many intervening factors that influence the process of teaching. The only thing I know for sure is that individual lessons are much more effective than class lessons even with the same teacher. I put exactly the same energy in the class, but the results are different. (Teacher, Georgia)

The number of students in some of my classes is still too big, and we as teachers can't teach and transfer knowledge in a proper way. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Apparent in all quotes is the argument that large class sizes negatively influence teaching quality by limiting the degree to which teachers can address the individual learning needs of pupils. The following words of an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina confirm the first person accounts of teachers and relate it more directly to the parental and pupils decision concerning PT use:

Classes are too big, and teaching material is extensive so teachers have every right to say that they can't manage to do everything they are supposed to do. So in some ways there is a real reason or even justification for private tutoring. (Educational governance – ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Consistent with the findings presented in Chapter Six examining pupil-related factors relevant to the decision to use PT services, the stakeholders here argue that the more highly individualized approach of PT is used to compensate for the absence of this feature within formal education.

Stakeholders further reported that this failure to provide an individualised approach was compounded by the ineffective and maladjusted pace and rhythm of classroom work, a feature determined by overloaded curricula, limited teaching hours as well as the inability of teachers to reduce and adjust the subject content being taught. In general, educational stakeholders argued that the rhythm and pace

with which teachers deliver course content is not well adapted to the capacities of pupils to receive and integrate this new information. This sentiment, covered in both Chapters Four and Six, is well illustrated in the words of a frustrated Croatian secondary school pupils' representative of the National Committee of Pupils, who additionally links this deficiency to his own decision to use PT services.

I think that what is missing in the teaching plans, for sure, and especially in mathematics, is the practice part, where you would have enough time to solve at least 2-3 items and to get an understanding of the process of solving these problems. During the lessons, we just run through the content and get the homework, and that's it.... There are many types of questions and I cannot always solve each question on the basis of what I have heard during the lesson. That's why PT lessons exist, and that's why I am taking them. (Pupil, Croatia)

Together, the quotes presented above clearly demonstrate that both oversized classes and poorly adjusted teaching pace detract from the delivery of an individualised teaching approach, a feature viewed by stakeholders across all participating countries to be a direct and powerful contributor to the decision to use PT services.

In addition to these difficulties, a number of organizational issues, including work schedules, shift work and a lack of necessary resources also emerged as relevant issues influencing the decision concerning the use of PT services. However, unlike previous factors, these issues were limited to the reports of stakeholders from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina only. In these countries, the majority of schools organise pupil and teacher schedules in two shifts, where several cohorts (or 'shifts') of pupils attend school in the morning while the other cohorts attend school in the afternoon. Unsurprisingly, this places a limit on the time pupils and teachers spend at school and, consequently, the activities they are able to undertake. In the words of an official from the Pedagogical Institute in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this negatively impacts the quality of teaching and learning occurring within the formal system of education.

From the total number of schools, there is maybe just 5% that are working in one shift. Lessons should be organized in a way that students arrive at 9 o'clock and leave at 5 so everyone, students as well as teachers, have time to learn and prepare. However, we are working in two, even three shifts and what can you expect then. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

And similarly, in the words of a Croatian Member of the Parliament who, at the time when the research was conducted, represented the main opposition party in all educational issues:

We still don't have a concept of the 'one shift' school. I think if we had that, some of the demand for PT would be less because that would open doors to other arrangements for support in schools. In the present situation, shift work really disables any effective help. (Member of Parliament, Croatia)

Arguably, in the context of such shift work, the more adequate option available to obtain the suitable teaching and learning conditions required by pupils is through the use of PT lessons. Once again, and together with those factors mentioned previously, working conditions in schools appear to create a learning environment that does not allow for the adjustment of teaching approaches to the individual needs of pupils. As such, it seems that the system as a whole, rather than particular actors within this system, create a solid basis from which an individual decides to use PT services as a means for meeting individual learning needs.

Thus far, numerous system deficiencies, ranging from problems in pre- and in-service teacher training, oversized classrooms, overloaded curricula, inadequate work conditions and ineffective schedules have all been demonstrated to contribute negatively to the overall competence of teachers and the quality of teaching practices (and, more specifically, to the degree to which teaching is individualised to the learning needs of pupils). Furthermore, these problems were demonstrated to be a strong influence on the decision

to use PT services, where a more individualised approach focusing on the specific learning needs of a pupil is seen as a replacement for the inability of the formal system to do the same.

5.3. The motivation of teachers employed in the formal system of education to provide PT services

In a brief diversion from the core conceptual framework of the present book, this section aims to explore the perspectives of educational stakeholders regarding the motivation of elementary and secondary school teachers currently employed in the formal system of education (referred to as *teachers* in the following discussion) to provide PT services. While teachers are, of course, just one type of PT provider, their participation in PT provision is of specific interest due to their dual role as both providers of instruction within and outside of formal systems of education. The nature of PT provision arrangements also vary, where teachers might offer PT services as individuals (most often in the form of 'one-on-one' PT lessons) or as part of preparatory courses organised by private firms. In the initial study on PT, school teachers were demonstrated to be the predominant providers of the former type of tutoring in Azerbaijan, Croatia and, to a lesser extent, in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia (Silova & Bray, 2006). In all countries participating in the present research, and particularly in Croatia (where teachers represented a majority of all tutors), school teachers were also employed by private firms to conduct group preparatory courses for high-stakes assessment or tertiary education entrance exams (Ristić Dedić, Jokić & Jurko, 2006).

While the existing PT literature has firmly established the role of teachers as providers of PT services (primarily through the responses of pupils), there is currently a lack of substantial empirical insight into the perspectives of teachers and other stakeholders regarding the reasons for and implications of teachers' provision of PT services. To date, the PT literature has largely conceptualised teachers' provision of PT services within the wider socio-economic setting of a specific society, placing special emphasis on the below-average salaries of teachers and the low or declining social status of the teaching

profession. Bray (2011) notes that the practice of teachers providing PT services, especially in cases in which PT services are provided to their existing students, is problematic for various reasons, including the decline in motivation for teaching in formal classrooms, the favouritism of specific pupils as well as various corruptive practices.

The qualitative orientation of the present study, and the inclusion of teachers (as those primarily providing PT services) as participants, allowed for a more in-depth exploration of the motivation for and implications of their decision to provide PT services. On the whole, the results confirm that the financial circumstances of teachers are the main source of motivation for teacher provision of PT services. In addition to these financial reasons, the evidence further suggests that there are also elements related to personal professional satisfaction and the development of personal competence that arise from the provision of PT services. These topics will be considered in turn in the following sections, in which the discussion will first consider the perspectives of teachers and secondly examine the views of other stakeholders.

5.3.1. The financial factors driving teachers' decision to provide PT services

Perhaps one of the most consistent findings emerging in the present study is the notion that financial reasons are the primary factor behind teachers' decision to provide PT services. In fact, this 'common-sense' finding was confirmed in all contexts and by all types of stakeholders. In the first instance, teachers in all five contexts readily acknowledged this fact, as evidenced in the following statements:

I do it for financial interest only. Nothing else. Let me assure you, if tomorrow my earnings magically increased and I was satisfied with my salary, believe me I would never do PT again. This is not easy money. Sometimes I feel like a slave, all my time is spent on teaching, lessons... (Teacher, Azerbaijan)

It is mostly about money, or a lack of it. When all my bank accounts were in a plus zone, I did not even think about providing PT. (Teacher, Croatia)

I see this as an opportunity to earn additional income because our salaries are as they are. In this situation, if you have a chance and an ability to earn, you will probably do it. (Teacher, Estonia)

I do it for the money. Our salary is very low and believe me it (teaching) is hard work. I work on myself, read a lot, every day I am learning something new, students assessment takes hours...and all of that for 200 GeL per month. (Teacher, Georgia)

Well yes, teachers do it because they want to earn money. Salaries are not the way they should be. Some of us need to provide PT because we have loans that need to be paid out in the next 15, 20 years. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Together, these first person quotes share two common elements: first, they all confirm the notion that teachers provide PT services mainly for financial reasons; secondly, teachers from all contexts relate these financial reasons for providing PT to inadequate teacher salaries. It is widely argued that the status of teachers in most countries, both developed and developing, has declined considerably during recent decades (Bennell, 2004; Silova & Bray, 2006). At the same time, the work of teachers and the level of required competences have become more complex and demanding. However, this increase in complexity and workload has not always been reflected in a growth in the earnings and social status of the teaching profession. In Table 10, the average monthly salaries in education and national average monthly salaries in 2011 are presented for each participating country. In addition, teacher salaries have been indexed in relation to the national average as well as to those salaries of Croatian teachers, where teachers are awarded the highest average salary.

Table 10. Monthly salaries in education, indexed in relation to average national salaries and the Croatian salary in education

| <i>Country</i> | <i>Average monthly nominal salary in education in 2011 (USD)</i> | <i>National average monthly nominal salary in 2011 (USD)</i> | <i>Index salary in education/national average</i> | <i>Salary in education as indexed in relation to Croatia</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Azerbaijan ⁷ | 360 | 461 | 78,09 | 38,30 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina ⁸ | 564 | 540 | 104,44 | 60,00 |
| Croatia ⁹ | 940 | 920 | 102,17 | 100 |
| Estonia ¹⁰ | 736 | 856 | 85,98 | 78,30 |
| Georgia ¹¹ | 186 | 353 | 52,69 | 19,79 |

While analysing salaries without taking into consideration other key indicators such as the gross domestic product, employment/unemployment rate, labour costs, consumption expenditure, costs of living or purchase power and others is in many ways limited, it is nevertheless important to note the wide range in salary levels and the relation of the average monthly salary of teachers to average monthly nominal salaries. From this data, it is evident that, in Georgia, teachers' monthly salary is only 50 per cent of the national average, suggestive of an extremely negative economic and financial situation for teachers in this country. The situation in Azerbaijan and Estonia is such that teachers' salary is around four fifths of the national average. Only in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia do teachers earn approximately the same as the average monthly salary. If the salaries of the teaching workforce are considered in the context of others with a similar educational level, the grim picture of the economic status of teachers

⁷ Source: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan

⁸ Source: Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁹ Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics

¹⁰ Source: Statistics Estonia

¹¹ Source: National Statistics Office of Georgia

becomes even more evident. Furthermore, a comparison of salaries between countries suggests extreme cross-national differences. Specifically, the salaries of teachers in Croatia, and to lesser extent Estonia, are considerably higher than those in all other contexts. In Georgia, the salaries of teachers are one fifth of what teachers earn in Croatia, and in Azerbaijan teachers earn slightly more than a third of the Croatian monthly salary.

In light of the previously provided first-person statements of teachers providing PT and this somewhat limited analysis of secondary data, it is not surprising that educational stakeholders from all five countries also identified financial reasons as the main motivational driver for PT provision. This issue is illustrated in the words of Georgian parent, a member of the State Student Admission Committee from Azerbaijan and a politician from Croatia:

If teachers had a good salary, they wouldn't bother themselves with additional workload and private lessons. They should really earn more and maybe then they would concentrate on school processes only and devote to each student as much time as needed. If that were the case, there would not be a need for private tutoring. (Parent, Georgia)

Material reasons certainly. Just imagine social services, prices of communal services, health care, food...everything is getting more and more expensive. How can a teacher, with his salary, afford it all? No way. No way. (Educational professional, Azerbaijan)

The material position of teachers is rather bad. I mean, salaries are small and, on one level, I can understand when they are doing it to fix the home budget (Member of Parliament, Croatia)

Along with the powerful echo of the financial impetus for teachers' provision of PT services, these statements vary with regards to the perceived level of necessity, on the part of teachers, to provide PT services. Consistent with the statement from the Georgian teacher presented earlier in this section, the statement from the participant from Azerbaijan suggests that, in some cases, providing PT services

becomes almost a necessity for financial survival. Unsurprisingly, this finding emerged mostly in the data sets from Georgia and Azerbaijan and is consistent with the very low teacher salary levels. In other countries, the financial necessity of PT provision is not observed so strongly, but rather is viewed as an augmentation of personal budgets or as a supplement allowing financial expenditures that were perhaps previously manageable on the teachers' salary alone. This notion is reflected in two somewhat humoristic excerpts from a Croatian focus group with teachers:

Based on that money (income generated through provision of PT services), we renovated our bathroom. Without it, we would still have the same old shower, same toilet...you know, PT money came in handy. (Teacher, Croatia)

We also have a 12th grader in our family this year. And you know how it is with girls at that age...I want this dress for the final dance. Paradoxically, this dress is bought with the money I earned giving PT to her age group. (Teacher, Croatia)

Similarly, such sentiments were expressed by Estonian teachers:
Material needs were the primary reason. When I was on maternity leave, I did it for this reason. If the time and skills are available, why not use them to earn some extra money. (Teacher, Estonia)

In contrast to the sentiments expressed by participants in Azerbaijan and Georgia, teachers in these countries appear to view PT provision as a means for gaining some additional income. Arguably, these differences in the level of perceived 'necessity' of providing PT services might be reflected in various unethical and corruptive practices related to PT provision. More specifically, in situations in which teachers deem it necessary to provide PT services in order to supplement their low salary, it is possible that teachers might conscientiously create a need for PT services amongst the very pupils they teach. If this occurs, the core factor influencing the decision concerning the use of

PT services becomes teacher behaviour and practices. Educational stakeholders from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina raised this issue by describing the practices of teachers who, despite official restrictions or internal school agreements on teacher ethics and professionalism, are providing paid tutoring to the children for whom they are already responsible in mainstream education. The following excerpts from the Georgian data set suggest this:

It is sad that, in some schools, teachers force parents to take private lessons from them in exchange to good grades. (Teachers union, Georgia)

Unfortunately, there were cases in my practice where parents called me and complained about teachers forcing pupils to take lessons. (Educational professional, Georgia)

Similarly, nearly identical reports were found in the Azerbaijani data set, as evident in this first-person account of a pupil:

I was unlucky with my teacher because he forced my parents to take him as my private tutor. It is true that my grades got better, but I did not improve my math knowledge at all. We did the homework together and we did some supplementary exercises. That was that. (Pupil, Azerbaijan)

And further, in the words of the principal of the school this pupil was attending:

Today all teachers are engage in tutoring regardless of their quality. Of course, there are excellent teachers amongst them, but there are also those who deliberately make the program complicated and cut pupils' grades. By doing this, they force pupils to take private lessons with them. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

This sentiment was also similarly evident amongst participants in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The problem is that private tutoring begins to represent a certain form of corruption and it is very similar to practices unfortunately present in the health care sector; teachers as well as doctors are being paid extra for something that is already their job. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Regrettably, these and similar reports of teachers covering only part of the curriculum during school hours and subsequently requiring pupils to attend their own private classes and teachers demanding attendance of PT lessons in exchange for good grades were not uncommon in these contexts and, undoubtedly, serve to create a highly unpleasant environment rife with blackmail. As illustrated in the quotes above, these forms of teacher behaviour prompt serious questions regarding the quality of education provided as well as the professional attitudes and roles of teachers within the school community.

5.3.2. Teachers' personal satisfaction resulting from PT provision

One of the more interesting findings stemming from the data analyses on the motivation of teachers to provide PT services is the notion that the outcome of such provision goes beyond mere financial gain and that, in some cases, PT provision can elicit professional satisfaction at times not achieved through the daily work of teachers. Interestingly, these findings emerged primarily in Croatia and Estonia, where teachers are paid the highest salaries and, as previously indicated, do not feel it absolutely necessary to provide PT services. In these contexts, some teachers reported viewing PT as an opportunity for self-improvement and professional growth. As the following quotes from an Estonian teacher illustrate, PT provision is viewed as good teaching practice, especially for prospective, young teachers just entering the profession:

I started (providing PT) during my university studies due to financial reasons but actually you learn to explain (topics to students) very well

during the process. The university does not teach you how to explain (mathematics topics) and there is too little teaching practice during formal studies. Hence, PT is good teaching practice. I learned how to explain topics in different ways. (Teacher, Estonia)

In addition, providing PT services was seen as a method of informing oneself about different educational issues at different levels and as an opportunity to apply new ideas and to acquire new skills:

In addition to money, it is also an opportunity to keep informed of the curriculum at lower schools levels. For example, if I am a teacher at the secondary level, PT lessons with students in primary school keep me informed with what is going on at that level. (Teacher, Estonia)

These sentiments were similarly evident in the words of teachers in Croatia:

It makes you stay sharp and informed. Especially if some bright kids come, then you really need to be at the top of your game. (Teacher, Croatia)

Although these reports might be viewed as a means through which teachers try to defend their decision to provide PT services, it is not unreasonable to expect that, in some cases, individual work with pupils away from the pressure and constraints of the formal system might be seen as a positive opportunity for the development of professional competences.

Of further interest was the frequent mention by teachers and PT providers of the professional fulfilment derived from the provision of PT services. For these teachers, PT lessons was a personally and professionally satisfying endeavour, often contrasted to the stressful and at times uninspiring work experienced in formal education settings. This notion is illustrated in the words of Estonian teacher:

It provides satisfaction as a teacher: the one (student) who comes, wants to learn and see that it is not so hard (as he/she thought).

The reason for this satisfaction is the positive feedback that I never experience as a teacher, or experience to a smaller extent compared to the negative feedback. (Teacher, Estonia)

The implicit view underlying this statement is that, in formal education settings, there is insufficient (or a complete lack) of positive feedback for teacher performance and little direct evidence of the impact of teachers on individual pupils. In comparison, PT lessons oriented towards individual performance more effectively enables such feedback and, as a result, is more likely to produce positive feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment amongst teachers. This position is supported by the words of another teacher/PT provider from Estonia:

I enjoy this work. It is an opportunity to earn additional income but also to realise yourself as a teacher. Sometimes I may even be in a better mood in front of the class after an enjoyable PT lesson. (Teacher, Estonia)

While it is certainly improbable to expect that every PT lesson positively influences a teacher's motivation to work in the regular classroom, this notion of 'realising oneself as a teacher' is an important one. Indeed, this quote depicts a viewpoint in which the development of professional identity and professional fulfilment is becoming less characteristic in formal education settings and instead, is shifting towards the sphere of PT. These positive sentiments towards the provision of PT services are especially evident when teachers have the opportunity to work with very able or motivated pupils, such as in the case of preparatory courses for high-stakes examination or tertiary education entrance exams. This situation is clearly depicted in the following excerpts from the Croatian data set:

In preparatory courses, you have a homogenous and motivated group of pupils, and this is something you do not have at your school, if you are a mathematician. At school, you have three kids who are interested, and the others are all sick of you. At preparatory courses,

you have someone who is ready to learn.....who can understand what you are talking about. (Teacher, Croatia)

I had great experiences. Not just those smart kids, but also those who were polite, who were motivated despite their abilities. When it is like that, everything is just different than what my job as a teacher has become. (Teacher, Croatia)

Together, these quotes confirm the positive sentiments stemming from PT provision and, in the same way as the PT phenomenon as a whole, are also a reflection of the deficiencies of the educational system in which issues of motivation and discipline negatively affect teachers' work. Furthermore, other such system deficiencies were mentioned by teachers, as described by an Azerbaijani teacher who, while confirming the financial motivation behind PT provision, also explicitly describes elements of creativity and a personal relationship with pupils as positive features of PT service provision:

Money from private tutoring saved my family. I cannot earn money any other way except teaching. Finally, the bad period ended, my husband found a job, my children grew up, but I am still providing private lessons. Now there is something more than money. I like my private classes. There is more creativity and a closer relationship with my pupils (Teacher, Azerbaijan)

In this section, various factors motivating the decision of teachers to provide PT services have been examined. Undoubtedly, the predominant factors raised by stakeholders in all contexts were the financial benefits inherent in providing PT. Within this issue, however, the feelings of participants differed between contexts as a result of the varying levels of perceived financial necessity. Most worrying here were the reports from some countries of highly corrupt and unethical practices amongst teachers determined to create a need for their own PT services. A unique, and perhaps more interesting, finding in the present study was the demonstration of various other factors

related to the personal and professional satisfaction, fulfilment and development of teachers. Arguably, the reports of teachers regarding the positive outcomes related to PT service delivery are reflection of the failure of formal education settings to enable such professional fulfilment amongst teachers.

5.4. Conclusions

On the whole, the research findings from all participating countries indicate that teachers and teaching-related factors are related to the decision to use PT services. Indeed, teachers are viewed to be critically placed at both ends of the PT chain, as an underlying factor contributing to the decision to use PT services and, as the main providers of PT lessons, a response to the demand for PT.

More specifically, participants from all participating contexts and from varying professional spheres identified teacher driven factors as one of the influences on the decision to use PT services. These were related by stakeholders to the insufficient knowledge and skills of teachers, insufficient experience as well as a lack of motivation for teaching. Together, these factors were reported to create a need for additional tutoring, most often in the form of PT.

However, the connection between these issues and the PT phenomenon was not made directly by stakeholders in all countries. For example, in Azerbaijan and Estonia, while respondents did not make a direct link between the reported poor and/or inadequate professional capacity of teachers and teachers' education, it was nevertheless still recognized as a relevant and important root underlying the decision concerning the use of PT services.

The previous two sections explored the motivation of teachers employed in the formal system of education to provide PT services. Considering the perceived loss of the status of the teaching profession which is mainly undermined by inadequate teacher salaries, it is not surprising that determining factor in taking decision on PT provision and main motivational driver is financial gain. On the one hand, the level of salaries, as it is evident in the case of Azerbaijan and Georgia, in a way forces the teachers to seek supplementary incomes. This

kind of identified necessity of the provision of PT services on behalf of teachers arguably can have a reflection in the unethical and corruptive practices related to the provision of PT services; the issue which was raised not just in Azerbaijan and Georgia, but in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well. On the other hand, evidence from Croatia and Estonia suggest that PT provision is also seen as an opportunity for additional income, regardless existing or non-existing necessity implying that teachers are slowly adopting so called ‘*entrepreneurial identity*’, shaped by market and market needs (Sachs, 2001). Furthermore, findings from Croatia and Estonia provided evidence which suggest that there are also elements related to the personal satisfaction, personal competence development and professional fulfillment stemming from a provision of PT services implying that teachers are well aware of the benefits which PT provide, and which are not just material ones.

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CHAPTER VI

INDIVIDUAL PUPIL CHARACTERISTICS AND THE DECISIONS CONCERNING PRIVATE TUTORING USE

Laura Kirss & Boris Jokić

Our educational system and programmes are targeted to a theoretical 'average pupil' or 'average class' but in reality, in any given class, there are 30 different existing knowledge levels, motivational patterns, work habits, etc...The approach is basically very conservative and outdated. Teaching is frontal with little communication, because there is simply no time. So most of the teaching is related to everybody and there is very little room for discussing something or for paying attention to an individual pupil. (Principal, Croatia)

This quote from the president of the Croatian Association of School Principals aptly describes the central issues covered in the present chapter. Specifically, it is indicative of the existing discrepancy, apparent in all five participating countries, between the inherent heterogeneity of individual pupil characteristics and needs and the 'one size fits all' approach of the formal educational system. Arguably, educational systems that successfully address this discrepancy through the use of various educational and organisational approaches and options are usually more successful in combating the private tutoring (PT) phenomenon (Bray, 2003). However, evidence from all participating countries in the present research suggests that the opposite is true in each respective system of education, in which a failure to address the individual needs and characteristics of pupils has contributed to an increased probability for opting to use PT services.

In order to address this issue, the present chapter will first explore findings on the relationship between various pupil characteristics and

the decision concerning the use of PT services. In the existing literature on PT, the issue of pupils' individual characteristics is predominantly discussed in terms of various easily-measured demographic characteristics and achievement levels for users and non-users of PT services, with particular emphasis on gender, age, ethnicity, place of residence and especially socio-economic factors such as family welfare and parents' level of education or occupation (e.g Bray, 2011; Bray, 1999; Bray & Lykins, 2012; Dang & Rogers, 2008; Silova, Būdienė, & Bray, 2006). Only a few studies have examined other more complex and individual-related factors driving the use of PT. For instance, Sultana (2011, as cited in Bray, 2011) discusses the influence of pupils' motivation to meet peers of the opposite gender (in the case of pupils attending single-sex schools) on the decision to attend PT lessons. Peer pressure (Bray & Lykins, 2012) has also been examined as a contributor to this decision. Indeed, it is plausible to expect that numerous individual characteristics contribute to the decision concerning the use of PT services. The qualitative orientation of the present research allowed for a more detailed exploration and a more nuanced discussion of such characteristics. The discussion of this issue in the present chapter is divided into three sections.

First, the perspectives of educational stakeholders concerning the relationship between pupils' motivation for learning in school and aspirations for educational success and the decision concerning PT use are presented. Secondly, the perspectives of educational stakeholders regarding the relationship between individual personality traits and the decision to use PT services are examined. This section will also explore perspectives on the impact of other concepts, such as self-esteem and academic self-confidence, and how, for some pupils, the use of PT services represents an efficient method to address both individual learning needs and to positively influence personal development of self-esteem and self-confidence. Finally, the third section focuses on the relationship between the heterogeneity of individual learning styles and cognitive abilities and the decision whether or not to use PT services. Throughout this discussion, the failure of the educational system in all participating countries to cater

for this heterogeneity of learning needs, learning styles, and cognitive ability, and the resulting impact on the likelihood of PT use, will be emphasized.

In the second section of this chapter, the perspectives of educational stakeholders on the ability of formal systems of education to accommodate the diversity of pupils' individual characteristics and needs are presented and discussed. Here, an overview of existing support systems in schools from all five contexts, and the perceived efficiency of such systems, will be presented.

Before proceeding to a consideration of the findings, it is important to relate the issues presented in this chapter to the conceptual framework of the study. In the ecological model, pupils' individual characteristics represent the most proximal sphere related to the decision concerning PT use. Arguably, even on their own, certain combinations of these cognitive, conative and behavioural characteristics represent foundational elements contributing to the decision concerning PT use. However, it is the interaction of these individual characteristics with elements from other spheres of the ecological model that is hypothesized to be especially influential on the parental and pupil decision concerning PT use. Particularly important are the interactions between individual characteristics and the school and educational system spheres, which significantly influence pupil and parental perspectives on formal education while also shaping their educational aspirations.

6.1. The role of pupil motivation in the decision concerning the PT use

During discussions concerning the individual pupil characteristics perceived to be relevant to the decision concerning PT use, pupil motivation for learning in school was the most prevalent issue raised by educational stakeholders. In the first instance, participants frequently spoke of the manner in which low or declining motivation for learning in the context of current teaching and learning practices was directly contributing to the prevalence of PT. Conversely, stakeholders also raised issues concerning the reciprocal effect of pupils' use of PT

services on individual levels of motivation for learning in school. These co-occurring phenomena, often mentioned in other work in the field of PT, will be explored further in the following paragraphs.

In all contexts, participants from all spheres directly related low levels of pupil motivation for learning in school to the decision to use PT services. These lower levels of motivation for learning in school are often associated with lower educational achievement and, consequently, with the inability to fulfil even minimal educational aspirations. In these situations, the decision to use PT services is made by parents and pupils in order to pass exams, remain in the education or progress to the next educational level. This argument, consistent with current understanding of the remedial use of PT services, has been partially confirmed in the data from the 'Monitoring Private Tutoring' project, which demonstrated the remedial function of PT in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia (Husremović & Trbić, 2006; Matiashvili & Kutateladze, 2006; Ristić Dedić, Jokić & Jurko, 2006; Silova & Kazimzade, 2006).

As a matter relating to the individual characteristics of pupils, the introduction to this issue is perhaps best described by pupils themselves, who often voiced this clear and direct relationship between motivational levels for learning in school and the decision to use PT. This is clearly exemplified in the words of an Azerbaijani pupil:

While I am in the classroom I am hearing, but really not listening. I know that after school I'll go to my private teacher and everything will be fine. (Pupil, Azerbaijan)

Similar perspectives were also offered by parents, as exemplified in the words of one Georgian parent:

My son is in the ninth grade. Nobody learns in his class and he doesn't learn as well. Pupils look at each other and simply don't learn. Funnily enough, even teachers don't expect them to learn. At private lessons, they are much more motivated. (Parent, Georgia)

Arguably, these statements establish the cross-contextual relationship between PT use and lower motivational levels, indicating that the likelihood of PT use increases when a pupils' motivation for learning in school is non-existent or underdeveloped. Furthermore, the quotes suggest that PT services have a considerable influence on pupils' motivational patterns for learning in school. The two quotes also offer an interesting juxtaposition between the school-based activities and pupils' motivation to learn within a school context and their active engagement and motivation for learning during PT lessons. In both quotes, the services of private tutors seem to elicit a motivation to learn that is not present in the school context.

The analysis of stakeholders' perspectives further established the existence of two contrasting explanations for the low motivational levels perceived to influence the decision concerning PT use. In the first instance, many stakeholders related an increased probability for deciding to use PT services to individual pupil characteristics such as lower levels of engagement or a resistance towards learning. In contrast, others placed the inherent inability of the formal system to motivate pupils at the centre of this relationship. These contrasting perspectives are further explored in the following paragraphs.

On the whole, the attribution of lower pupil motivational levels for learning in school to underlying individual traits was most prominent amongst teachers and PT providers. This depiction of PT as a service catering to pupils with underdeveloped work habits and motivation to learn in school is clearly evident in the following quote from a Croatian PT provider of preparatory courses for Matura and tertiary education entrance exams:

At the bottom line, we are providing help for lazy pupils, who do not feel like learning...because with our help, they will learn faster and with less effort. They will also not learn things that will not be presented in the exam. So we make their life easier and basically they get everything served on a platter. (PT provider, Croatia)

This view is similarly evident in the words of an Estonian representative of the Association of Mathematics Teachers:

But most PT users are those who do not study mathematics consistently – math requires constant learning...they just loaf around, wait and see if they get through or not. (Teacher, Estonia)

The predominance of this perspective amongst teachers and PT providers specifically is interesting for two reasons. First, these stakeholders are those who most directly work with pupils, in both formal and shadow systems of education. As such, they are in perhaps the best position to assess the levels of pupil work habits and motivation to learn in school and, in this case, offer a disheartening depiction of some segments of the current pupil population. Conversely, such perspectives might be indicative of a self-distancing from the responsibility of their own roles within the PT phenomenon. However, while this might be the case in some instances, parent statements confirm that, for some pupils, underdeveloped work habits and motivation for learning in school do stem from their personality. This is evident in the words of one parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

I know very well why my kid needs PT. When he needs to sit and learn he usually says: 'Mom, I am hungry' or 'Mom, I am tired' or 'Not now, there is a game on TV'. It makes me sad as he used to be an A pupil. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Or similarly, in the words of a mother from Azerbaijan:

All parents dream to see their child as a hardworking pupil with strong self-discipline. Some parents are lucky, others not so much. To be honest, I am from the latter group. My child is a very lazy boy. If I don't stand above him, he never starts his lesson or homework by himself. I have no time, no patience to sit with him, to read his textbooks...We were advised by a school teacher and got a good private teacher. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

As these quotes illustrate, PT serves as an important avenue for parents with children whose motivation to learn in school is low and work habits and work ethic are underdeveloped. A concern for their

children's education and educational success and the aspirations they hold for their children prompt parents to search for ways of addressing the interaction between these characteristics and school requirements. The ready availability of PT services makes it a convenient option. It is also important to note that, consistent with the previous statements from teachers and PT providers, these parental perspectives emphasize underlying pupil characteristics as the main source perceived to influence the decision whether or not to use PT services.

In contrast, a second set of perspectives arising from the findings centres around the idea that the failure of the formal system to motivate pupils for learning and to develop good work habits is the root source behind the poor motivational patterns for learning in school. In the analysis of stakeholders' perspectives regarding the formal educational processes negatively affecting learning motivation and work habits, and consequently contributing to the decision to use PT services, two main issues arose: the failure of formal education settings to establish environments conducive to learning and the perceived competence of teachers to foster pupils' motivation for learning. While the former topics were partly examined in two previous chapters, it is important to relate both issues to the present discussion of the role of pupils' individual characteristics on the decision concerning PT use.

First, the analyses of stakeholder perspectives revealed that formal systems of education, and schools in particular, find it challenging to create positive learning environments for all pupils, which in turn is viewed as a condition that negatively influences pupil motivation. This sentiment was especially evident in parental perspectives. In principle, modern learning environments focusing on inclusive education should offer positive learning experiences to all pupils, irrespective of their capabilities or achievement level. However, the analysis demonstrated that this is not always the case, a finding consistent with the view expressed at the beginning of this chapter in relation to the 'one size fits all' characteristic of the formal education systems in all participating countries.

More specifically, in both individual interviews and focus groups, participants frequently expressed the notion that negative feedback

provided in a context of non-individualised or traditional (i.e. summative) assessment practices affects pupils' motivation to learn in school and their attitudes towards specific subjects. In turn, declining motivation levels and negative attitudes can influence pupils and parents to opt for PT services instead of investing additional individual effort in the classroom. This view was especially evident in situations in which pupils received a poor grade. Here, stakeholders linked declining levels of motivation for learning in school to the development of firm negative sentiments, arising as a result of consistently poor learning outcomes, concerning 'difficult' subjects that were 'impossible to learn'. Arguably, in these cases, pupils who have repeated negative experiences with learning in a particular subject subsequently refuse to fully devote themselves to deep and enduring learning in this subject and may search for help in the form of PT services. This situation is illustrated by the following quote from a teachers' union representative from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Pupils often have some prejudices about certain school subjects and they believe that they can't get a grade higher than a D or C, so they lose their interest and give up. In the end, they usually use PT to pass. (Teacher union, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This quote underscores how the learning and assessment processes within the formal system of education, instead of instilling a sense of self-belief and an orientation towards learning, can promote negative sentiments towards subjects and learning amongst some pupils. The statement is also suggestive of the potential irreversibility of this process, in which it is nearly impossible to reverse a pupil's belief that he or she simply cannot learn particular subject content. While PT services might help pupils overcome the educational hurdles presented by a particular subject, it is unclear whether it can alter established attitudes about such subjects.

In an even more explicit example of how pupils' learning experience in school can seriously affect motivation to learn as well as self-confidence, a Croatian parent emphasizes how her child, as the learner, was largely ignored in the learning process itself:

My child is taking PT for physical education(PE) – I must say outright that she is not physically handicapped. She plays tennis, but her teachers' expectations and standards are such that she could not master them. Her first experience in secondary education was getting an F, F and D in PE, which was very demotivating for her. She needs help practising some gymnastics moves and that is what she is doing through PT. It really got to her and affected her and she is generally an ambitious person. (Parent, Croatia)

Again, the demotivating effect of negative school experiences on pupils' motivation and attitudes towards learning is highlighted in this quote, which additionally illustrates the extension of the PT phenomenon into such unlikely subjects as physical education. Here, the manner in which the sometimes unrealistic expectations and standards of the formal educational system is related to the decision concerning PT use also becomes very clear. Namely, the failure of the education system to instil positive motivational patterns, and the apparent suppression of motivation, ambition and educational aspirations through unrealistic expectations in particular, is observed to directly contribute to the decision to use PT services.

The second issue raised by stakeholders in their discussion of the educational factors contributing to low pupil motivation was more specifically concerned with teachers' capacities and competencies in fostering pupils' motivation for learning and promoting effective work habits. More specifically, stakeholders frequently suggested that ineffective teaching processes, due in part to the insufficient pedagogical, psychological and didactic knowledge and skills of teachers (an issue extensively covered in previous chapter), can contribute to the development of negative pupil attitudes towards a specific teacher or subject. This, in turn, negatively influences motivation for learning in the specific subject. Once again, this perspective was most dominant amongst parents, and is illustrated in the following quotes from two Croatian parents:

90% of pupils in this gymnasium are taking PT for mathematics occasionally, because most of the teachers do not know their job

and claim 'you are stupid if you do not know mathematics'. So the kids are demotivated, and parents pay for PT to motivate children and to get a passing grade. (Parent, Croatia)

Nowadays, programs are made in such a way that they are not interesting to children. The teacher cannot find the means to make it interesting to pupils...It is different with PT. (Parent, Croatia)

Once again, the views expressed here underscore the key role of the teacher in facilitating pupils' motivation for learning in school, and the influence of the teachers' relative success or failure in fulfilling this role on the decision to use PT services. Indeed, the skills and knowledge of the teacher are critical in ensuring that subject content is taught in such a way that pupils do not lose interest in the subject.

So far, this section has been devoted to a discussion concerning the low motivation of pupils to engage in the learning process at school and the manner in which various features of the formal education system might contribute to decreased learning motivation. The manner in which PT serves to overcome and compensate for this problem has also been considered. However, research findings also revealed the existence of a very different group of PT 'clients', concisely described in this quote from an Estonian representative of the Association of Pupils:

There are two target groups [of PT users] – those who want to learn more and those who learn because of outside pressure. (Pupil, Estonia)

This quote underlines two contrasting issues not present in the case of poorly motivated pupils. First, it describes a group of pupils with high levels of intrinsic motivation that is generally absent amongst those pupils discussed earlier in this chapter. Instead, this student describes pupils who are interested in acquiring further knowledge for the sake of knowledge acquisition itself. Secondly, the quote suggests that, for some pupils, attending PT lessons is a voluntary activity rather than something that is required by their parents when more learning is considered to be necessary. Although, according to stakeholder

accounts, this group of pupils is a minority, they are nevertheless an important segment of PT users as a whole. A Ministry official from Bosnia and Herzegovina characterizes these pupils in this way:

Even though these cases are rare, some pupils use PT because they are ambitious and they want more. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

As this quote suggests, these highly motivated pupils might be characterized by high educational aspiration and motivation to acquire as much knowledge and skill as possible. Arguably, because mainstream schools are often incapable of recognizing and addressing this need for additional learning and instruction, pupils and their parents are inclined to seek help from PT services. In turn, private teachers, flexible in their service provision and responsive to the particular needs of the learner, can easily cater to the enrichment needs of ambitious learners.

The responses of stakeholders additionally suggested that this group of highly motivated pupils also includes pupils who are very carefully and conscientiously planning their educational career paths. With a long-term perspective and goal in mind, these pupils initiate activities that help to secure an intended educational career. More specifically, in order to ensure entrance into certain educational institutions, these pupils begin using PT in order to complement the knowledge provided in mainstream classrooms and to gain a competitive advantage over their peers. An Estonian local government official outlined this issue in the following way:

Of course, there are those highly motivated pupils who, in grade 7 or 8, start choosing a gymnasium for themselves. Since getting into those schools involves entrance exams or academic tests, they would require preparation. (Educational governance – Local level, Estonia)

As is evident from this quote, planning for a preferred educational career can start rather early. In this case, pupils as young as 14 years

of age already acknowledge the necessity of preparing for important career-deciding events and, in many cases, PT services are deemed to be an avenue for addressing this need.

6.2. The effect of PT use on pupils' motivation for learning

In the literature, it has been hypothesised that the use of PT services can have a negative effect on both motivation for learning and actual learning occurring in regular classes within the formal system of education (Silova & Kazimzade, 2006). This notion was supported in the present research, where participants in all countries reported that some pupils exhibited decreased levels of attention, concentration and engagement during lessons within the formal system as a result of using PT services. The data also indicated that pupils' personal use of PT services can additionally have distractive effects on general teaching and learning processes, thus affecting both other pupils and teachers. The quotes from an Azerbaijani pupil and a Georgian parent in the previous section are a clear illustration on the manner in which the use of PT can potentially negatively affect pupils' learning motivation at school, where respondents describe how pupils' knowledge that there exists a private tutor who can explain everything individually has serious implications for the pupils' attention and activity within the formal education system. Arguably, these quotes are suggestive of the idea that, for some pupils, school becomes a place where one just has to show up and invest little, if any, effort towards learning and that actual learning occurs only within the context of PT lessons.

Stakeholders' perspectives further highlighted the tendency, amongst some pupils, to use a strategic approach when making decisions concerning the time and effort invested towards learning in both formal education and PT lessons. In these cases, the perceived costs of time and effort invested in continuous individual learning for school are weighed against the pupil's perception of meeting the educational requirements set by the formal educational system as well as their own personal educational aspirations. For some pupils, the general result of such analyses is clear, where PT becomes the outlet through which pupils' personal aspirations are most efficiently

met with the most concentrated and brief effort. This approach becomes clear in the following statement from a Croatian teacher:

You know, I have kids who, right at the start, make a clear calculation: 'I will not do anything in chemistry for the whole year. A month before the end of the school year, I will start with PT and get a D.' The whole school year, she basically just sits in the class. And you know what the best part about all of this is? Her strategy works. (Teacher, Croatia)

While this quote raises many serious issues regarding the assessment and monitoring practices of the formal system of education in Croatia, the issue to emphasize here is the apparent lack of active pupil engagement within formal education. Arguably, this arises from the pupil's awareness of the features of the system that allow such a strategy to function successfully combined with a reliance on PT services. Indeed, if the pupil recognizes that the requirements of the system and one's personal aspirations can be successfully met with a short, concentrated effort at the end of the school year, the continuous investment of time and effort to learning course content throughout the year becomes a rather unappealing option.

The negative effect of PT use on motivation for learning in school becomes even more problematic and dangerous when it additionally influences the teaching and learning processes in the classroom as a whole as well as the motivation of other pupils. A Croatian teacher union representative provided an example of this situation:

I am sure that you have already heard that pupils attending PT say during the class: 'I do not need to learn this now. I will learn it during PT lessons or the private tutor will help me.' Sometimes they even openly criticise and ridicule teachers' methods. By doing so, not only do they undermine the teachers' status but also distract other pupils who are motivated to learn in school. (Teacher union, Croatia)

This statement is illustrative of the negative processes that can appear within the classroom as a result of pupils' use of PT lessons. First,

the statement confirms the strategic approach reported previously, where some pupils select PT as an easier, quicker and more effective path towards fulfilling educational requirements attuned to their own personal educational aspirations. Secondly, because PT offers an inherently individualised approach that at times offers positive and tangible results, it seems plausible to expect that some pupils might be tempted to criticize teachers' delivery of course content and general teaching practices. The quote additionally illustrates how, together, these elements can have a very negative influence on the work habits and motivation for learning in school of other pupils.

Together with many of the quotes presented throughout this chapter, the statements above further suggest, both explicitly and implicitly, the potentially dangerous effect of developing a dependency on PT services. This issue is described through the words of a Bosnian PT provider:

Nowadays, I have a feeling that pupils are less and less active within regular classes because they know there are tutors who will explain everything and give them even more information. And no one is thinking about the long-term consequences of this...because if kids are, even in the third grade, used to PT because they think that nothing is possible without it, then we have a problem. We will create generations that will be more and more dependent on others and incapable to do anything on their own. (PT provider, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Despite the fact that PT provision is his profession, the words of this PT provider point towards the larger problem of the PT phenomenon as a facilitator of the development of PT-dependent pupils who are not developing competencies to act or learn independently. This is in stark contrast to one of the main objectives of education: the development of independent, self-activating and self-regulated individuals (Boekaerts, 1997; Bruner, 1960; Pintrich, 2004; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989). Although the statement suggests the view that it is the individual who is responsible for the development of such

dependence, the most problematic element in this issue is perhaps the fact that the educational system itself does not have adequate mechanisms for supporting the development of independent and self-regulated learners. These ideas will be explored further in the final section of this chapter.

6.3. The role of certain personality traits and self-confidence in the decision concerning the use of PT services

Although not as central as the issue of pupils' motivation, a second theme emerging from the data from all contexts depicted the relationship between the decision concerning PT use and a number of individual pupil characteristics, such as specific personality traits and pupil self-confidence related to learning or fulfilling various academic expectations.

In the first instance, teachers, PT providers and parents frequently reported shyness, social anxiety and the fear of negative evaluation (most commonly expressed through increased anxiety to act or speak in front of others), and the underdevelopment of social competences as characteristics at times associated with the decision concerning the use of PT services. The quotes below from four different countries and from different types of stakeholders depict this reported relationship:

My child is shy and is always afraid of making presentations in front of a big audience. She got lost so many times although I know she was very well prepared, so we used a tutor to work with her on that, among other things. (Parent, Georgia)

I think PT can be useful in some cases. I have experience with a few girls who were quite insecure and they were afraid – afraid of the teacher, their classmates, and the reaction of their classmates. All of that changed after PT. They obviously worked with an experienced person and thanks to that they became much more secure and confident. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

There are some pupils who are attending PT because they are afraid to ask something during lessons, they are afraid to stand up and to say «I do not understand». They fear that other pupils will laugh at them with derision, and they are very sensible and feel easily insulted. (Teacher union, Croatia)

I have an experience in my PT lessons, where pupils seem to understand things well but as soon as they go back to this general (school) environment they get nervous. Many pupils are like this. It seems that they cannot understand things in this class noise. (Educational professional, Estonia)

The above statements provide examples of pupils whose shyness, anxiety to act in front of a group, or sense of fear and insecurity impinge on their ability to effectively learn and act in regular classroom settings. For some pupils, the combination of these individual characteristics with the learning environments of the formal system of education, often characterised by large classes, can have serious negative implications for learning. In order to compensate for this difficulty, parents and pupils may decide to use PT services, which are generally characterised by more flexible, comfortable and individual learning contexts. Arguably, these statements suggest that school learning environments are not effectively addressing and respecting the heterogeneity of pupils' individual characteristics and, as such, not fulfilling their important role of facilitating the personal development of pupils as confident, independent learners. A potential consequence of this failure to adjust to the diversity of pupils is a decline in learning opportunities for certain groups of pupils. In order to compensate for this systemic deficiency, pupils and parents become more likely to use PT services in order to provide the additional support needed in order to effectively acquire the knowledge and skills expected from both educational standards and personal aspirations. In addition, these quotes suggest the somewhat wider role of PT tutors in some situations, in which services in formal education might even assume a secondary role.

In addition to the individual characteristics described above, pupils' self-confidence in their acquired knowledge and academic performance was also found to be associated with the decision concerning the use of PT services. While these elements might be influenced by certain personality traits, they are also largely situational. Data analyses further suggested that the decision to use PT services can serve as a boost to the self-confidence of pupils who feel insecure that their current knowledge and skills are sufficient for meeting personal educational aspirations. This is evident in the words of Estonian and Azerbaijani PT providers:

Preparatory courses can provide self-confidence to some pupils. In these situations, self-confidence is very important before the exams. (PT provider, Estonia)

Psychological factors shouldn't be forgotten. /.../ Some of them just need someone who can advise them and support them psychologically. (PT Provider, Azerbaijan)

Interestingly, this sentiment was found to be especially prevalent in countries with a system of high-stakes examinations, where the extremely high significance placed on such examinations (and the potentially devastating consequences of failure) can place undue pressure on pupils with lower levels of academic self-confidence.

Of further note is the finding that, in many cases, these doubts are unfounded (i.e. those pupils seeking tutoring help are already well prepared and therefore do not actually need any further assistance). However, the lack of self-confidence combined with an environment of high competitive pressure and the ready availability of PT creates a situation in which these pupils seek extra help anyway. This is confirmed by the words of the director of the largest Croatian firm organising preparatory courses:

Many pupils come here although there is absolutely no need for them to go through preparatory courses. They come from good schools

with good knowledge. But they still want to be sure, or they want to increase their confidence. (PT provider, Croatia)

Or similarly in the words of an Estonian PT provider:

99% of my students do not have problems with cognitive abilities; the problem is rather with zero self-confidence. Hence, one of my important tasks is to raise the self-confidence and self-belief of children so that when they want to try and try hard, they can do well. (PT provider, Estonia)

Interestingly, the above quotes point to the potentially positive role of PT services in increasing levels of self-confidence during examination preparation. Here, instead of discussing the more typically-described functions of PT (e.g. providing additional knowledge or filling gaps in knowledge), respondents have placed emphasis on the psychological role of tutoring. Once again, it might be argued that the need for such a role is suggestive of severe shortcomings across formal educational systems to adequately develop self-confidence in pupils and to espouse the belief that the quality offered within the system is sufficient to overcome any perceived individual educational challenges.

6.4. The role of individual differences in cognitive and learning abilities in the decision concerning PT use

A third area in which stakeholders' reported individual reasons related to the decision concerning use of PT services focuses on pupils' cognitive abilities and various difficulties in learning. In comparison to the previously discussed characteristics related to PT use, these issues were relatively infrequently emphasized by stakeholders. Arguably, this is due to the relative dominance of other personal characteristics in relation to the decision concerning the use of PT services.

In all participating countries, respondents identified pupils with difficulties in learning as a specific group more likely to opt for using

PT services. In some cases, interviewees also made reference to the issue of lower cognitive abilities and its impact on the decision to use PT services. However, while stakeholders' reports clearly suggested a relationship between these elements, the interviews did not allow for these issues to be explored sufficiently deeply nor for any clear conclusions to be made regarding the relationship between cognitive abilities and learning difficulties and the decision concerning the use of PT services. Indeed, the language used by stakeholders varied in both specificity and detail. Some respondents spoke of this issue by referring rather generally to pupils who *'are challenged to find the right answers'*, *'are slow learners'*, *'have problems understanding content'* or *'have less talent'*, while others went into greater detail and specifically discussed issues around *'underdeveloped learning abilities'*, *'concentration problems'* or *'learning disorders'*. Even others related the need for PT to specific difficulties of a diagnostic nature such as dyslexia, dysgraphia or dyscalculia.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, no clear pattern of positions across different stakeholder groups could be established. Indeed, stakeholders' views seemed dependent on their personal experience with PT and pupils with difficulties in learning. For instance, parents who had experienced problems related to their child's attainment at school could discuss cognitive abilities in greater detail than some teachers who simply reported referring pupils with learning problems to private tutors. On the other hand, there were other teachers and educators who were very knowledgeable on the topic of learning difficulties and viewed this to be a case in which the use of PT might be justified.

More specifically, an educational official from Estonia, herself a former teacher, characterizes the cases where she would see the need for a private tutor:

The most important thing is that PT is used, or should be used, if a pupil has some mental or psychological problems, he or she cannot concentrate, is a slower type by nature, cannot catch up at school. This should be the main function of PT. (Educational governance – local level, Estonia)

Similarly, a Croatian school principal suggested that the use of PT is justified in the case of special problems or needs:

I think that an average pupil, who has average abilities and average working habits and whose lessons are of average quality, does not need PT. PT is normal if there are some specific learning problems or disorders. (Principal, Croatia)

In addition to underlining the differing nature in which stakeholders discussed this particular topic, these quotes reveal a tendency amongst educators to externalise the problem of specific difficulties in learning. It is somewhat surprising to find that, in both quotes, respondents explicitly express that special learning needs are something that cannot be addressed within the regular school system and, consequently, need to be dealt with in a separate structure or framework such as PT services. This becomes especially evident in the following two quotes from Georgian participants. In the first quote, a Georgian parent reports that his or her child has a problem that requires special attention:

I cannot blame teachers. My child has difficulties with learning and needs additional help. (Parent, Georgia)

Perhaps most interesting in this frank statement is the explicit exclusion of the school from any responsibility for addressing the special learning needs of the child and providing additional support, effectively transferring this responsibility to the personal spheres of parent and pupil. This shift of responsibility is even more strongly observed in the words of a Georgian teacher:

When a child's learning abilities are low, he or she may need additional help to catch up. This is not my fault. (Teacher, Georgia)

In addition to its focus on the relevance of individual difficulties in learning to the decision concerning PT use, this quote relates to the

previously-mentioned tendency of formal education systems across all studied contexts to target policy and programme development towards the pupil of 'average' learning ability. The consequence, it seems, is that those with any form of difficulty in learning is required to seek outside help. This is especially disheartening in light of current trends in education that emphasize inclusion, a child-centred approach, and the adjustment of teaching practices in accordance with individual learning needs. Apparently, in the educational systems of the countries participating in the present study, some educators fail to incorporate these principles into their practice and instead adopt the view that pupils who do not meet an arbitrarily set 'average' are somebody else's problem.

In fact, throughout this exploration of the pupil characteristics perceived to influence the decision concerning the use of PT services, it seems that the failure of formal educational systems to address and accommodate individual differences amongst pupils is a primary contributing factor to this decision. Arguably, in their focus on the average pupil, current systems of education, as well as the individual schools and teachers within those systems, struggle to effectively address the multiple and varying learning needs of individual pupils. Consequently, the solution to the problems of individual pupils often lie somewhere outside the school system and, most frequently, through the use of private tutors.

6.5. The ability of formal education systems to address pupils' heterogeneous characteristics and needs

The previous section concluded with the argument that the decision whether or not to use PT services is in part driven by the failure of teachers, schools and educational systems to effectively address the needs of various types of pupils. This section will continue to explore this particular issue in more detail through an examination of stakeholders' perspectives on the ability of the formal education system to meet the individual needs of pupils and the main challenges in doing so. Stakeholders' views on the position of PT in this issue, and the types of pupil needs PT might address, will also be explored.

However, before presenting the results of this analysis, a cross-country comparison of the ability of each educational system to establish and deliver pupil-centred learning is provided. This analysis is largely based on the data emerging from the PISA 2009 study, in which all countries from the present research participated with the exception of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

6.5.1. A pupil centred approach: To what extent is this present in each participating country?

It has been previously argued that the extent of PT in an educational system is partly dependent on the system's ability to provide pupil-centred teaching and learning environments. Arguably, it could be expected that systems more devoted to addressing individual pupil needs provide less incentives to hire extra learning help. At the same time, however, attention to the needs of individual pupils is not a guarantee that there will not be a demand for PT, particularly in instances such as preparing for high-stakes assessment. The PISA data, by providing insight into the views of schools on such topics as teachers' capacity to meet individual pupil needs and the potential of schools to contribute to the development of a pupil's full potential, allows some light to be shed on the influence of these issues on the decision concerning PT use. Specifically, these indicators provide some insight into the relative success of each country in providing pupil-centred learning environments and meeting the individual needs of pupils. However, it must be kept in mind that the data only reflect the subjective views of school principals at the time of data collection, without providing any objective evidence. In Figure 8, PISA 2009 data examining the percentage of schools in a particular country reporting that teachers do not meet individual pupil needs is presented. Here, it is immediately evident that the education systems of the countries participating in the present research meet individual pupil needs to a varying extent. More specifically, while one third of schools in Estonia admit that pupils' learning is to some or a large extent hindered by the failure of their teachers to meet individual pupil needs, only one in ten schools in Georgia claim the same. In both this case and in Azerbaijan, the share of schools reporting that teachers'

inability to meet individual pupil needs is a hindrance to pupil learning is well below the OECD average. Amongst all participating countries, Croatia comes closest to the OECD average. In light of the fact that Georgia and Azerbaijan are the countries with the highest levels of dependence on PT, it is surprising to observe that the views of schools reflect a relative lack of dissatisfaction with their teachers' ability to meet individual pupil needs. Arguably, this result might be a reflection of the schools' unwillingness to openly admit to problems in their system. On the other hand, it might be suggestive of a more worrying view that, as an increasingly commonplace and acceptable part of education in both countries, a well-developed PT system is an effective way for meeting individual pupil needs. It might even be further argued that the system of PT in these countries has become such an integrative part of the overall education system that school principals fail to separate this 'shadow' system from the formal one.

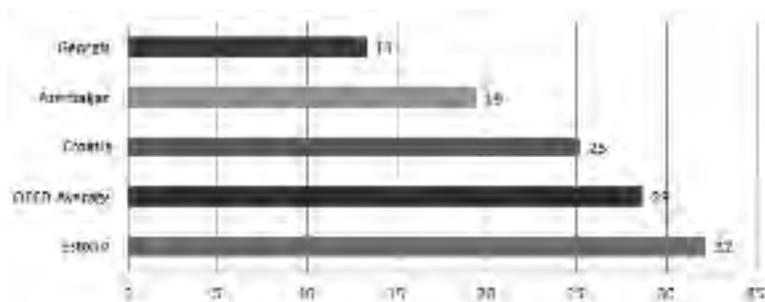


Figure 8. Perceived hindrances to pupil learning in schools: Percentage of schools reporting that teachers are not meeting individual pupil needs. Source: PISA 2009 database.

The PISA 2009 data also provides information on the perceived ability of schools to support pupil development, conveyed through the percentage of schools reporting that pupils are not being encouraged to achieve their full potential. Again, as suggested by the data presented in Figure 9, the education systems of all participating countries differ rather clearly in this aspect. At one end, Georgian schools report the failure to encourage pupils to reach their full potential as a hindrance to learning relatively infrequently (15%). In contrast, Croatian schools are far more critical about their ability to

do so, where more than one in four schools (28%) claim that pupil learning is hindered by this factor in school. The figures in Estonia and Azerbaijan are slightly lower, where the achieved rates are closest to the OECD average. Again, the reasons behind these results are most likely multiple, ranging from the relative openness of school officials to admitting problems to a number of specific contextual factors.

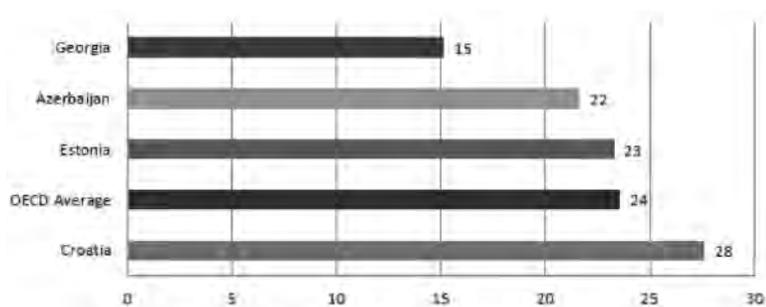


Figure 9. Perceived hindrances to pupil learning in schools: Percentage of schools reporting that pupils are not being encouraged to achieve their full potential. Source: PISA 2009 database.

Further to this brief quantitative comparison of the relative success with which educational systems from each participating country meet individual pupil needs, stakeholder interviews from the present research allowed a deeper exploration of the issue of pupil-centred teaching and learning in schools and the manner in which these processes influence the decision to use PT services. Not surprisingly, interviewees confirmed the general absence of pupil-centred approaches in schools, instead suggesting that teaching tended to be focused on the so-called 'average' pupil. The following quote from an Estonian educational expert is a good illustration of this perceived problem:

There is mass teaching in our classrooms, where teachers lack competence to take into account the different abilities of pupils. Usually, they really don't do this. (Educational professional, Estonia)

Similar views are expressed by a teacher from Estonia:

Individual attention and personal explanation are the things missing at school. An individual pupil gets lost in the 'mass' and does not get attention. (Teacher, Estonia)

Consistent with previous arguments, these quotes emphasize the view that, in the formal education system, pupils tend to be viewed as a uniform group rather than a collection of individual personalities with particular needs. Further, they suggest, both explicitly and implicitly, that ignoring this fact creates problems for many pupils who do not meet the criteria for the hypothetical 'average' pupil. Stakeholders further suggested that this problem is caused either by structural problems (e.g. large class sizes, overloaded curriculum) or unqualified providers of education (i.e. teachers lacking competences). However, the views of stakeholders from different spheres diverged rather drastically on this issue. While teachers, and to some extent school principals and policy makers, attributed the lack of a pupil-centred approach to system-related deficiencies (mainly large class size and an overloaded curriculum), parents and other groups were more likely to relate this issue to teachers and their insufficient skills and knowledge. These contrasting perspectives will be explored further in the following paragraphs.

In the first instance, teachers often reported that large class sizes and overloaded curricula forced them to provide instruction using a general, 'one-size-fits-all' approach directed towards the imaginary average pupil. In this context of high pressure to deliver a large amount of taught content to a large group of pupils, teachers reported feeling obliged to disregard the individuality of pupils. In an explanation of the reasons for giving priority to the average pupil, a Bosnian teacher describes how this situation is related to the need for private tutors:

The curriculum is too extensive, so the greatest attention is given to average pupils. Those pupils who are above or beneath that average are bored or not interested... so that is also one of the reasons for PT. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Similarly, a Georgian teacher talks about how she cannot take individual needs into account due to an overloaded curriculum:

Unfortunately, I cannot adjust the whole process to those who are very slow; there is a lot of material to cover in class during the semester. (Teacher, Georgia)

Similarly, an educational expert from the National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education in Croatia admits that existing school programmes are set up in a way that does not allow for individual needs to be taken into account:

The educational system, especially in primary schools, is made to statistically satisfy the average, while it is not interested in those on the margin. Unfortunately, mathematics education has problems because of this. Children are not at the same level of development, but our programs assume that all pupils are the same at the same moment on the same day....It is a deeply rooted belief that 80% master the program, while 20% are, in industrial terms, considered as waste in the production process. So definitely, there is not enough care about the individual. (Educational professional, Croatia)

From these quotes, one can clearly observe the manner in which pupil-centred approaches aimed at addressing individual needs are sacrificed in order to deliver prescribed curricula in a set time frame. The quotes from the teachers implicitly point towards lower levels of teacher autonomy in both selecting the curricular content and the timing of the teaching and learning process. Together, these issues have clear implications by restricting the ability of teachers to devote their time and attention to those who, for whatever reason, do not or cannot fit into the suggested content and time framework. It might be argued, therefore, that pupils with specific learning needs become more likely to opt to use PT services as a means of more effectively matching individual learning styles and characteristics with the achievement of educational aspirations. While teachers themselves

are often incapable of directly influencing the content and scope of programmes, educational administrators are perhaps in a position to introduce the changes into the system necessary to reduce this overload. It is particularly surprising, therefore, that the Croatian administrator reports the problem in such a removed manner. The apparent lack of any will to address a deep and far-reaching problem within the system for which he is partly responsible is a particularly worrying illustration of a situation in which an apparently static feature of the educational system fails to address the individual needs of pupils and, as such, plays a direct role in the decision of individual pupils concerning PT use.

While teachers tended to relate the problem of addressing individual needs to systemic factors, parents and other stakeholders were more likely to emphasize the failure of teachers specifically in providing instruction according to the individual needs of pupils. The following quotes from a number of educational experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia highlight this problem:

Our teachers are relying on textbooks to a great extent. They teach the lesson in the same way it is written in the textbook. I have a feeling that they are more focused on satisfying the form than paying attention to pupils' needs and abilities. Their approach, for most of them, is quite superficial. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The Teachers' Faculty teaches teachers classroom management, i.e. how to teach to a class, how to manage class discipline etc., but nothing about how to teach individually. Our teachers do not know how to teach an individual child. (Educational professional, Croatia)

In these excerpts, all stakeholders point to the perceived inadequacies in the preparedness of teachers to meet individual needs, suggesting that current training models are not meeting the needs of contemporary society. In the quote from the expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the excessive reliance on textbooks seems suggestive of a teaching approach consisting solely of the reproduction of textbook content.

Further, as is suggested by the Croatian interviewee, there appears to be a gap in teachers' pre-service training in which knowledge and skills for managing a whole class and teaching to a group of pupils is not complemented by training directed towards developing skills in adjusting instruction to the individual needs of pupils.

Taken together, it seems reasonable to suggest that a combination of both systemic elements (i.e. large class sizes, curriculum overload) and teachers' relative inability to address individual learning differences result in the overall failure of educational systems to successfully accommodate individual learning needs. The end result of this apparent interplay between factors is an overall lack of focus on individual pupils. In order to compensate, pupils and families look to private tutors for a more individualised approach to learning. As was suggested by interviewees, PT lessons cater for the individual needs of pupils by taking into account the particularities of each child and adjusting the pace, style and approach to learning accordingly. In this manner, PT services represent features missing from systems of formal education. However, this very personal approach is a characteristic element of individual PT lessons only. It is much less evident in the case of PT courses that involve a greater number of participants and that typically follow a predetermined study programme. While these group lessons or courses can accommodate some individual approaches, individual PT lessons are those most driven by the particular needs of the learner.

6.6. Addressing individual needs through formal support structures: What currently exists in formal systems of education?

The previous section concluded with a discussion arguing that PT services compensate for the failure of formal educational systems to provide a pupil-centred approach. However, it should be made clear that there is not a complete absence of initiatives aimed at recognizing and addressing the learning needs of individual pupils. Indeed, in the case of some of the participating countries, there is evidence of efforts aimed at developing strategies and structures

for addressing the individual differences of pupils, including many of those presented previously in this chapter. This section examines the nature and effectiveness of these structures, beginning with an overview of support structures across all participating countries, followed by a discussion of the factors contributing to the function and relative effectiveness of these structures. Support structures are defined as any formal strategy or activity aimed at addressing individual learning needs or the experienced difficulties of pupils. Arguably, the degree to which these structures are used by pupils and, more importantly, are effective in addressing the heterogeneous needs of pupils could potentially reduce the likelihood of PT use. Table 11 provides a brief overview of the existing support structures in each participating country, as stipulated by law or other education policy.

Table 11. Overview of existing support structures

| | Support structures stipulated by law or regulation (2009) | Scope of support |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Azerbaijan | Remedial education as such is not present in Education Act. | - |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Preparatory courses for pupils needing to re-take exams Remedial lessons for pupils who are not able to meet curriculum standards Additional lessons for talented pupils Remedial support stipulated as part of regular teacher work load (40 hrs. per week) | Preparatory courses: 5x2hrs per subject Each teacher is allotted 1.5 hrs. per week for remedial and additional lessons Min.no. of pupils needed for remedial lessons: 5(8) in primary and 10 in upper secondary school Max.no. of pupils allowed in remedial lessons: 10(15) in primary and 20 in upper secondary school |
| Croatia | Schools obliged to organise remedial classes for pupils who need help in learning Enrichment classes for talented pupils Remedial support stipulated as part of regular teacher work load | Remedial classes are organised for a limited time Max. no. of pupils per group: 8 for regular pupils; 5 for pupils following individual/adapted programme Max. allowable amount of remedial teaching: 4 hrs. per week of any type of extra teaching per teacher in secondary school |
| Estonia | Regulation effective in 2009: Remedial classes for pupils with special educational needs at basic school level; no clear regulation on remedial help for pupils falling behind temporarily. Regulation effective since 2010: Schools shall provide pupils who temporarily fall behind in attaining the presumable learning outcomes with additional pedagogical guidance outside lessons. | 2009 regulation: The scope of remedial classes was: min 4hr for grades 1-3, 3 hrs. for grades 4-6, 2 hrs. for grades 7-9. Max.no. of pupils per class was 6. 2010 regulation: Law does not specify the organisation of this pedagogical guidance; it is up to schools to decide. |
| Georgia | Obligatory preparatory courses for tertiary education entrance exams (additional hours for such courses added to the official curriculum in 2010). | Occurring only during the last grade of schooling |

At first glance, the data presented here reveals the large diversity in the nature and scope of support systems across all five countries. In Azerbaijan and Georgia (before 2010), there was no legal regulation prescribing any form of support within the formal systems of education. However, this does not rule out the possibility that schools and teachers themselves provided additional support to their pupils. For instance, one Azerbaijani stakeholder reported cases in which

teachers provide extensive help to pupils after school hours, free of charge. However, in light of the tight financial circumstances in which most schools find themselves as well as the previously mentioned time and financial constraints of teachers, it might be reasonable to assume that the voluntary provision of such services represents an exception rather than a norm across the system. In light of previous arguments linking increased PT use with the failure of the formal education system to support the individual learning needs of all pupils, it might be argued that the elevated frequency and scope of PT in both Azerbaijan and Georgia (Silova, Būdienė, & Bray 2006) is a direct reflection of the overall lack of support structures within the formal education systems of both countries.

In the remaining three countries, some form of regulated support systems have been put into place. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to holding remedial lessons for pupils who are unable to meet curriculum standards, there is a regulation requiring the availability of preparatory courses for pupils who need to re-take exams. Similarly, Croatian legal regulations oblige schools to organise remedial classes for pupils who need help with learning or cannot meet the minimal requirements set within a specific subject. The regulations in both countries additionally require the provision of extra support for talented pupils. Furthermore, the regulations state that teachers are expected to provide all remedial support as part of their regular teaching load. In both contexts, the scope of remedial support is formally limited by time and number of pupils. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, remedial classes can only take place when a minimum number of pupils in need of help is reached. In Estonia, the regulation in effect during the period in which the research was conducted (2009) stipulated that remedial classes be provided for pupils with special educational needs only (i.e. pupils with more severe educational and developmental problems). The size of these classes is also formally regulated. During interviews, a number of Estonian participants also indicated that teachers were additionally required by schools to hold consultation lessons for pupils. In 2010, regulation requiring the provision of additional pedagogical guidance

for pupils falling behind temporarily was also introduced. However, the structure and nature of this form of support remains unclear and it is currently up to individual schools to develop and manage such support strategies according to their own needs.

From this overview, it seems reasonable to conclude that, across all participating countries, there exists a significant diversity in formal strategies for supporting the individual learning needs of pupils. Even in those countries with regulations around the provision of such support in place, the outlined quantity and content of this support remains poorly defined and overly general. Furthermore, in all cases, there appears to be an overall lack of any clear delineation of individual roles and responsibilities in the provision of support services, a condition which could potentially make it easy for schools to displace responsibility and evade direct initiative. Indeed, legal regulation on the provision of support for pupils is not a guarantee of the effectiveness of these systems.

This assumption was confirmed through the analyses of the interview and focus group data, which revealed several elements impairing the effectiveness of support structures in schools. First, stakeholders' responses indicated a lack of serious commitment from schools to implement support strategies in a manner that would meet their purpose. Secondly, in cases when such strategies were observed to be in operation, stakeholders reported a number of features that made these systems inferior to PT services. Both of these issues will be discussed in more detail using the data from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Estonia.

In all three countries, stakeholders reported that support systems aimed at addressing the individual needs of pupils are in fact sometimes used for a completely different purpose. This was most evident in Croatia and Estonia. In Croatia, analysis of stakeholders' responses revealed a situation in which the existing support system, consisting of remedial and enrichment classes, is more oriented towards fulfilling teachers' work load requirements than actually supporting pupils. This sentiment is evident in a very frank statement from the Croatian State Secretary for education:

Remedial classes are completely pro-forma, and teachers' unions benefit the most out of it. They do not help the system, or the pupils. I can guarantee that. This (i.e. remedial classes) has been turned into a measure for the standardisation of teachers' working hours, as these classes are given to teachers who lack working hours. Pupils are secondary here. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Croatia)

This quote describes a commonly-reported situation in which, in order to keep a full-time position, teachers are assigned remedial classes in order to fill a gap in required workloads. Consequently, teachers can maintain their full-time position while the idea of providing learning support to pupils becomes secondary, an argument clearly voiced by the State Secretary. Sadly, this observation was additionally reported by other Croatian participants, further exemplified in the words of a professor from the Mathematics Department at the University of Zagreb:

These [remedial] classes are delivered if teachers lack some teaching hours....The classes are organised regularly or occasionally, depending on how many free hours teachers have, so this is nothing. (University professor, Croatia)

In both statements, the suggestion that the focus of remedial classes has radically shifted from pupils to teachers is clear. Indeed, if remedial classes are primarily seen as a means to meet workload requirements, they are almost certainly not tailored to the needs of individual pupils at a given school. For example, in a school where the mathematics teacher has already fulfilled full-time work requirements, pupils with difficulties in this subject would not be given the opportunity to participate in remedial classes. Conversely, the same school might offer such classes in Mother tongue in order to fulfill the teaching hours of the Mother tongue teacher, even though there might be fewer problems for pupils in this subject. Arguably, this failure to organize remedial classes in a way that supports pupil learning serves to decrease their potential effectiveness.

In Estonia, the focus of remedial support also seems to have shifted. Here, instead of aiming remedial support at facilitating pupils' learning, available consultation lessons appear to have primarily become an avenue for re-taking tests and other assessments. Analysis suggested that, because school curricula are overloaded and teaching schedules are often very tight, lessons themselves do not always provide sufficient time for all necessary tasks. In Estonia, the lesson plan is often so dense that teachers cannot assign time during lessons for pupils to re-take tests or assessments. Furthermore, it can also be expected that teachers want their pupils to follow the currently taught topics and not fall behind any further. Consequently, consultation classes are actually used for re-taking tests or making up other missed assignments, rather than providing individualised learning support for pupils who may be experiencing specific difficulties. While stakeholders concede that this situation varies across schools, these quotes from a former teacher/PT provider and a representative of the Association of Pupils provide a clear illustration of the issue:

In some schools, consultancy hours are required for catching up purposes, in others, consultancy hours are only meant for retaking tests. An overall system (for remedial teaching) is missing overall. (PT provider, Estonia)

... most of the time consultancy hours were meant for re-taking tests. (Pupil, Estonia)

Two issues of interest are raised in these quotes. First, it seems that even though a system for the provision of remedial support exists in Estonia, it does not necessarily provide what its title suggests. Arguably, this is due to the second issue raised by respondents, where other important academic tasks or activities (e.g. making up missed or failed assignments) not accommodated in the regular school schedule are reallocated to time allotted to remedial classes. Once again, the problem of providing effective and timely remedial support appears to remain unresolved in this context.

The data further suggested the existence of several organisational problems hampering the effectiveness of existing support structures. Consistent with the previous discussion, stakeholders often reported the view that remedial classes are unlikely to be effective if they are not specifically focused on helping pupils. A Bosnian educational official and former teacher explains this issue further, and directly links it to the decision concerning PT use:

Remedial lessons are organized in such a way that everything done within regular classes is just repeated. And repeated in the same way. Just put yourself in the pupils' position; you listen to the same teacher who is teaching the same thing in the same way twice. So it is not surprising that pupils don't see the point of attending remedial lessons. They see that it is much better to use PT services. The private tutor will have a different approach and, more importantly, he will be more motivated to achieve a certain result. (Educational governance – Local level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This quote from an official from Bosnia and Herzegovina clearly illustrates the primary problems of remedial classes, which are often viewed as nothing more than an additional class provided after hours, typically repeating what was presented during regular class time by the same teacher. In contrast to PT services, this support system is often viewed as inferior as it lacks the flexible, novel, and individualised approaches and teaching methods that characterize many PT services.

Another organisational problem raised by stakeholders was the fact that, although support classes are perhaps more individualised than regular classes, they are still group activities in all three countries. Consequently, it is reasonable to expect that pupils with a diverse range of learning needs and difficulties will attend any given class. In fact, data suggested that, in some cases, remedial classes will often even include pupils from different grades. A PT provider from Estonia, speaking of a time when he was a teacher, aptly describes how this becomes a factor further complicating the process of addressing the unique problems of individual pupils:

It was complicated to help because pupils were from different grades and in 45 minutes you cannot help much. /.../ you have to explain weekly material in an hour. (PT provider, Estonia)

Not surprisingly, the combination of pupils from different grades with different issues in a single class made it very difficult for this teacher to effectively support all pupils equally. A similar problem was described by a Bosnian education professional, who also spoke of the divergent nature of pupil needs in remedial classes:

[Remedial] lessons are mainly organized for pupils who are fighting to get a D to pass but those pupils who, for example, want to improve their knowledge to get a higher grade, let's say from D to C or C to B, are excluded. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This quote raises an interesting issue in its suggestion that, in some cases, remedial classes are focused only on a limited group of pupils – those that are the biggest concern to teachers (or the school). Consequently, remedial efforts are directed towards helping the least successful pupils meet minimal educational standards while ‘less problematic’ pupils are left without any individualised attention despite being in equal need of remedial support. It seems reasonable to expect, therefore, that those pupils wishing to improve their knowledge and grades beyond minimal standards are forced to seek help outside the school.

In a contrasting example, a Croatian secondary school mathematics teacher argues that those pupils who are in real and immediate need of learning support are in fact not attending remedial classes:

Remedial classes are not obligatory in our school. Pupils who come are usually those who have A's, B's or C's, when they did not understand something we worked on. Those who really have problems do not come, as they did not learn anything anyway. (Teacher, Croatia)

Taken together, these examples from all three countries suggest that the main problem experienced by support systems in regular schools

is that they are not organised in a way in which they can effectively address the individual needs of pupils. It seems reasonable to argue, therefore, that pupils with specific learning needs not met in the formal system choose to attend PT lessons as the only alternative for meeting those needs.

Another issue raised by stakeholders was the perceived convenience of remedial lessons for pupils. Data from all three countries suggested that remedial classes were typically held at an inconvenient time for pupils. A Croatian education expert from the Education and Teacher Training Agency clarifies this issue further:

In elementary schools, remedial instruction is more or less functioning, but children do not like to attend remedial classes....Teachers are also not satisfied, because they already have workloads above the norm... Pupils are overloaded, and remedial classes are held as the 8th or 9th lesson in a day. (Educational professional, Croatia)

Here, the failure of remedial lessons to be effectively accommodated into the study plans and schedules directly contributes to a decline in their effectiveness by making attendance an unpleasant responsibility for pupils. This Croatian professional additionally highlights the fact that remedial lessons can be a responsibility that teachers do not accept willingly. Arguably, a negative attitude on the part of teachers further contributes to the low effectiveness of these lessons.

Another factor reported to reduce attendance of remedial classes is pupil perceptions concerning such lessons and the stigmatisation of pupils attending remedial classes. Based on previous experience or second-hand information, pupils in need of learning support often do not consider remedial classes to be helpful. As a result, there is a potentially significant number of pupils who might benefit from remedial classes but have not sought their help. Indeed, a number of teachers admitted that, although they provide remedial classes, there are times when nobody turns up. This problem is compounded by cases in which remedial classes have a stigmatizing effect, where pupils who attend these classes are viewed to be of lower intelligence or to experience significant problems. A Croatian educational professional

and an Estonian School Principals Association representative provide further insight into this process:

Some younger children also perceived it as a punishment, as a sort of stigma. (Educational professional, Croatia)

In basic school, it is not very popular to go to a teacher and ask for an explanation, or saying I cannot understand something. (Principal, Estonia)

These excerpts, in a revealing depiction of learning values and school ethos, illustrate a predominant view that seeking help with learning or, at the very least, seeking help openly is not a socially acceptable practice. Arguably, this stems from the view that all pupils are expected to be able to learn everything in class or at home and, as a result, it is considered unusual that some pupils might need extra help. Together with other factors reducing the overall effectiveness of remedial support structures, this stigmatisation of remedial lessons is another factor that makes PT a more attractive option for pupils seeking learning support.

A final issue arising from interviews was the observation that teachers themselves are not always motivated to provide remedial classes. Analysis of stakeholders' responses revealed that teachers are often not held accountable for providing these classes nor are they compensated for the provision of classes when they have already met their required workload. This issue is illustrated in the following quotes:

I know a teacher who said that she will only organize remedial lessons when she will be additionally paid for it. And so, is it necessary to say anything else about remedial lessons in our schools? (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Every teacher is obliged to teach his or her subject 22 hours a week, but they are actually teaching only 20 hours. Two hours should be

remedial classes, but no one controls this. It is not regulated by law, and no one is giving these lessons because it is not a must. (Pupil, Croatia)

On the whole, this lack of any clear control and accountability over support strategies was one of the key explanations given by stakeholders for their lack of usefulness. In most cases, the matter of providing remedial lessons or other support is left up to individual teachers, with little support or commitment from school leaders. This situation is likely exacerbated by the larger structural problems discussed here, in which the lack of any regulatory mechanisms to reinforce the delivery of support strategies further limits their effectiveness.

6.7. Conclusions

This chapter opened with a quote from a representative of school principals in Croatia, who voiced a concern about the lack of individualized approaches towards teaching and learning at schools. The quote clearly underlined the diverging learning needs of a heterogeneous body of pupils and the limited capacity of the formal education system to provide a 'one size fits all' approach. This chapter has been devoted to exploring this issue further, focusing more specifically on the systemic failure of formal education systems to respond to the individual needs of learners and the role played by this situation in the decision to use PT services.

Even though modern discourse in education strongly advocates pupil-centred learning and the inclusion of different learners, this chapter has demonstrated that, in all participating countries, such concepts are poorly represented in the formal systems of education. Perhaps the most striking evidence of this paradox comes from Georgia and Azerbaijan, where a majority of school principals claim that their education systems are good at responding to individual pupil needs in contexts characterized by the most intense use of PT services. As previously argued, PT has become a seemingly integral part of the formal education system in these countries and,

as such, appears to be viewed as a functional mechanism serving to correct the deficiencies of formal education. The near non-existence of any form of remedial support structures in these countries further underscores this issue.

While the relationship between the responsiveness of the education system to individual learning needs and PT use might seem rather explicit at first sight, the analysis here suggests that this relationship is a result of a rather complicated interplay of various interrelated factors. Many of these factors are often historically and deeply rooted in the system (e.g. teaching processes, modes of delivery, teacher education, etc.) or relate to complex issues related to individual pupil development (e.g. motivation, personality characteristics, etc.). Nevertheless, the aim of this chapter has been to pinpoint the main forces behind the decision to use PT services, as they relate to individual pupil characteristics. Further, it has endeavoured to explore the deficiencies of formal systems of education in responding to these individual characteristics and needs.

In conclusion, several main issues are worth highlighting:

- First, the analysis drew attention to the role of low motivation and poorly developed work habits in the decision to use PT services. Amongst teachers and PT providers, this observed decline in motivation and work habits was attributed to the pupils' individual characteristics and, in turn, were argued to contribute to more intensive use of PT services. In contrast, parents and educational experts attributed this trend to inadequate teaching and learning processes within the formal education system. Regardless of the reasons, it is clear from the findings that the decision to use PT services is, in many instances, made to restore motivation for learning or, at the very least, to fulfil the minimal educational requirements set by the formal system of education.
- Many stakeholders, and especially parents, emphasized the worrying issue concerning the low capacity of schools to provide positive learning environments for all pupils, a situation often reflected in a lack of positive feedback and unrealistic expectations in mainstream classrooms. In other cases, this

failure was manifested in low levels of psychological support and efforts at enabling academic self-confidence.

- Further, stakeholders often reported the opinion that formal education systems in all contexts are very rigid in their efforts at respecting the heterogeneity of pupils' individual characteristics (e.g. shyness, anxiety etc.) and, consequently, fail to facilitate the personal development of pupils as confident and independent learners.
- While teachers tended to attribute these perceived challenges to providing pupil-centred learning to underlying systemic factors such as overloaded curricula (coupled with a lack of teacher autonomy over subject content and the pace of content delivery), parents were more likely to position the blame on the low competence of teachers.
- These deficiencies in teacher competences included a lack of competence in fostering pupils' motivation, a failure to facilitate the development of effective work habits, limited ability to teach difficult topics in an appealing and interesting manner, and limited support for the active engagement of pupils in learning.
- Stakeholders additionally emphasized the negative reciprocal effects of PT use on pupils' motivation to learn and their level of engagement within regular classes. Furthermore, stakeholders' accounts suggested that PT use could negatively affect the development of important skills (e.g. acting independently) as well as the effectiveness of the classroom teacher and the motivation levels of other pupils. This result is particularly interesting in its illustration of the inherent duality of the PT phenomenon, in which its perceived usefulness for the individual is in sharp contrast with the potential for wider negative consequences on a more system-wide scale.
- In all participating countries, analyses revealed virtually non-existent or largely ineffective remedial support strategies in the formal systems of education. In such cases, it seems reasonable to expect that the use of private tutors is the only option for receiving adequate support for difficulties in learning. While the

reported reasons for this failure to provide effective support structures were multiple, it is clear from the analyses that the perceived inefficacy of formal support strategies is a primary influence on the decision to use PT services, where the services provided by private tutors fill an important gap by supplying pupils and families with effective and efficient assistance. Because PT services are an option only to those families who can afford to pay for them, this finding has serious implications regarding the equitable access to quality education for pupils of varying learning ability.

Overall, these issues, independently or in combination, were reported to fuel the use of PT services, which are seen as a means to compensate for these deficiencies by offering a more flexible approach. Most importantly, PT offers an individualised approach to pupils and their specific needs by facilitating not only subject learning but also the development of critical skills. Further, private tutors were reported to also serve a vital role in providing psychological support to learners.

Perhaps most discouraging in the findings presented in this chapter is the apparent distancing of teachers and educational administrators from their responsibility and role in providing pupil-centred learning environments and in addressing the needs of individual learners. Indeed, without any active commitment to such efforts, there is very little hope of reducing the scope of PT use aimed at supporting individual learning needs and difficulties. The critical need for teachers and administrators to position themselves at the centre of this issue is further amplified in light of the duality of the PT phenomenon revealed in this chapter, where any positive personal impact of PT use is contrasted by wider negative consequences. Indeed, these educational stakeholders are central to reducing the demand for PT services through the development and implementation of strategies to better meet the individual learning needs of pupils in the formal system.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ROLES OF PARENTS IN THE DECISION CONCERNING THE USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

Elmina Kazimzade & Boris Jokić

The role of parents in making the decision to seek private tutoring (PT) services is critical to the conceptual framework of this research. Parents occupy and potentially control the emerging perception gap between the formal education system and their educational aspirations for their child. This is perhaps not surprising if one views parents as those most central in seeking and receiving information relevant to their child regarding the various processes and outcomes within the educational system. With this information, parents are in an important position to influence their child's work habits and learning strategies, as well as attitudes towards and motivation for learning in school. Indeed, it is the responsibility of parents, in active cooperation with teachers and schools, to steer their children's education. Further, it is parents who exercise the most influence on the educational aspirations for and of their children, transmitting and developing ideas around the value of education and often monitoring and even determining these aspirations themselves. In previous research examining the PT phenomenon, it has been hypothesised that parental awareness of the fact that investment in education can generate strong returns for individuals and enhance educational and life opportunities substantially influences the decision to use PT services (e.g. Bray & Lykins, 2012; Silova & Bray, 2006). More specifically, Bray and Lykins (2012) argue that while 'few parents have read the empirical literature on rates of return to education', most parents recognize the future benefits that education holds for their children. Arguably, this position stems from a basic understanding that education is necessary for children to succeed in life. Indeed, throughout the world, education is still seen as a

stepping stone to socio-economic success, and parents view assisting their children in attaining this success to be one of their primary responsibilities. Furthermore, parents are those who are financially capable of financing PT services if they or their children perceive such services as necessary in light of a perceived discrepancy between the information from and opportunities offered by the formal system of education and personal educational aspirations. Together, these elements make it clear that parents are a very important element in the decision concerning the use of PT services. (Bray, 2011; Devi & Singh, 2010; Mori, 2009). However, despite their important role, parents have only seldom been the focus of academic research on PT.

Arguably, the parental feeling of one's personal responsibility for a child and his or her education is at the foundation of parents' vital role in the decision concerning the use of PT services. Closely related to this notion is the concept of 'role construction', described by Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) as parental 'beliefs about what they are supposed to do in relation to their children's education'. Although the particular form of parental role construction likely differs across contexts, research has suggested that role construction is a useful concept for predicting parents' home- and school-based involvement activities (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Drummond & Stipek, 2004; Gonzalez & Chrispeels, 2004; Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski & Apostoleris, 1997; Scribner, Young, & Pedroza, 1999; Sheldon, 2002). In the present study, data analysis demonstrated a very strong role construction towards intervention, portraying parents as the active driving force behind their children's education and describing PT as one of the means through which parents exercise their personal responsibility for their children's educational outcomes. In all contexts, respondents made frequent use of phrases such as '*parent's use of PT...*' or '*PT helps parents...*'. Similarly, many parents used the word 'we' when discussing their personal experience with PT use, employing phrases such as '*last year we were using PT services continuously*' or '*then we decided to use PT and we were all happy*'. These unsurprising findings serve to portray the active role parents have in their children's education in general and with regards to PT in particular.

The present chapter covers three specific issues. First, analyses of the data collected in all five countries from nearly all stakeholders suggested that parents were inclined to make a decision concerning PT services as a result of the inability of the formal education system to fulfill the educational aspirations and expectations held for their children. Here, the decision to use PT is viewed as an intervention aimed to control and influence pupils' educational outcomes as well as the teaching and learning processes occurring within the formal system of education. In this respect, PT serves as an effective way to both influence the educational opportunities of an individual pupil and to deal with some of the perceived deficiencies of the formal system. Unlike the discussion in previous chapters in which the focus was on specific elements of the educational system (curriculum, assessment, teacher provision, etc.), the emphasis here is on the examination of the general sentiment of parents towards the formal educational system and the services it offers. As with previous research, the results of the present study demonstrate parental dissatisfaction with formal systems of education to be a salient influence on the decision to seek PT services. The second issue covered in the present chapter attempts to uncover the reasons underlying parents' decision to choose PT as a means to address this dissatisfaction with the formal system of education and the educational aspirations of themselves and their children. More specifically, this part of the chapter, based almost exclusively on the perspectives of parents, aims to examine why parents view PT as a reasonable, popular and prevalent alternative over other options for supporting the educational needs of their own children, themselves included. Finally, in the third part of the present chapter, the perspectives of other stakeholders on the role and motivation of parents behind the decision to use PT services are explored.

7.1. Parental dissatisfaction with the official education system as a contributor to the decision to use PT services

On the whole, participants' responses suggested that parental perceptions concerning the lack of quality within the formal educational system, and a general dissatisfaction with the educational services

offered therein, are important factors contributing to the decision concerning PT use. In order to explore the particularities of this relationship, the results of the data analyses arising from the interviews with 'non-parent' stakeholders will first be presented. This discussion will then be further elaborated upon through a consideration of the analyses of parental perspectives.

The perceptions of non-parent respondents concerning parental dissatisfaction ranged widely, with participants in some countries focusing more concretely on dissatisfaction with individual teachers or actual teaching and learning practices while others connected parental dissatisfaction to more general features of the educational system as a whole. The following quote from a local government official in Estonia relates parental dissatisfaction with the practices of an individual teacher:

I will give you an example from my own family. They (parents) are not satisfied with their child's teacher. They just do not trust her and they are convinced that the actual results are not the best that the child could get. What they did is that they looked for a private tutor who is a good teacher. (Educational governance – local level, Estonia)

This sentiment is similarly evident in the words of a PT provider from Estonia:

I had students from one school who said that they cannot understand the things they learn in school. The teacher is explaining in front of the class, everybody is so noisy and you cannot hear anything. And when the parent cares for the child, he/she starts looking (for a PT teacher). (PT provider, Estonia)

Consistent with those from many other stakeholders, these third party quotes are both indicative of parental dissatisfaction with the way teaching has been delivered by teachers in the formal education system and the manner in which both learning and teaching processes have been organized and controlled. In these situations, parents who

perceive such deficiencies and who are concerned for their child's education may opt for PT services as a method to compensate for these deficiencies.

In contrast, a wide range of respondents related the decision to use PT services to the negative parental perceptions of the education system as a whole. This is clearly evident in the following quote from a Ministry official from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

The situation in our education system, at the moment, is quite bad and I feel sorry for that. The presence of PT just indicates all these deficiencies that our formal system has. We have so many employed people within the education system, so many classrooms, textbooks and still parents need to pay for additional tutoring. That is terrible. Considering all this, it may be good that there is an option, like PT, that enables parents to fill the gap that is created in the education of their children by the system itself. (Educational governance- ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This frank statement from a highly ranked education official directly and unequivocally relates the deficiencies of the formal system of education to the parental decision to use PT services. Furthermore, the statement's deterministic nature depicts an attitude that these deficiencies are so deeply embedded and strongly rooted within the formal system that the existence of PT is one of the only effective methods for addressing them. These ideas are similarly evident in a somewhat surprising statement from a teacher speaking about the very system within which she is employed:

Parents are not satisfied with what is provided by the formal system. Indirectly (i.e. through taxes and public expenditure) they are paying for that education and they expect that their children gain a certain amount and quality of knowledge. Unfortunately, they are not getting that so they need to find another solution and that is PT. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Arguably, although teachers are in perhaps the best position to affect the quality of formal education, these words suggest that, in some cases, even teachers are aware that the quality of education is insufficient for some parents and that, consequently, they may opt for the services of private tutors. This perspective was similarly true in other contexts, as evident in the words of a Georgian educational expert:

...PT is also an option for parents to overcome the drawbacks of the system. This is mostly the case at an elementary and basic level (grades one to nine) and in subjects such as mathematics and foreign language. (Educational professional Georgia)

This notion that the parental decision concerning the use of PT services is a means of overcoming perceived deficiencies within the formal system and adjusting educational opportunities to personal educational expectations, clearly illustrated in previous chapters, are similarly evident in the words of a Croatian teachers' union leader speaking about preparatory courses:

Preparatory courses are indicative of a recognition amongst many pupils and parents that formal school does not provide children with something that is needed and expected of them at some point in time. (Teacher union, Croatia)

Together, these third party quotes, arising from multiple contexts and at times from those in a position to directly shape the formal system of education, depict a predominant opinion that there is a strong link between parental perspectives regarding the quality of education provided within the formal system and the parental inclination towards the use of PT services.

Further insight into the particularities of this relationship is offered through the analyses of parental perspectives specifically. In the first instance, this link between parental dissatisfaction with the formal education system and the decision to use PT service was clearly evident amongst parents, as illustrated by the words of an Azerbai-

jani parent describing the relationship between parental aspirations, perceptions of the quality of the formal system of education and PT:

Parents want their children to be educated and think of their future. Today the level of teaching at schools is known to everyone. As a parent you really do not have a choice. Everyone thinks that without private tutoring, a child cannot enter university. To openly put it, in the last 5 years, I have not met a child who entered university without taking PT lessons. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

This intriguing first person statement summarises many important points enclosed in the main argument of the present chapter. First, it speaks about the inherent responsibility of parents for their children and, more specifically, for their children's aspirations for future educational success. Secondly, this statement confirms previous descriptions of parental perceptions of the poor quality of education within the formal system, and directly relates this to the argument that PT use is necessary in order to address both the deficiencies of the system as well as the educational aspirations held for one's children. This deterministic stance amongst parents was also evident in other contexts, as illustrated by a parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina offering his views regarding the need to use PT:

In my opinion, it is the fault of the formal system that creates a need for PT. And it is a serious thing. Considering the current situation in our system of education, it is impossible to properly educate your children without PT. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Consistent with the words from the Azerbaijani parent, this parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms the placement of a perceived lack of quality of the formal education system at the core of parents' decision concerning PT use. However, perhaps the most controversial element housed within the above statement is the notion that PT is a necessity if a parent wishes to provide his or her child with a 'proper education'. This statement is perhaps especially worrying if one considers evidence, provided in the present book as well as in

many other academic works, demonstrating that PT in Bosnia and Herzegovina and other participating countries could hardly be considered to incorporate all the necessary elements for a holistic and all-encompassing education.

As described in previous chapters, the case of Georgia has been defined by ongoing changes and reforms to the formal educational system. Although this might have been viewed positively in the perspectives of some parents, the following words from a Georgian parent suggest that, in light of recent educational reform, parents are even more dissatisfied with the formal system of education:

We are tired of so many reforms and changes. It seems that no one is thinking about children and their parents. Changes need time and everyone needs time to adapt to them. But as parents we don't have time. These changes are happening when my child is supposed to be learning and I will do anything for my child to learn and not be a victim of an experiment. (Parent, Georgia)

Regrettably, the outcome of educational reform in Georgia seems to be feelings of disappointment and a lack of commitment amongst parents. Consequently, Georgian parents turn to PT services in order to maximise the learning and educational opportunities for their children and to compensate for the failures of the formal system.

PT was also perceived by some parents as an instrument to provide value-added educational experiences not available in the formal education system. This viewpoint is well illustrated by parent in Azerbaijan:

I would differentiate ordinary private tutors who help students' master tests from talented tutors who contribute more to learning. The first type of private tutor is the right person only if your child is weak or has low ability. Sometime ago, my son left his chemistry private tutor. His explanation was very simple: 'It is very boring and just wasted my time, always doing crazy tests.' So I accepted his decision. I agreed with him because I see how he was inspired by another private tutor who is a super professional and talented person. Together my son and this person work very productively and have a good relationship, a kind

of team of two thinkers who love mathematics. It reminded me of my school where there existed a special group for gifted children in which motivated teachers and pupils worked as an excellent team. Today, school is for mediocre pupils and teachers. So I have to pay to get a good, talented teacher for my son. This mathematics private tutor has three groups of children, divided by their capacity. You know, he divided children by their capacity from low to high. The third one, where my son is going, is for gifted pupils. I am glad that my son was so lucky to be in his group. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

This complex quote raises many important issues. First, it signifies that some parents make clear distinctions with regards to the quality of private tutors and the service provided, an issue further explored in Chapter Nine. Secondly, it provides insight into parental expectations of and satisfaction with the work of a private tutor. Finally, and perhaps most importantly to the present discussion, the quote suggests a strong negative judgement of the formal system through the use of the phrase 'mediocre pupils and teachers'. Interestingly, this parent offers this viewpoint as an issue of common knowledge and does not express any opinion concerning a wish for change. Instead, in the opinion of this parent, the only option is to compensate for this mediocrity with quality PT, a service that requires a certain fee.

In contrast to this apparent resignation towards PT use, the decision to use PT services also evoked very negative sentiments amongst some parents. This is illustrated in the words of a Croatian parent:

When I hear the words 'private tutoring', I feel a bitterness and anger. I feel angry and bitter towards teachers and the school because they have failed in accomplishing their goals. They have failed to educate my child. (Parent, Croatia)

In addition to being a strong depiction of the negative sentiments characteristic of many parents, the above quote serves as fertile ground for a discussion concerning the discrepancy evident across stakeholders in the perceived division of responsibilities in the educa-

tion of an individual pupil. This issue will be addressed more closely later in the chapter.

In this chapter and throughout this book, data excerpts illustrating parental perspectives from all participating countries have focused on a depiction of the perceived deficiencies in teaching and learning processes and other weaknesses of the formal system of education as the main factors driving the decision to use PT services. In general, this position has been supported by the viewpoints from a substantial number of other stakeholders. In fact, when discussing the decision to use PT services, parental statements rarely included any form of self-criticism and instead focused on what was wrong within the formal education system. However, there were some examples in which parents readily acknowledged the manner in which their expectations played a role in the decision concerning PT services. This exception is evidenced in the following excerpt from one of the Croatian focus groups with parents:

I have a feeling that sometimes we, as parents, are hypocritical in blaming the teachers and schools. I mean, PT is always related to our parental expectations and aspirations – and all children cannot be excellent in all subjects. (Parent, Croatia)

Together, the quotes presented in this section support the core conceptual idea behind the present research proposing that the likelihood of deciding to use PT services is a function of the discrepancy between opinions regarding the formal system of education and the educational aspirations of pupils and parents. Specifically, parent dissatisfaction with the quality of the formal system of education, and the failure of that system to meet the educational aspirations parents hold for their children, directly contributes to the decision of parents to pay for the services of private tutors. However, in light of this parental dissatisfaction and an apparent wish to control the teaching and learning opportunities provided to their children, one might pose the question: Why do parents opt for hiring an external tutor instead of addressing these deficiencies themselves? Arguably, because most of the parents participating in the present research are well-educated

individuals, they should be able to provide effective support for their children, at least at lower educational levels. The following section will explore this issue further through a discussion of the various reasons why parents might opt for PT services instead of providing help to their own children directly.

7.2. Why don't parents provide educational support themselves?

In general, the collected data indicated that parents opt for PT services for a variety of reasons. Indeed, the decision to use PT services is made both as a result of and in order to address various familial challenges. This includes familial efforts to overcome existing 'life contexts' such as parental work obligations or a perceived lack of ability and competence to provide educational support (Green et al., 2007). Some parents reported opting to use PT services due to a lack of desire to become actively involved in a child's school assignments and the overall convenience of PT services. There was also significant evidence to suggest that parents use the support of tutors over direct parental involvement due to ineffective patterns of parent-child communication on topics related to education and school obligations (Glasman, 2007). These often overlapping issues were reported in all participating countries. In the following section, these reasons are discussed first through the perspectives of parents themselves. This is followed by a presentation of the clearly discrepant views offered by other stakeholders regarding parental reasons for deciding to use PT services.

7.2.1. The 'life contexts' related to the decision concerning PT use: The interplay of time, ability, convenience and child-parent communication

In the first instance, parents consistently reported that they simply did not have the time to work with their children on schoolwork or to systematically support them in their learning. In a description of his personal experience with PT services as a busy professional and parent of a child experiencing problems with concentration and in need of daily help with homework, the leader of the Teacher Union in Croatia frankly explains:

My child had a problem with concentration and attention. As she is a child with whom someone has to work on homework every day, PT was a relief for me and my wife. We were unburdened. So part of PT is related to the fact that parents are over-busy and do not have enough time, like in our case, so you rely on PT. By doing that, we are sure that the child will have her homework written. (Teacher union, Croatia)

This very personal statement is a clear indication of the omnipresent situation in which PT is being used by parents as a result of busy work schedules. In the above case, the pupil had special educational needs and PT was used in order to control teaching and learning processes but also because time constraints of the parents did not allow them to provide sufficient attention to the educational needs of their child. This sentiment was similarly voiced by parents in all contexts and also in the absence of any learning difficulties or special needs, as evidenced in the following words from an Estonian parent:

As parents, we are just so busy with all that we have to do. This means that sometimes we do not have time to pay attention to the specific educational needs of children. Frankly, sometimes I just do not have time or even energy to do that. (Parent, Estonia)

Of special interest in this quote is the parent's use of the phrase 'busy with all that we have to do', a sentiment illustrative of the multiple and complex roles and obligations of today's parents. This viewpoint, and the manner in which this complexity of roles is related to supporting the education of one's children, was similarly observed in other contexts. In many instances, parental lack of time alongside a feeling of parental responsibility resulted in a dissatisfactory outcome for familial processes, as evidenced in the following words of Azerbaijani parent:

I am a business person and work hard. I am really busy with my job; my daughter is in school or with her private tutor group. So, what do we as a family have at the end of the day? No room for free time in the family, neither for her nor for me. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

While the feeling of frustration present in the words of this Azerbaijani parent will be considered further at the end of this chapter, here this statement serves to triangulate with previous findings indicating parental lack of time as a contributor to the decision concerning PT use. Also evident in this quote is the manner in which the parent's lack of available time to dedicate to the personal support of a child's educational and learning needs has a clear reflection on familial processes. This scarcity of time was also often coupled in the collected data with the perceived (in)ability of parents to effectively offer learning support to their children. This second contextual factor was frequently reported by parents as a reason for not helping their children themselves and instead making the decision to use PT services. This is evident in the following words from a Croatian university professor from the Faculty of Teacher Education:

On one side, parents do not have time as they are supposed to work and earn money, and on the other side, they are not competent enough. They feel they cannot help, and instead they search for private tutors. (University professor, Croatia)

This quote suggests that, in a context of scarce time and/or a lack of ability to support their children, parents become more inclined to hire private tutors perceived to be more competent to work with their children. The views of parents in all contexts supported this statement, with some parents reporting that, while they felt able to help their children in elementary school, they lost this ability when children entered higher grades:

When he was in elementary school, I worked with him and we did not use any PT. But now he is in a gymnasium and I faced a situation where I could not help my child even in the first grade – I just do not have the knowledge and skills that are necessary to help. (Parent, Croatia)

Others reported feeling unable to provide support even in elementary school:

As a parent, I could not help her even at the end of basic school. There was nothing else to do but to find a private tutor. (Parent, Estonia)

Together, these two statements depict a common finding across all contexts in which parents reported that, regardless of a wish to support their children with educational tasks, they could not always do so. Further, as pupils progress upwards through educational levels, the ability of parents to help, regardless of their commitment and educational level, seems to decrease.

Apart from issues of time and ability, some parents openly stated that the decision to use PT is made for reasons of convenience. For example, an Azerbaijani parent stated:

To be honest, I would rather spend more time in the office and pay for a tutor than read her textbooks and help her with homework. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

This sentiment is echoed in the words of another Azerbaijani parent who states that he does not have time to support his child in school-related tasks and that, even if time was available, he would choose work over helping his child:

I work two jobs and do not have time. The paradox is that I work so much to earn money for a private tutor. If I could choose between working at home and extra office work, I would rather work more to earn money for PT. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

These statements from Azerbaijani parents portray a situation in which parents are readily relying on the convenience of hiring private tutors. Arguably, in a context in which there is a combination of scarce time, limited ability and available PT supply, the decision to use PT service becomes a convenient choice.

The data from all participating countries further suggested that, even in situations in which parents had the necessary time and ability to support their children, the decision to use PT is made by parents in

order to overcome problems in parent-child communication. Certainly, for families with pre-adolescent and adolescent children, problems in child-parent communication are common, particularly in relation to daily educational assignments such as homework. In supporting a child's learning, Glasman (2007) argues that knowledge of a particular subject does not necessarily help parents in communicating that knowledge to their children due to the more nuanced issues inherent in the communication between a parent and child. By hiring external help, the provision of educational support is freed from the problems of parent-child communication and, as such, can yield better results. This argument is supported in the findings from the present research. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this notion that some form of external, intermediary influence is an effective mechanism for ensuring positive educational results was strongly expressed by parents themselves. This is exemplified in the words of a parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina describing the process of soliciting a private tutor after failing to successfully work with her child individually:

When I sit with my child and try to help her, she is always, like, you don't know that or it is not like that, so I see it is better to engage someone else. When the private tutor is working with her, the story is completely different: she is listening carefully and she is focused. For us, using a third person appeared to be really efficient. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Or in the words of a Croatian parent:

At their developmental stage, kids at the secondary education level do not respect parents. So it is better to search for help outside. And we did so. (Parent, Croatia)

Both statements, similarly characteristic in other participating countries, add to the complexity of the reasons for which parents might opt for PT services. As previously stated, the hiring of a private tutor is seen by parents as a means to evade some of the potentially negative influences arising from the lack of fruitful and constructive

communication between a child and parent. Particularly interesting in the quote from the Bosnian parent is the depiction of the contrast between the manner in which the child rebels against her parent and the manner in which she works with the private tutor. In both cases, the parents' description of their children's criticism of their ability to help and general lack of respect are clearly indicative of the obstacles some parents may face when working with their own children.

While not speaking from a parental perspective, the following words from an educational professional from Croatia effectively summarize some of the more nuanced psychological issues related to the child-parent dynamics influencing the decision to use PT services:

In secondary education, the relationship between parents and children is jeopardised, and there is no absolute trust anymore. It is necessary to introduce a new person who has the required knowledge and approach. Boys and girls during this developmental stage have a need for someone who will work with them. They develop a trust with a tutor, and a relationship is built that does not exist at schools or at home. (Educational professional, Croatia)

Thus far, most of the parental statements presented have clearly indicated that various 'life contexts' faced by parents and families contribute to the decision to use PT services as an alternative to offering support themselves. These obstacles range from a basic lack of time due to work obligations, the multiplicity of roles a parent must fulfil every day, a lack of ability to help one's own children, and the convenience of using PT services to more nuanced issues such as the absence or dysfunctional communication patterns between a child and parent. In most cases, parents framed these reasons positively during interviews, an understandable observation if one assumes that parents act in the interest of their children and themselves.

In contrast, the perspectives of other stakeholders were more critical when discussing these observed reasons for the parental decision to use PT services. The level of criticism offered ranged from subtly expressed disapproval to clear accusations that parental use

of PT signifies parents' avoidance of any responsibility regarding their child's education. These contrasting perspectives will be addressed in the following section.

7.3. Discrepant perspectives on parental roles in the decision concerning the use of PT services

One of the core findings stemming from the analyses of the data from all five contexts was a clear discrepancy between the perspectives of parents and other stakeholders concerning the reasons for which parents decide to use PT services. This is particularly interesting in light of the fact that most participants, in addition to holding certain professional roles, were also parents themselves. This duality of parental and professional roles was clearly evident in the analyses of stakeholder responses. Namely, any discussion concerning a personal situation was more consistent with the perspectives of parents presented in the previous section, suggestive of some degree of understanding of the decisions and obstacles parents face when considering their children's educational issues. In contrast, when stakeholders assumed their professional roles, more critical perspectives concerning the role of parents in the decision concerning PT use were more common and sometimes even approached feelings of contempt towards parental behaviour.

In general, the findings suggest that parents and other stakeholders expressed similar views concerning the reasons influencing a parent's choice to use PT services rather than supporting the learning needs of their children themselves. This consonance of views was observed in all participating countries and is succinctly summarized by an Estonian policy maker:

There are families who are very busy with work and who do not have time for their children. Even though the parents could help their child with homework, they are very busy with work and it is clearly more convenient for them to use private tutors. The child works better with a stranger, takes things more seriously than with her own mother. The authority is different. (Educational governance – ministerial level, Estonia)

Interestingly, this statement includes all of the elements related to the parental decision to use PT services that were revealed in the previously presented analyses of parental perspectives. Once again, the reasons contributing to a parent's decision to use PT services are firmly established as those related to limited time, a lack of perceived ability, increased convenience and hiring a tutor in order to compensate for issues in child-parent communication. This concise and analytic identification of reasons was clearly evident in the responses of stakeholders from other contexts.

Perhaps the more interesting finding arising from the analyses of perspectives of other stakeholders is the manner in which they differed from those of parents. More specifically, the responses of these stakeholders differed from parental perspectives in the attribution of responsibility for the decision to use PT services and the judgment placed on this decision. In some cases, the parental decision to use PT services was justified, an opinion illustrated in the following statement from a school principal from Croatia:

For all those children who have objective problems, it is easier if they have learning support. Parents are typically not experts in such problems, they do not have time, so children are searching for help, and PT yields good results. (Principal, Croatia)

The ability of PT services to provide expertise instruction and assist children with specific learning needs was one of the situations in which the decision to use PT was positively viewed. In these instances, stakeholder statements were mostly descriptive and void of any clear criticism. In other cases, stakeholders attempted to contextualize the parental decision to use PT services by placing it in a wider societal framework. This is illustrated in the following, somewhat critical quote from a Bosnian politician:

We live in a world of disturbed values, where people continuously struggle for existence. Because of that, parents began to neglect their own children. They are not involved in their educational process. They

don't follow the child's progress at school so children start to get bad grades. The thing they can do is to engage someone who will solve those problems and that someone is a private tutor. Of course, there are also parents who want more for their children and that 'more' can't be provided by the formal system so they opt for PT. (Member of Parliament, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This statement is representative of many observed amongst stakeholders, in which there is a clear criticism of parental approaches to supporting their children's education, characterized here as neglectful and with minimal active involvement and monitoring of children's progress. At the same time, however, the participant attributes these negative elements to the wider social changes that have occurred in his country over the last 20 years.

The majority of other perspectives were sharply critical of the parental reasons perceived to be behind the decision to use PT services, attributing responsibility for this decision solely to parents themselves. This critical position was evident across all contexts. In Estonia, where participants generally expressed the lowest levels of criticism towards parents, a pupils' representative criticizes parents for using PT as a matter of convenience:

It is easier to work an hour and earn the money than to work with your own child. It is because you are either used to not having time for your children and you do not have this time because of work. In the end it is easier 'to buy' a teacher and to simply get this thing off your list. (Pupil, Estonia)

Clearly, this statement contains a sharp criticism of parental behaviour. Of particular relevance is the stakeholders' use of the verb 'to buy', which alludes to the financial nature of the decision to use PT services, and his use of the expression 'get this thing off your list', suggestive of a position that parents lack true commitment to children's education.

These opinions are similarly evident in the words of a representative from an Estonian Association of Mathematics Teachers:

For me, the parental reasoning is simple: 'I do not have time and I do not have the money. I hire a teacher who I know is good, whom the child can go to. It is a question of my own convenience.' However it is not so simple as it has happened lately that the child's only contact with the parent is the pocket money left on the table. (Teacher, Estonia)

While neatly summarizing parental reasoning behind the decision to use PT services, this statement also offers a subtle criticism of the apparent lack of interaction between parents and children and, as such, positions PT as a mechanism catering to a child's educational needs when parents are unable or unwilling to do so. As with the previous quote, the use of the phrase '*pocket money left on the table*' emphasizes the fiscal nature of PT use while also serving as a succinct metaphor of the participant's perspective regarding the nature of the interaction between children and parents.

In all other contexts, similarly critical views of parental behaviour in relation to the decision to use PT services emerged. This is clearly exemplified in a somewhat harsh attribution from an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Parents are not working enough with their children. It is easier to pay someone than to invest additional effort and sit and work with their own children. In my opinion, that is the problem, because I see the parental role in education as crucial. (Educational governance – ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Once again, the stakeholder's criticism of parental behaviour is evident, where parents' reliance on the convenience of paying for PT services as a substitute for the investment of personal effort is viewed as a failure to fulfil the parental role. Indeed, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this criticism was evident amongst most stakeholders and was often related to an inability to fulfil vital parental duties. Perhaps the most negative assessment of the parental reasons influencing the decision to use PT services was given by Croatian respondents, who repeatedly described parents' decision to hire private tutors as

evidence for a lack of responsibility. This negative opinion is clearly observed in the following words from a school principal in an elite gymnasium:

Parents are taking PT when their child gets a B, and of course if he gets a C or D. I think this is totally irresponsible on the parents' side, because they do not motivate the child to do and to learn something by himself...Parents are just covering themselves with that...Of course they want to help the child, but with PT they just want to remove the responsibility from their back. They want to say: I have done what I could, I am paying for PT. (Principal, Croatia)

Or in the words of a Croatian educational professional:

The relationship between parents and children is lost....Parents run away from the responsibility and easily transfer it to someone else, and pay for their loyalty to their children. (Educational professional, Croatia)

In both of these intriguing and very critical quotes, the respondents argue that the decision to use PT services serves as a displacement of parental responsibility for children's education to a different sphere. Of particular interest in the first quote is the respondent's use of the phrase *'just covering themselves'* and, even more interestingly, the depiction of the parent's decision to hire a private tutor as a half-hearted attempt to take responsibility for their children's education. The response from the second stakeholder similarly depicts this position, and additionally raises an interesting issue in its use of the phrase *'pay for their loyalty to their children'*, implying that parents protect their self-image as effective parents through paid PT services. Indeed, in both statements, the respondents imply that parents are using PT services to preserve the image of a caring and responsible parent, while at the same time not actually being able to support their children themselves.

This negative evaluation of parental behavior is supported by the responses from participants in Azerbaijan. In his discussion of PT as

'the easy way out', an Azerbaijani school principal argues that this approach is one increasingly adopted by parents in all facets of parenting:

Today, parents are so busy they do not have any time for their own children. You have to call at least two times to have a parent come to the school. And then what? I tell him about his child's educational problems and he asks how much? (Principal, Azerbaijan)

This quote clearly illustrates a sentiment that some parents have little or nearly no active interest in the education of their children. The result, as argued by another Azerbaijani school principal, is that parents rely on PT to solve all educational problems. However, in doing so, parents accept no active responsibility or interest in understanding and monitoring the teaching and learning activities occurring during private lessons:

Most parents do not look so deeply at how tutors work with their children... Unfortunately, today's parents are not willing to make the effort to understand their children and how they learn. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

Georgian respondents were similarly critical of the decision-making processes of parents in relation to PT use, a position that is clearly, and perhaps surprisingly, evident in the words of a Georgian PT provider whose clients are the very parents she is directly criticizing:

The main interest of parents is to keep their children satisfied. They simply don't have enough competence and time to evaluate my work. Most of the time, I have a feeling that they are also not that interested in what is going on with their children. (PT provider, Georgia).

As stated at the outset of this section, the responses of other 'non-parent' stakeholders concerning the use of PT services as a result of absent or ineffective child-parent communication were consistent with the perspectives offered by parents concerning this issue. How-

ever, while parental perspectives focused on communication issues related solely to the educational sphere, the responses from other participants suggested that difficulties in communication were more widespread. The perspectives of private tutors themselves, who are in a position to evaluate the educational needs of their pupils and speculate about the reasons behind the decision to use PT services, are particularly interesting in this respect. In a personal perspective, an educational expert from Croatia describes his role when working as a private tutor:

I was tutoring some children whose parents sent them to PT because they wanted someone to sit behind their children when they were learning. Otherwise, these children did not need PT; they could learn alone, but they need somebody who is older, who might sit next to them and tell them 'You've done it right', and motivate them. Parents should be in the place of these tutors, but parents did not have time and used PT as a form of care for children. (Educational professional, Croatia)

This quote suggests that, in some cases, PT services take on a more 'psychological' or 'caregiving' role rather than one that is purely 'educational'. As such, PT serves a wider function than being solely educational, replacing elements often present in the family setting, such as the discussion of successes and challenges, parental monitoring of school work and other activities of the child or the provision of general support. In a somewhat humorous manner, this notion was similarly evident in the words of an Estonian PT provider who was also a former teacher:

In my opinion, some pupils come here because they have communication problems at home. I tell them: you come here to learn and not to talk. But you know what they reply? Don't worry; my parents are also satisfied when you just talk to me. (PT provider, Estonia)

This quote raises the idea that both children and parents are somewhat aware that the educational aims of PT can, at times, become

secondary. In fact, respondents also reported that one reason behind the decision to use PT services is that it is perceived as a productive and general way to structure children's free time. This finding is in line with hypotheses put forward by Bray and Kwok (2003) about the patterns of PT use by some parents and pupils in Hong Kong. In these cases, the purpose of PT becomes more tightly related to maintaining control over one's children and securing their safety when the parent is unable to do so oneself. By investing in PT services, parents satisfy themselves that children fulfill their educational obligations and spend their time more constructively and safely. While parental perspectives on this matter were generally framed in a positive manner, other respondents provided a more negative opinion, identifying the use of PT as a method for structuring children's free time as a form of child-minding, at times referred by respondents as '*babysitting*'. In the following interview excerpts, a quote from a Croatian parent speaking about her 16 year old son is followed by a contrasting statement from a university professor from the same country:

At least with a tutor I know where he is and what he does. I mean, he could be somewhere else doing I do not know what. So in a way it is also an issue of me knowing what happens and his whereabouts. (Parent, Croatia)

PT can be viewed as a prolongation of babysitting, or securing kids when parents are working. Parents are generally glad to transfer their parental role onto someone else for a modest sum of money. (University professor, Croatia)

While this use of PT services is most likely limited to a small number of instances, the blurring of boundaries between academic tutor and caregiver here is an illustration of the use of PT by some parents and children. More importantly, these quotes indicate the extreme discrepancy in views between parents and other stakeholders regarding the parental role in the education of their children.

7.4. Conclusion

The evidence provided in this chapter offers a strong argument in favour of the conceptualisation of the decision concerning the use of PT services as a relationship between the perspectives of the formal system of education and the educational aspirations of pupils and their parents. The results firmly and unambiguously establish that parents play a crucial role in this decision for their children, as they are the ones who both seek and receive information from the formal system of education and are in the position to set and influence the educational aspirations of their children. The data analyses demonstrated that an important influence on the parental inclination towards the decision to use PT services is the perceived shortcomings within the formal system. Whereas previous chapters provided evidence regarding parental perspectives on specific elements within formal systems of education, the discussion in this chapter most clearly captured a more general feeling of dissatisfaction. Perhaps unsurprisingly, other stakeholders in all countries similarly held the view that the perceived lack of quality of educational provision offered within the formal system of education influences the parental decision to use PT services. In light of these perceived shortcomings, parents view PT as an adequate method for controlling and ameliorating the teaching and learning processes their children experience at school and as a tool to adjust competences and educational experiences to the aspirations they hold. Indeed, some parents even expressed an almost deterministic stance towards the necessity of using PT services in order to compensate for the quality of teaching and learning processes offered by the formal system of education. This was especially evident in the case of Georgian and Azerbaijani parents. In many ways, the parental perspective revealed here indicates that the decision concerning the use of PT services is viewed as a facet of their general responsibility for the education of their children.

An examination of the question as to why parents opted for the services of private tutors instead of providing support to their own children additionally offered interesting insight into the decision concerning the use of PT services. On the whole, the parental perspective suggests that PT is chosen as a preferred alternative primarily to overcome ex-

perienced 'life contexts' (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). PT was also perceived as a solution for families in which parents do not have the time, ability, or desire to personally oversee the educational needs of their children. In addition, PT was also reported to act in ways beyond simply offering individual instruction or new knowledge, but also as a method for structuring children's time. In these instances, PT services are often paid for even when not academically necessary.

Although the application of PT services to meet a variety of needs was generally valued by parents, the use of PT services for non-educational reasons was negatively evaluated by most other stakeholders. On the whole, parents defended the use of private tutors as mediators between themselves and their children by stressing the benefits of such a solution to family relationships and pupils' learning. In contrast, stakeholders from other spheres were more likely to view this trend as a negative transfer of parental responsibility.

Analyses of the differences across participating countries revealed that, on the whole, the use of PT for such mediational purposes was criticized the least in Estonia and most highly criticized in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Georgia and Azerbaijan, while parents were similarly criticized for lacking the time, competence, or motivation to help their children, the use of PT services was, on the whole, less frequently associated with non-academic activities such as structuring time, checking homework, or providing motivation. Parents additionally argued that not only is a private tutor more knowledgeable about the specific subject matter, he or she also represents a different source of authority better able to work with children during difficult secondary school years. In contrast, other stakeholders criticized parents for the amount of time and effort they put into working personally with their children, often describing parents who paid for PT services as 'taking the easy road' and transferring parental responsibility to others. Interestingly, however, few stakeholders raised the suggestion that parents might approach the school for the provision of extra help. Arguably, this is indicative of a generally held view that seeking the type of learning support typically provided by private tutors from more formal settings such as schools is not a feasible option. The exception to this perspective might be in the case of select elite schools more willing to offer individualized forms of support.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE WIDER SOCIETAL SPHERE AND THE DECISION CONCERNING THE USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES

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This chapter explores the influences of various elements stemming from the wider societal sphere on the decision concerning the use of private tutoring (PT) services. In order to position these elements within the larger conceptual framework proposed in Chapter Two, it can be hypothesised that such socially-derived factors influence the perspectives of both pupils and parents regarding the formal system of education and additionally have an effect on their educational aspirations.

Elements stemming from the wider socio-cultural sphere have been previously recognised in the literature as potential influences on the decision concerning PT use and are often used to explain differences in the scope and patterns of PT use in different contexts, countries and parts of the world (Bray, 2003). Among these elements, values attached to education and the instrumentality of education for fulfilling personal goals are probably those discussed most frequently (Bray, 2006). Across the world, members of various societies share the belief that education is a valuable, future-oriented investment that can generate high rates of private return (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004; Dang, 2007). However, it is assumed that societies differ in the strength of the relationships between achievement at each educational level and later life outcomes. It has been further argued that in societies in which the importance assigned to education as a tool for social mobility and economic advancement of the individual is high, families are more inclined to use PT services than in those societies where economic and social rewards from education and PT are lower (Bray, 2003; Mazawi, Sultana and Bray, 2013).

The levels of competitiveness within a society and within an educational system, elements closely related to the value placed on education and the importance of educational achievement for future life, additionally contribute to the decision concerning the use of PT services (Bray, 2003). Empirical evidence from different contexts has confirmed that PT is driven by a competitive educational climate that is often most evident at critical points of educational transitions (Bray, 2006; Dang, 2007). During these periods, in which a selection process often takes place, families strive to maintain or improve the position of their children and might decide to use PT services in order to assure the fulfilment of educational aspirations.

Some authors have also recognised the role of social influence in the decision concerning PT use and have emphasised the tendency of families to follow others in the use of PT services. Ireson (2004) and Ireson and Rushforth (2005) explored the emergence of PT-related social norms in some contexts and related the use of PT services to social pressures. These authors claim that many parents felt under pressure to conform to the actions of others and provide tutors for their children because they knew others were doing the same.

As similar elements from the wider socio-cultural sphere drive the demand for PT in different societies, Bray & Silova (2006) reported that in the post-socialist countries of Central and South Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union many families viewed education as a way to escape the hardships of the deteriorating economies of the transformation period and treat PT as a long-term investment strategy intended to ensure that their children enter tertiary education and have better opportunities on the labour market. However, the authors claimed that a different dimension of socio-cultural factors had emerged in this region due to the distinctive features of the political, economic, and social transformations occurring over the previous 20 years. A related observation has been made by Murawska & Putkiewicz (2005), who have argued that families view PT as an effective mechanism to adapt to the new systems and new realities of post-socialist societies, and by Silova & Bray (2006), who observed that: *'After the collapse of communism, the image of the 'free and*

uniform education' began to crumble, as PT appeared increasingly to supplement and, in some cases, substitute for mainstream schooling as a more flexible, effective, and prompt response to student needs in a new sociopolitical environment/.../many families embraced PT as a long-awaited opportunity for educational choice that was never available during the socialist period. At the same time, however, many families insisted on safeguarding the socialist legacy of a free, equitable education system that would reduce and eventually eliminate the need for private tutoring....' (Silova & Bray, 2006, p. 45)

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, the focus of the discussion is on an exploration of changes occurring in this transitional period to the public discourse surrounding the PT phenomenon. It is argued that the parallel processes of expanding PT use, increasingly open communication and increasing visibility of PT in the public sphere changed the public image of PT and lay the foundation for the development of an increasingly common view of PT as a normal and even necessary educational activity. The second section of this chapter explores the notion of PT as a normative behaviour and the ways in which this contributes to the familial decision concerning the use of PT services. The third section of this chapter examines the influences of a shifting public discourse surrounding PT and the normative nature of PT use on the decision concerning PT use. Here, the tendencies of pupils and parents to conform to the 'PT norm' and the manner in which social influence can be powerful in convincing families to follow the decisions and activities of others will be examined. The fourth section presents participants' perspectives regarding the relationship between the perceived instrumentality of education for fulfilling personal future goals and the decision to use PT services. This section is guided by the idea that families invest in PT to increase the probability that their children will be successful within the educational system, thereby gaining access to higher educational levels that guarantee a greater return in the future.

Finally, the last section of this chapter relates PT use with the level of competitiveness within educational systems and societies as a whole. Here, it will be argued that the demand for PT increases as

a result of intense competition for educational opportunities and that families treat PT as a strategy for increasing or maintaining their children's competitive advantage within the formal education system.

8.1. Changes to the public discourse surrounding the PT phenomenon

Despite a lack of reliable longitudinal or cross-sectional data as empirical support, it might be argued that, in all research contexts, the PT phenomenon has had a long tradition dating back to communist times. During the transitional period following the fall of communist regimes in such contexts, both the scope and visibility of PT has been shown to have increased (Silova & Bray, 2006). Confirmation of such changes emerged in the data collected in the present study, as exemplified in the following words from a Croatian PT provider and an expert from the Pedagogical Institute in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

When I used to go to school, only a few pupils took PT lessons, those were the 'dumb ones', I mean the so-called 'dumb ones'. Since then it just grows and now you have a situation that almost everyone takes lessons. (PT provider, Croatia)

Before, children used to hide that they are using PT services because it was perceived as something reflecting your lower intellectual level – meaning that only students who were not so smart needed PT. But today things are totally different – everybody could be a user.... Furthermore, children are speaking openly about PT. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In acknowledging the widening scope of PT, both quotes suggest that PT was previously perceived as a stigmatised educational endeavour intended mostly for less able pupils experiencing difficulties in fulfilling even the minimal educational requirements set within a formal system. Some authors (Murawska & Putkiewicz, 2005; Silova & Bray, 2006; Silova, 2009) attribute this failure to acknowledge the

existence of PT, and the absence of any open discussion regarding the PT phenomenon, to the socialist and communist legacy in which the school is viewed as an ideal institution and education as an impeccable, free and just system espousing equal educational opportunities for all. As such, any acknowledgement of the existence of PT could be interpreted as an admission of inefficiencies and imperfections existing within the state educational system (Silova & Bray, 2006; Silova, 2009). In such a context, PT was officially ignored and frowned upon as unwarranted and depicted in the public as a socially unacceptable and even shameful practice eroding the values of the system. In light of this strong association with the stigma of underachievement and its perceived threat to the idealistic visions of education and schools, it is perhaps not surprising that PT attendance was not openly discussed among peers and families.

Alongside numerous changes in the social sphere, the shift in the dominant political and economic models was also evident in the manner in which PT became increasingly visible and discussion concerning the PT phenomenon gradually opened in public spheres. This shift is evident in the following quote from a State Secretary for Elementary Education in Croatia:

We just started talking loudly about using PT in our society. It was a theme before, but it was solved in quiet. Now the system is very developed and networked, so parents can easily find a tutor, if not directly through the regular teacher's recommendation then through some other channels. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Croatia)

This emergence of a more open discussion concerning PT is further evident in the words of an educational expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Students are recommending tutors to each other; they know who is good for what. It isn't something that is being hidden anymore; everyone is talking about that openly. There are also teachers who are

advising their students to take additional PT lessons, sometimes they even recommend private tutors. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

These excerpts clearly portray how PT has become a socially accepted and widely embraced practice that is discussed openly and extensively amongst parents, pupils, teachers and tutors. This change in public discourse and the growing acceptance of PT services as a legitimate educational tool, an emerging trend evidenced throughout this book, is characterised by an active search for information and advice by pupils and parents regarding PT service options and individual providers. In most cases, this advice is sought from peers, family friends and acquaintances, but pupils and parents also frequently consult teachers or look to other sources of information. Namely, in addition to personal communication regarding PT services and the use of both open and 'hidden' social networks, pupils and parents have become increasingly exposed to the advertising campaigns of PT providers. The following frank assessment of a Croatian PT provider illustrates this:

When we started the PT business in 1997, there was only one provider besides us, and a few pupils were attending our courses. As time passed by, we've launched quite aggressive campaigns with posters in schools, memos in public transportation etc., and I have an impression that this created in pupils' minds a need for preparatory courses, and the notion that pupils will fail at entrance exams if they were not attending our courses... Today it is a mass phenomenon... And I think that, in some way, we have induced it with our constant advertising... Everybody begins to think: If I go there, my chances will be higher, so it is better to go... Today our society perceives preparatory courses as something you should not miss. (PT provider, Croatia)

While openly admitting that the advertising strategy of his company takes advantage of pupil and parental anxiety and fears regarding education, a theme covered later in this chapter, the words of this

Croatian PT provider also confirm the notion of PT's increased visibility. Furthermore, this statement indirectly acknowledges the changing position of education and educational services in society. In fact, by demonstrating the invasive marketing influences on pupils' views regarding the need for PT support, the above quote is illustrative of a worrying drift towards the increasing marketization and commodification of education.

On the whole, the widening scope of the PT phenomenon, as well as the emergence of a more open discussion and shifting public discourse regarding PT, signifies that PT has gradually become a normative behaviour - an educational activity embraced and perceived by the majority as an appropriate course of action in certain educational contexts. The following section explores this notion further, and provides evidence from the present study to support its claim.

8.2. PT as a normative behaviour

Throughout the interviews and focus groups, participants referred to using PT services as a 'normal' or even 'necessary' activity for every pupil, as evidenced in the words of a Georgian parent:

Children in private schools need tutors as much as children from state schools. There is no difference. Thus private tutoring is the only way to get sufficient results to enter higher education. I do not see it as an alternative; it is simply the only option for everyone. (Parent, Georgia)

The omnipresence of PT use and the perception of its 'necessity' and 'normality' were similarly reported to be present in Azerbaijan, a country demonstrated to have a very high incidence of PT in the 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' project:

Everybody thinks that taking PT lessons for their children is normal. Everybody recommends it. Teachers also encourage tutoring. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

The same perspective resonates particularly clearly in the response of another Azerbaijani participant, who reported that:

Private tutoring has become 'normal' or a 'tradition' in our society. The fact that PT is necessary for university admissions, for example, is a 'common opinion'. (Pupil, Azerbaijan)

Similar positions were also evident in countries exhibiting a lower incidence of PT use. The following interview excerpt from a Bosnian stakeholder illustrates clearly the process through which the notion of the necessity of using PT services is spread among peers and families:

In their classes, children see that PT is becoming more and more common and they are starting to believe that it is necessary. Then they pass on their opinions to their parents, who also start to believe that PT is a must. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The above quotes support the claim that the decision to use PT has become almost normative. This 'normalisation' of PT use is evident in all contexts through reports of an increasingly common view that PT is an appropriate, useful, and to some extent even desirable educational activity for achieving personal educational aspirations. Undoubtedly, this shift in perspectives regarding PT, from a service intended only for pupils of lower abilities towards a service sought and welcomed by most pupils (including high achievers), is quite substantial. In addition, this shift, having occurred over the last twenty years, is indicative of the manner in which norms change in response to changing societal circumstances.

Together with the ever more open and public communication regarding PT and the invasive marketing efforts of PT providers discussed earlier, the increasingly normative nature of PT use might be argued to represent a powerful source of social influence on the familial decision concerning the use of PT services. More specifically,

the decision to use PT might be strongly informed by observing the decisions and choices of others and considering the perceived benefits of PT services for achieving educational success. The following section explores this in further detail.

8.3. Shifts in the public discourse and the normative nature of PT on the decision concerning the use of PT services

Across a number of participating countries, participants spontaneously discussed the effects of the increasingly open communication about PT, its increased visibility in society, the emergence of invasive marketing techniques to promote PT services, and the increasingly normative nature of PT on the decision concerning PT. This is consistent with the observations made by Ireson (2004) and Ireson and Rushforth (2005), who stated that social influence and social norms with regards to PT may encourage or discourage parents to seek supplementary tutoring for their children.

Often referred to by participants as a social pressure, these social influences were clearly related to the decision concerning the use of PT services. This notion is evident in the following interview excerpt from a Croatian policy maker:

The thinking of the people in respect to PT usually follows the pattern: 'I've seen what others are doing, and I will do the same'. I mean, these people feel that they have to behave in a certain way, but usually not because they see the value of PT in itself, but because they follow others. Later they start to believe that they made the right decision... (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Croatia)

The above quote clearly illustrates that, in some cases, opting for PT services can be considered conformist behaviour directly affected by the actions of others. A similar position is evident in the words of an Estonian participant:

Many pupils have this idea – my friends are taking PT classes, and I will also go and see if it is something for me. (Educational governance – Local level, Estonia)

Again, the above quote confirms the notion that the behaviour of others significantly affects the familial decision regarding PT use. In doing so, families might not only follow others in deciding to participate in PT, but also accept and internalise the notion that attending PT classes is necessary and worthy of financial investment.

The following words of a Croatian secondary school mathematics teacher illustrate how the intense communication and normative nature of PT use influences the decision concerning PT use:

Pupils are talking about taking PT classes all the time. They are asking each other questions like: Why don't you take PT? Why don't you try tutor XY, as she is really helpful? This clearly then informs not only if someone will use PT, but what kind and with whom as a tutor. (Teacher, Croatia)

Of interest in this quote is the suggestion that social influence plays an important role not only in the decision to conform to the actions of others but also in the internalisation of the notion that PT is necessary and in determining specific details related to PT use, such as service type, form and even individual tutor. Arguably, pupils and parents are prone to accept and value the information received from others as evidence about the quality, appropriateness and usefulness of PT services.

The following words of a Croatian university professor at the Faculty of Teacher Education also point to the possibility that parents and pupils use the beliefs and decisions of others as an important element guiding their own decisions and beliefs:

People start panicking when kids come home from school and inform parents that everyone in the class is attending PT and valuing it as useful. They are starting to realise that it is important to use PT services for their children as well. (University professor, Croatia)

The above quote also suggests that parents and pupils are often exposed to information about PT well before they have any active

involvement in the search for PT services. It seems that, in addition to the fact that families are being increasingly exposed to the public promotion of PT, they are frequently presented in their closer social surroundings with the message that PT is an appropriate educational service necessary in many problematic situations that might be encountered during school years.

Finally, evidence concerning PT use as a result of social influence suggested that resisting social expectations and pressures to use PT, or 'standing apart from the crowd', might be more difficult in some social contexts than in others. In Azerbaijan and Georgia, where there is widespread practice of teachers actively encouraging pupils to take PT lessons, resistance is much more difficult. In these societies, where social pressure is quite overt and direct and frequently stems from teachers themselves, pupils are more likely to conform to such pressure as a result of the power asymmetry in the pupil-teacher relationship. This idea is reflected in the following observation from an Azerbaijani educational expert:

There is a tremendous pressure for taking PT from teachers, relatives, peers. People are talking all the time about it, and everyone recommends it to others. Teachers are sometimes also forcing pupils to take PT. It is common that the parents' decision to use PT is based on their fear that children might become segregated from the majority of his peers, or rejected by their teachers if they will not use PT. (Educational professional, Azerbaijan)

The above quote describes how teachers sometimes use their position to promote PT amongst pupils and to persuade them to take PT services. In this regard, the quote suggests that this misuse of the power imbalance between teachers and pupils and of teachers' educational authority may play a powerful role in influencing familial decision to use PT.

A similar situation is described by a Georgian educational professional working at a Teacher Professional Development Centre:

Maybe teachers don't force children explicitly to take private lessons from them, but there is a pressure, e.g. there was a case when a poor parent complained that he had to take his child to a tutor, because in his class all students had tutors and he didn't want his child to be an exception. (Educational professional Georgia)

In both statements, the participants' words are indicative of the *normative social influence* (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955) that might motivate parents to seek the services of PT tutors in order to ensure that their children are not excluded or rejected by others. This is perhaps most clearly exemplified in the latter quote, which suggests that families coming from underprivileged backgrounds attempt to adapt to the behaviours of the majority in order to avoid possible disapproval, rejection and exclusion of their children and to secure a favourable position for their children amongst their peers. In such situations, in which a normative influence is operating, these parents likely believe that following others and using PT may have some positive social consequences, or that not following others may have negative consequences. Arguably, adopting a socially desirable belief system and consequently opting for PT services, makes it easier for these families to be accepted into a desirable social circle.

The findings presented thus far have demonstrated that the decision concerning the use of PT is, to some extent, influenced by social expectations and pressures, as well as by increasing public promotion of PT services. The view of PT as a 'normal' or even 'necessary' educational service was repeatedly emphasised. It might be argued that such a perception, present in all researched contexts, implies a high regard and value education in general. The following section explores the relationship between the decision concerning the use of PT services and this instrumental value attached to education.

8.4. The instrumental value of education and the decision concerning the use of PT services

Across the world, there is a common belief that education, and tertiary education in particular, is instrumental for the improvement of employment opportunities, social advancement and general success

in life. Empirical evidence confirms that private returns in the labour force are generally higher to tertiary education than to secondary education (Brunello, Comi & Lucifora, 2000). Furthermore, the private return to tertiary education compared with secondary education is growing in almost all countries in the world today (Brunello, Comi & Lucifora, 2000; Dang, 2007). In countries of the post-socialist block, rates of return to education also increased during the transition from communism to a market system and are generally comparable to those obtained in high-income countries (Silova & Bray, 2006). Based on this information, it is valid to say that, in the global context, education can be viewed as a worthwhile investment generating high private returns (Psacharopoulos & Patrinos, 2004). Within a given society, the decision to use PT services might be influenced by these differentials in salaries across groups of people with different educational levels (Kwan-Terry, 1991; Bray & Kwok, 2003). In fact, Bray (2003) claims that the differences in return rates related to tertiary education may explain the variance in the scope of PT in various societies. Namely, in societies in which the economic and social rewards from extra levels of schooling and PT are larger, families would be especially motivated to invest in PT to help their children stay longer in education.

Although families are certainly not informed about the empirical evidence and models of return rates to various levels of education, they are likely able to reach a similar conclusion concerning the instrumental value of education through casual observation and everyday experiences (Bray, 2006). Arguably, therefore, awareness that investment in education can generate substantial private returns and enhance children's educational and employment opportunities might be related to the decision to use PT services. More specifically, these elements might be seen to represent a fundamental factor informing the educational aspirations held by pupils and parents that, in turn, are directly related to the decision concerning the use of PT services.

The data collected in the present study confirms these arguments, which clearly suggest that education is perceived as instrumental for pupils' future life. Further, the link between the instrumental value attached to education and the decision concerning the use of PT

services was considerably strong. Such thinking was frequently evident in the Estonian data set, as seen in the following interview excerpt with an Estonian educational expert:

From an early age, families start worrying and thinking about how to help their child to succeed in the long term. And there is this very keen attitude that if I fail to do something, I am guilty in front of my child. (Educational professional, Estonia)

And similarly, in the words of a Croatian university professor from the Teachers' Faculty:

Parents are aware that it is easier to cross some barriers in life if you have some diploma. We as parents claim that we are more secure if we monitor our children, if we are taking them to PT...Many of us cannot bear the possibility that our children might not finish their studies, and we would do anything to gain the diploma. (University Professor, Croatia)

While pointing to the commitment of families to secure the most positive educational opportunities and success for their children, the above quotes also speak about the anxieties of today's parents related to their children's future. These tendencies are well recognized in the literature as the parenting model embraced by middle class families (Lareau, 2003; Ball, 2010) and were previously discussed in Chapter Seven.

In other countries, there were also many examples of the parental view that PT was a calculated investment in their children's future and of the significant commitment of parents and children to securing overall educational support. The following quotes from Azerbaijani and Bosnian and Herzegovinian parents represent this dominant position:

Parents want their children to be educated and think about the future. Because today the level of teaching at school is (as it is known to everyone) not adequate, parents have no choice...Everyone thinks that without private tutoring his/her child cannot enter university... (Parent, Azerbaijan)

Last year we used PT services continuously. This year we still haven't started, but we will, because we want to be well prepared for entrance exams for higher education. It is important to achieve good results and to create a good base for further education. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

A similar sentiment is evident in the words of a Georgian Member of Parliament:

Education has a value in our society and people don't hesitate to spend all their savings on the education of their children. (Member of Parliament, Georgia)

Together, the above quotes suggest that parents have a long-term perspective and clearly articulated goals for their children, and are motivated to use PT due to its perceived instrumentality for achieving these goals in the future. Indeed, the sense of a future purpose, alongside a growing recognition of the value of education and the importance of children's educational achievement for future careers and life, all lead families to be intrinsically interested in securing the realisation of such goals. Consequently, parents perceived engaging in PT as instrumental in achieving valued future outcomes and highly appreciate the utility value of the services.

The perceived instrumentality of PT is especially relevant in the educational points which are marked with increased competitiveness and selection processes. The relationship between rising competition in the educational systems and the decision concerning use of PT services is discussed in the following section.

8.5. Rising competition in the educational system and the decision to use PT services

What can I do? I cannot stop this race. I have to earn money to pay for the tutor, and she has to be prepared for university. No choice. (Parent, Azerbaijan)

In its brevity, the above quote from an Azerbaijani parent potentially summarizes the notion that PT services are used by pupils and parents to stay in a competitive position and maintain or improve competitive advantages over others. This is most notably present in the crucial transition points that determine pupils' future educational pathways. The notion that PT is related to the level of competitiveness within a specific society and educational system is well-established in the literature (Bray, 2003, 2006, 2011). Bray (2003) argued that the prevalence of PT is related to the extent to which individual schools and, more broadly, societies are competitive. The same author (Bray, 2011) more recently re-stated that a general atmosphere of competition in the educational system and labour market may be a strong driving force for PT. The level of competitiveness of an educational system is usually associated with the presence of selective and inflexible models of academic tracking, the existence of high stake external assessment and high levels of selectiveness in the transition points to the next educational levels. Stevenson & Baker (1992) and Baker & LeTendre (2005) related intense competition for future educational opportunities with the existence of a 'tight linkage' between academic performance and later opportunities in higher education and the labour market. These authors argued that pupils and parents are inclined to use PT when there are clear moments of selection within the system (where selection is based on examination performance) and when high-stakes examinations serve as a gate-keeper to future education and labour market opportunities.

In the post-socialist countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, PT has become particularly important in the context of an increasing demand for higher education (Silova & Bray, 2006; Silova, 2007). Between 1989 and 2002, higher educational enrolments doubled in most of these countries (Silova & Bray, 2006). This growth in demand is further illustrated through UNESCO (2011) data on gross enrolment ratios,¹² presented in Table 12 for each participating country.

¹² Gross enrolment ratio in UNESCO statistics is defined as total enrolment within a country, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education.

Table 12. Gross enrolment ratios for tertiary level education in 1999 and 2009

| | 1999 | 2009 |
|------------------------|------|------|
| Azerbaijan | 16 | 19 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | - | 37 |
| Croatia | 31 | 49 |
| Estonia | 50 | 64 |
| Georgia | 36 | 26 |

The data presented in Table 12 clearly demonstrates large differences between countries in enrolment to higher education. In Estonia and Croatia, the population in the official age group to enter tertiary education reaches nearly two thirds and almost one half, respectively. In contrast, less than one fifth of the same group in Azerbaijan enter tertiary education. Furthermore, while both Croatia and Estonia have experienced a growth in enrolment, there was a decline in the percentage of the eligible cohort entering tertiary education in Georgia. This is in contrast to previous evidence from Azerbaijan and Georgia, which indicates that the growth in the number of places in tertiary education is not parallel to the growth in the interest of potential students (Silova & Kazimzade, 2006; Bregvadze, 2012).

In light of the rising demand for tertiary education and the fact that the number of subsidised (state-financed) places available in all five countries is limited, it is not surprising that admission to tertiary education represents a key competitive point within each educational system.

The data from all countries suggest that the decision concerning the use of PT services is influenced by the perception of an intense competition to enter tertiary education, a view reflected in the words of an Azerbaijani representative from the Ministry of Education who explicitly related the use of PT to an increased interest for tertiary study:

Today's parents have a big dream to see their children in higher education. The number of those parents is increasing. If the child was not successful in gaining university admission, students and parents experience frustration and it becomes a family drama. So, this dream

is driving parents to look for PT services, to ensure better preparation for admission exams... (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Azerbaijan)

Similarly, the following words of an Azerbaijani university student suggest that an increase in interest for tertiary study and a wish for upward social mobility has resulted in a growth in competition and the use of PT as a tool in preparation for external exams:

Now everyone wants to apply to university. In the past, a shepherd's son was certain about his career and future. He would make cheese, yoghurt and sell it to people. But now, everyone is moving to cities. Everyone wants to be a doctor, lawyer, or economist. That's why the competition is starting to become fierce. (University student, Azerbaijan)

The above quotes confirm the notion that transition to tertiary education is a focal competitive point which has implications on the scope and characteristics of PT. The importance attached to this transitional point makes pupils and parents particularly vulnerable to social influences stemming from the behaviour and decisions of others and the advertisement of PT services. This perspective is evident in the words of a leading provider of preparatory courses in Croatia who described how PT courses take advantages of pupils' and parental insecurities and anxieties:

...When 15 kids in a gymnasium class start preparatory courses in February, the other 15 kids start panicking and thinking: They are attending a preparatory course! They will succeed! What will happen to me? In that way they are alarming each other. Those who are attending preparatory courses are saying: It is good! I've learnt a lot! I am more prepared now....Automatically, all who can afford it will go too. (PT provider, Croatia)

This is also evident in the words of a Bosnian PT provider:

Certain social pressure exists because if a parent or a pupil is surrounded by others who use PT services, then (s)he is in a way forced to do the same. (S)he does not want to accept that others are having something more or something better. S(he) is afraid and wants to stay in the race. (PT provider, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In both quotes, there is a clear indication of the competitive pressure imposed by the behaviour of others. Arguably, the competitive atmosphere in which pupils evaluate personal educational chances and achievements against the actions and decisions of others can contribute significantly to the decision concerning use of PT services.

Evidence from other countries also suggested that many families seek PT services to maintain or further increase a competitive advantage for pupils who are already successful and privileged. This perspective is evident from an interview with an Estonian PT provider, speaking of a time when she was a teacher:

I had a girl who came to her parent and said that everybody in her school has a private teacher and she also wants one. Then she came to me and I told her that she does not need a PT teacher... It was this social pressure that you need to have a PT teacher; otherwise you cannot do well on tests. (PT provider, Estonia)

This notion is similarly evident in the words of another Estonian participant:

...Pupils are learning at school but also want another opinion, just to be sure. I know that in those schools where there is a great emphasis on high exam results, almost everybody takes additional classes. (Parent, Estonia)

The insecurities of families and the resulting use of PT as a 'just in case' measure was similarly expressed by a Croatian participant:

I expect that a significant number of people will rush to PT, because the main problem is fear. It is not that they cannot do something, they

are afraid. PT acts to reduce parents' fear of pupils' failure. Parents will be ready to pay even if their child knows a lot... because they want to eliminate their fear of failure by doing everything they can. (Educational professional, Croatia)

Together, these quotes provide compelling support for the notion that the decision to use PT services is strongly influenced by the pressures of competitive educational environments and the decisions and actions taken by other families, creating a context in which attending PT lessons has become highly regarded as an aid for securing future educational opportunities. Furthermore, these quotes support the notion that social pressure and a competitive atmosphere influence the decision to use PT services even in cases in which PT might be seen as academically unnecessary.

8.6. Conclusions

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the familial decision concerning the use of PT services is also influenced by various elements stemming from the wider societal sphere, thus confirming previous findings from the literature (Bray, 2003; Ireson, 2004; Silova, Būdienė & Bray, 2006). In all participating countries, the present state of the PT phenomenon, characterized by a widening scope and function of PT services, an opening of public discussion and the resulting growth in the visibility of PT, is in sharp contrast with socialist times. Together, these shifts have contributed to the de-stigmatisation of PT services and even led to the positioning of PT as a socially accepted educational service that is beneficial for fulfilling personal educational aspirations. More importantly, these social developments have contributed to a growing perception that the use of PT services has become a normative behavior for a majority of pupils. Arguably, the normative nature of PT use and the increasing awareness of PT use amongst other pupils imposes a social pressure on parents and pupils to conform to this behavior and to internalize the notion that PT services are necessary and worthy of investment.

These social elements exert their influence on the decision to use PT services by informing parental and pupil perspectives regarding the formal system of education, one of two key elements housed in the conceptual framework of the present study.

The presented evidence supports the notion that, in all participating contexts, education is perceived to have instrumental value for an individual's professional and personal success. This is clearly reflected in the willingness of parents and pupils to exert significant personal and financial effort and even sacrifices in order to maintain a successful educational path and to achieve higher educational levels that generate better life opportunities and higher returns. In such contexts, families welcome PT as a helpful tool to improve the chances of achieving personal educational aspirations. The instrumental value attached to education is a core feature of the educational aspirations of pupils and parents, a second key element of the conceptual framework.

Finally, evidence supported the view that the decision concerning PT is especially driven by the existence of selective and competitive transitional points within the educational systems. The likelihood of the decision concerning PT services is particularly high in the context of high-stake centralised external examinations or the highly selective entrance procedures of higher education institutions critical for gaining admission to tertiary education. Intense competition, resulting from a combination of a rising demand for tertiary study and high educational aspirations on one side and a limited number of places available at tertiary institutions on the other, encourages families to seek advantages for their children and to devise strategies that improve their children's performance and enhance their competitive advantage. In such a context, families regard PT highly as a generally affordable and convenient educational activity that increases pupils' opportunities in the educational market and raises their chances of admission to tertiary education institutions. Arguably, at these highly competitive points, the monitoring of the behaviour of others is most prevalent and, as such, the likelihood of succumbing to social influence to use PT services is highest.

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CHAPTER IX
EQUITY ISSUES RELATED TO THE
USE OF PRIVATE TUTORING SERVICES
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The impact of private tutoring (PT) on educational and social inequalities is often emphasised as one of the most prominent negative implications of the use of PT services (Bray, 1999, 2003, 2009). It is argued that the differences in access and affordability of PT services for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds, as well as differences in gender and place of residence, might result in the unequal positioning of pupils within formal education, leading to differential educational paths and outcomes and to uneven life prospects (Bray, 2011). The proponents of this position further emphasise that paying for PT services may represent a substantial financial burden on lower-income families and that PT might be viewed as a mechanism of more privileged pupils and parents to further extend their privileges (Bray, 2011). Because of the differences in accessibility and/or affordability of services for various groups of pupils and parents, in addition to the ability of wealthier families to secure not only greater quantities, but also better qualities of the services, PT is positioned as a mechanism for maintaining and increasing social stratification (Bray, 2003, 2006). As such, PT is viewed as a phenomenon that might seriously endanger the principles of equity in education and, in extreme circumstances, could also pose a threat to overall social stability (Bray, 1999).

In the OECD report 'No More Failures: Ten Steps to Equity in Education' (Field, Kuczera & Pont, 2007), it is argued that equity in education has two dimensions. The first dimension is fairness, which implies ensuring that personal and social circumstances, such as gender, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, etc., are not

an obstacle to achieving one's educational potential. The second dimension is inclusion, which implies ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all. Both fairness and inclusion are closely related to concepts of equality of opportunities and the equivalent treatment of all pupils in the formal system of education, which are also relevant in the exploration of the PT phenomenon.

The initial PT study 'Monitoring of Private Tutoring' explored the differences in PT use between pupils from families of different socio-economic backgrounds, of different gender and urban-rural locations (Silova, Būdienė and Bray, 2006). The study demonstrated that, in Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Georgia, despite a relatively high scope of PT use, PT services were in general more accessible to pupils from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds (Silova & Kazimzade, 2006; Husremović & Trbić, 2006; Ristić Dedić, Jokić & Jurko, 2006; Matiashvili & Kutateladze, 2006). The same patterns were confirmed in a number of other educational and social contexts, e.g. in Korea (Yi, 2002), Greece (Verdis, 2002), Hong Kong (Kwok 2004), Germany (Schneider 2004), Ireland (Smyth 2009), Poland (Putkiewicz 2005), England (Ireson and Rushforth 2005), etc. Using the OECD's PISA data, Southgate (2009) demonstrated that the effect of socioeconomic status on shadow education varies between countries. However, the reproduction of class through participation in shadow education occurred in 58% of the sampled countries, while the class effect on participation in PT ranged from moderately to highly significant.

In the initial PT study, the difference in the scope of use of PT services of pupils from different backgrounds served as an argument for claiming that differential access to PT reflects, but also potentially exacerbates, social and educational inequalities. There were no significant differences with regards to the location of participants on the rural-urban continuum and *'all countries studied reported rough gender parity in private tutoring use.'* (Silova & Bray 2006, p. 84). Based on this and the data analyses of the present research, which similarly did not indicate differences with regards to gender and location, the focus of this chapter is on the differences between pupils and parents of different socio-economic backgrounds.

Although the initial PT study identified differential access to PT services for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds, its methodological orientation and design did not allow for the in-depth exploration of the equity issues related to PT. As with other studies exploring the PT phenomenon, the investigation was mainly focused on the issue of access to PT services. Furthermore, the quantitative orientation of these studies and their reliance on the students' perspectives in survey data limited the potential for a deep and holistic investigation of the issue. In contrast, the orientation of the present work on qualitative data and a consideration of the diverse perspectives of various educational stakeholders may prove beneficial for the exploration of the relationship between PT use and educational and social equity issues and has the potential to contribute to a more complete understanding of the equity issues related to PT use.

In relating this chapter to the overall conceptual framework, it is important to emphasise that this section takes a broad approach to the exploration of the differences in patterns and reasons behind the decision of families from different socio-economic backgrounds to use PT services. Furthermore, central in the present chapter are the implications of these decisions on the wider society and, in particular, on levels of equity in both wider educational and social spheres.

This chapter has three main sections. First, an analysis of educational stakeholders' perspectives on the differences in access and affordability, patterns of PT use and function of PT for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds is provided. The second section explores the stakeholders' perspectives on the implication of attending PT for pupils' attainment and achievement at various educational levels in the formal education system. Finally, the last section explores stakeholders' perceptions of the relevance of social equity issues in relation to the PT phenomenon and their personal willingness and capacity to deal with these issues.

9.1. Access and affordability of PT services

As previously stated, the initial PT study demonstrated that, while a majority of students used PT services during the final year of secondary education, the level of PT service use was not equal for

all social groups. Specifically, it was found that first year students who perceived their family socio-economic standing as below the national average took PT services less frequently than students who estimated their family welfare as average or above average. In the total sample, the data revealed that PT lessons were used by 41% of students from families of average and above average welfare, compared to 28% of students from families of below average welfare (Silova & Bray, 2006). Among non-consumers of PT, almost one half estimated their family welfare as below the national average, further indicating the limited access of PT to families from lower socio-economic groups (Silova & Bray, 2006). In addition to this evidence demonstrating, in all participating countries, differences in the scope of PT use related to students' family welfare, there was further evidence suggesting that PT was more widespread among first year students whose parents had access to higher education. While the difference in PT use between students whose parents had or had no higher educational experience was relatively small in Azerbaijan (due to the fact that the overall scope of PT use was over 90%), the differences were substantial (over 10%) in Georgia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Silova & Bray, 2006).

The quantitative data demonstrating the wide scope of PT in all countries were supported by the observations of numerous participants in the present research. In all countries, participants were aware of the omnipresence of PT, often claiming that services are used by *'almost every pupil'* at least at some point during their school years. This perspective is evident in the words of an educational expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Parents decide to engage PT tutors when they realise that their children need help. But lately, the PT phenomenon became so widespread... and we could not say that everybody, but a very large proportion of students is using PT services nowadays. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Arguably, the perceived all-encompassing scope of PT in all countries is related to the finding that nearly all research participants reported

having had personal experience with PT services, either as a PT user, a parent of a child relying on PT or a provider of PT services. Furthermore, many participants emphasised that PT services are used widely in their immediate social environment, especially amongst their peers and friends. Arguably, the closeness and salience of participants' experiences with PT influence their tendency to make a judgement about the wide scope of the PT phenomenon. It should be noted, however, that the fact that our participants could readily recall many instances of PT in their social surroundings is probably related to the observation that most of the participants came from more privileged socio-economic backgrounds.

Interestingly, and consistent with the general perception of widespread reliance on PT, most participants did not spontaneously relate the use of PT services with the personal and social circumstances of pupils, such as their socio-economic background, place of residence or gender. Instead, when describing typical PT users, participants usually used descriptors of pupils' individual characteristics related to their motivation for learning in school, educational aspirations, personality traits, academic self-concept and other elements covered in Chapter Six.

However, when directly questioned about the opportunities of pupils and families of different socio-economic standing to participate in PT, participants acknowledged the relation between access to PT and the socio-economic background of pupils. In all participating countries, the issue of difference in accessibility of PT services for pupils and families of different socio-economic standing was related mostly to the participants' observation that PT is not always affordable for poor families. Unsurprisingly, participants identified the financial situation of these families as the most significant reason for not being able to afford PT services. This observation is captured in the following interview excerpt, which concretely illustrates the participant's recognition of the inability of poor families to afford PT services:

The negative side of PT is that it is not accessible to all because it requires a lot of money. It is especially a problem among those who

are at risk of being excluded from school...when parents do not have the money. (Educational governance – Local level, Estonia)

This is further reflected and elaborated upon in an observation from an educational expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

We have a large percentage of the population that is on the edge of survival. For them, buying textbooks and providing basic educational supplies are the big issue, so I don't have to mention how expensive PT is for them. It is simply something that they could hardly afford, without great sacrifice. On the other hand, we have one category of people in our society where money is not a problem and who might go to another extreme; they engage private tutors for their children when it is not even necessary... (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

These words adequately capture the notion that differences in the use of PT among different groups is strongly related to the financial status of families and their ability to provide the financial means to support PT use.

Analyses further suggested that different groups of stakeholders expressed varied levels of awareness of the fact that pupils from different social groups might have unequal opportunity to participate in PT. In general, participants that had direct and closer contact with pupils and teaching and learning processes (e.g. teachers, representatives of teachers' unions, PT providers and pupils) were more sensitive and aware of the inability of poor families to afford PT services. This perspective is evident in the words of a Croatian representative of the National Committee of Pupils:

I am pretty aware that private tutoring is a privilege. When we would analyse the situation in my own class, we could see that 10% of those with the lowest household income cannot attend private tutoring classes or take them only when it is something very serious going on, e.g. when the pupil cannot pass a chemistry exam or something... It is

very difficult for them to secure PT, and they do appreciate it a lot. So, PT is a luxury that discriminates some pupils. (Pupil, Croatia)

Similarly, the words of a Georgian parent who struggles to financially secure assets which would allow his child to have PT lessons confirmed that, for some families, using PT services might be out of reach:

The cost of PT is too high for me. I am afraid that very soon the service will become unaffordable to all of us... You know, prices grow so fast. (Parent, Georgia)

In contrast, participants who did not have daily or direct contact with actual teaching or PT practices demonstrated a tendency to minimise the effect of differing socio-economic backgrounds on PT use. Instead, these stakeholders more frequently expressed the view that PT is a universal phenomenon and that the observed differences in access to PT between different social groups is not substantial. The following interview excerpt from a Croatian politician depicts such a position:

...I believe that a family's financial situation is an issue only when it is at the most negative extreme. Parents are taking PT, irrespective of their financial status, when they realise that their child needs help... They always think: I would rather be hungry than not provide something that is needed for my child. (Member of Parliament, Croatia)

This quote clearly suggests a perspective that, under specific conditions, PT services are affordable for most families. Furthermore, the above quote is also indicative of the participant's recognition of the tremendous determination of families from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds to provide the financial means for securing PT for their children and of the sacrifices these families make in doing so. This is an issue that will be explored later in the chapter.

On the whole, the dominant perspective stemming from different groups of educational stakeholders from all five contexts encompassed

the view that PT services are accessible and affordable to a large majority of pupils, but not for all. In all contexts, the affordability of PT services was viewed to be the result of segmented and competitive PT markets in which there is a sufficient and diverse supply of services. In addition to a diversity of PT service providers, ranging from students to university professors, PT markets are characterised by a variety of service types (some operating in the zone of the grey economy and others functioning legally) and functions and, as a consequence, a wide variance in fees. Together, these elements are indicative of flexible and well-adjusted PT markets that provide opportunities to numerous segments of society by accommodating PT use to individual needs and financial capacities.

This notion of the relationship between the overall affordability of PT services, its scope and the PT market is evidenced in the following frank response from a Croatian PT provider of preparatory courses for tertiary education entrance exams:

It is sad for me to say, but this is a cheap service. Even worse, you can get it for much less than what I am charging if you go to some university student. A service that fits every pocket, I say. (PT provider, Croatia)

In combination with the generally-held perception of the large scope of PT, this is suggestive of a situation in which the main source of equity issues related to PT are perhaps not found in access to PT, but in more subtle and complex elements of its patterns of use. Indeed, in light of the diversified and segmented nature of the PT markets in all participating countries, differences amongst pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds might best be understood through an examination of the differences in the function and usage patterns of PT services. This topic will be explored further in the following section.

9.2. Patterns of PT use and function of PT for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds

In general, the data from all participating countries support the notion that the patterns of PT use and function of PT might be quite different for pupils and families from different socio-economic backgrounds. This, in turn, may have a substantial impact on social and educational inequalities. In this section, issues related to the use of different types of PT tutors and services will be first explored. This will be followed by an integrated discussion concerning the patterns of use and functions of PT services for pupils and families of different socio-economic backgrounds.

Throughout the data analyses, the perceived *quality* and *status* of tutors emerged as one of the more divisive issues in the use of PT between families of different socio-economic backgrounds. Arguably, the *quality* of tutors is reflected in their fees and, consequently, the services of higher quality tutors are more affordable only to families from privileged socio-economic backgrounds. The words from a teacher from Bosnia and Herzegovina are indicative of this notion:

Deciding which private tutor to hire has become like buying cheese at the Sunday market. Parents think the more expensive ones are those of better quality and the cheaper ones are a bit less qualified. Unfortunately, in most cases, the price is not an adequate indicator of quality. (Teacher, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This issue was clearly evidenced in the following, somewhat ironic, statement from an Azerbaijani representative of the Association of School Principals:

If you are a parent who has money, you are probably thinking about a certain private tutor, a tutor recommended by someone. This 'famous' teacher will probably examine your child and will decide to take him or not. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

While pupils from wealthy families are clearly in a position to hire more expensive private tutors, evidence suggests that these pupils additionally benefit from their socio-economic background in securing the highest quality of service. Indeed, although the price of the lessons set by each tutor is generally perceived as a sign of the tutors' quality and as a guarantee of the quality of instruction, some families do not base their decision about tutors only on the service price, but also purposively search for those most highly qualified or competent private tutors. Such tutors are frequently university professors or well-known secondary school teachers, who are the most prestigious amongst certain social circles and recognised in society as being highly successful. The words of an Azerbaijani pupil, speaking about the experiences of her family in hiring a private tutor, demonstrate the tendency of higher class families to choose the 'best' tutors:

Everyone in our family was a doctor. My parents, my grandparents, from both sides....They are monitoring my school work all time. What is happening at school, what are my scores? Why am I not doing well in Literature?...My grandmother came up with the decision that I needed private tutors for humanities. As she said: 'I'll ask my friends who are working in education to find the best tutors. It doesn't matter how much it will cost. This is very important for your future'. So she did it. Now I have two private tutors for English and literature... (Pupil, Azerbaijan)

Several insightful elements are contained in this quote. First, it depicts the tendency of higher class families to continuously monitor and re-examine the quality of their children's learning. Secondly, the opening comments in the statement indicate the social and professional reproduction of specific segments of society. Thirdly, it depicts the involvement of the wider family in decisions concerning issues perceived as relevant to children's future life. Finally, it points to the determination of the family to engage the best tutor, irrespective of the costs. Arguably, these elements combine to influence the manner in which the family searches and secures the services of the most highly-qualified, and often most expensive, private tutor. It is perhaps

reasonable to suggest that this is a process more likely to occur amongst more highly educated and privileged families than in those of lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The interview data from Azerbaijan further indicated that, in this context, people believe that the best tutors are those teachers and professors who are involved in preparing the examinations for external assessment. Although participating in an ethically controversial practice, these tutors are highly valued and sought, as evidenced by the following excerpt from an interview with a provider of group tutoring:

The parents choose a private tutor after checking his/her reputation. They ask if s/he is well known, with a good reputation, if s/he is a testing expert involved in the SSAC (State Students Admission Committee). In other words, 'bunker' tutors. The price of our courses ranged between 30 - 50 AZN (30 - 50€), but courses taught by bunker tutors cost much more (from 70 AZN to 200 AZN) and take place at tutors' homes. (PT provider, Azerbaijan)

This was confirmed in a very frank statement from an Azerbaijani school principal who previously held a high position in State Students Admission Committee:

I used to work at the State Students Admission Committee. In 1994 I was the person who was managing the test writing process. At the time we were inviting experts, mostly teachers, to train them on test and item development. Later, we asked these teachers to prepare tests for upcoming examinations. In the beginning, everything was strictly confidential. But soon, these so called 'bunker' teachers became highly sought after and high-priced private tutors. (Principal, Azerbaijan)

This complex and intriguing statement, describing potentially corruptive practices, serves here as an indication of the diversification of PT service providers and of the opportunity for those from more

privileged socio-economic positions to hire tutors who may have information not readily available to others.

In contrast, while wealthy families are capable and ready to invest in the best or most informed private tutors on the market, pupils from underprivileged backgrounds are limited to choosing from among the cheaper, often less competent tutors. A Croatian provider of preparatory courses for Matura Exams explained this situation in a rather resigned tone:

People who are giving PT are sometimes not competent in the subject - there are situations in which a tutor, who holds a diploma in Forestry for example or is a second-year student in Construction, is giving PT in mathematics. His class is 30 kn ($\approx 4\text{€}$), while at the same time a professor's class is 70 kn ($\approx 10\text{€}$). Parents who lack money would take those cheap classes, but the tutor is not competent at all. (PT provider, Croatia)

This statement indirectly confirms the ability of the PT market to cater to all types of potential users. Furthermore, it suggests that the price of the PT service is the main criteria for hiring a specific tutor for some families from underprivileged backgrounds. The financial hardship faced by these families in securing assets to hire private tutors is further discussed later in this chapter.

In Azerbaijan and Georgia, the difference in PT use between pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds is also marked by a difference in the preferred service type. In order to cater to different customer profiles, PT markets in these countries have adapted by offering PT classes of different sizes: some are individual lessons suited mostly for wealthy families, while others are of varying group sizes and are more suited to the financial capabilities of families from underprivileged backgrounds. In these two countries, a number of stakeholders recognised that pupils from privileged backgrounds almost exclusively opt for individual tutoring, while pupils from families from underprivileged backgrounds are directed towards less expensive forms of group tutoring. The words of an Azerbaijani provider of group tutoring illustrate this difference:

Our clients are mostly children of lower social classes... Most people cannot afford expensive individual PT. Our prices are much more reasonable and affordable to everyone. It doesn't mean that the quality is worse at all. You know, some smart parents who could easily afford expensive individual private tutors, chose us after a long search. (PT provider, Azerbaijan)

Of interest in this quote is the reasonable assertion made by this PT provider that the price difference of PT services is not necessarily a reflection of a difference in the quality of the service. Unfortunately, the experiences of families whose children are attending group tutoring are not always so positive. However, the financial situation of these families is such that alternative services are out of their reach. The following interview excerpt from a Georgian working-class parent demonstrates this clearly:

My child's tutor doesn't take much money from us, because he has in total 10 students in his class. That means that my child gets only 10 minutes of his attention during one session....But I can't even dare to think about expensive teachers. I cannot afford it. (Parent, Georgia)

Together with the quotes presented, the discussion thus far has demonstrated the manner in which varying patterns of PT use amongst pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds are clearly related to the financial capabilities of families to provide the means for procuring PT services. With the aim of providing the best opportunities for their children, families attempt to adapt to their financial situation and provide the highest possible quantity and quality of PT service. However, the evidence from the present study suggests that the differences in patterns of PT use also reflect differences in meaning and function ascribed by different social groups to PT. More specifically, the interview data contained many statements suggesting that the decision of pupils from privileged social groups to use PT services is driven by different reasons and for different purposes than for those from more underprivileged backgrounds. For instance, the

tendency of parents, as reported in Chapter Seven, to use PT not only for learning subject-specific content, but also for developing relevant domain-general knowledge, for providing all-encompassing support for everyday learning, for strengthening wider personal and social competences and for structuring children's out-of-school time is perhaps more characteristic of families of privileged backgrounds. Arguably, the use of PT services for these purposes is suggestive of the wider role played by PT in addressing both the educational aspirations of a family as well as a child's overall upbringing. This widening role of PT is also reflected in the observation, reported by a number of participants, that PT is a very calculated investment and carefully planned action for wealthy families. The words of a Georgian parent and professional living in a prosperous neighbourhood of Tbilisi illustrate how pupils from privileged families are using PT to supplement regular school classes in many subjects from an early age (sometimes even in the first grades of elementary education). In these instances, the aim is to gain a competitive advantage over others and strengthen knowledge and skills in the disciplines deemed important for future life:

I am taking my child to a tutor in German from the second grade. He has a very good teacher at school, but I still wanted him to know more than others. We started mathematics lessons from the sixth grade. mathematics is a very difficult and important subject, boys should know it well. We also had a teacher in Russian for 3-4 years. I wanted him to know Russian. If I see that he needs help in physics or for instance in chemistry, I take him to tutors in these subjects as well. I was trying to help him in any subject he needed help (Parent, Georgia)

The words of an educational expert from Bosnia and Herzegovina further speak about the strategic and prolonged use of PT among privileged social groups, a practice aimed at building the profile of the learner and enriching the pupil's knowledge and skills:

I would say that people who belong to the so-called privileged social groups tend to use PT more strategically. For example, we had a case

of a group of pupils that achieved a lot – their results on mathematics and physics competitions were much higher than average. At the end we found out that they were preparing continuously with private tutors. From one point of view that was great, but from another that was a problem, because it is discouraging for other talented students who are not in position to afford a private tutor. (Educational professional, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

A teacher union representative from Bosnia and Herzegovina captured this point in similar way, relating the strategic use of PT in wealthy families with the use of PT for purposes of pupil enrichment and personal growth:

...Perhaps in those few elite schools, PT use is more frequent and planned ahead, because students have better knowledge and want to achieve more...and, of course, their parents can afford that. (Teacher union, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Related to the strategic use of PT in privileged social groups is the notion that, in these social circles, the use of PT of services is not only for solving current problems in pupils' education, but also a preventive measure that supports the regular learning processes of these pupils. In all likelihood, wealthy families are in the best position to act in advance and therefore prevent the incidence or development of possible learning difficulties by procuring PT services early and quickly. This pre-emptive use of PT is evidenced in an excerpt from an interview with a Croatian secondary school principal:

In my school, it is true that children of highly educated and wealthier parents attend PT classes more. They are probably more ready to recognise when some learning problem emerges, and it is easier for them to pay for tutoring. Of course, children who have parents of lower educational status who have financial problems are also attending PT, but never to raise their grades from 4 to 5 or from 3 to 4. They would take PT to get a passing grade (2) or sometimes to raise it to a 3. (Principal, Croatia)

In addition to recognizing the readiness of families from privileged social groups to react in a timely and appropriate manner in order to address their children's learning needs, the above quote also points to the difference in function of PT amongst pupils from such families. This is in sharp contrast to the predominantly 'survival' function of PT amongst pupils from underprivileged backgrounds.

This contrast is illustrated in the words of another Croatian secondary school principal, who summarises these differentiating elements in patterns and functions of PT use for pupils from different social groups:

Everyone takes lessons but in a different manner. I notice that children of lower social status also take PT, but only when they face a problem. Those of higher status and especially those with more highly educated parents go more continuously and with a set goal. They go more frequently and go to better instructors, because they can afford them. (Principal, Croatia)

Together, the above quotes suggest that, for families of privileged social classes, the use of PT is goal-oriented and mostly multifunctional. In addition, they confirm that, for such families, the decision to use these services is financially relatively simple. For families from lower socio-economic backgrounds, however, the decision to use PT involves a more careful weighing of pros and cons. Because PT lessons are often expensive and sometimes even unaffordable for certain segments of society, PT use represents a much greater sacrifice for many families and therefore requires more thorough consideration. This notion is evidenced in the following interview excerpt from a Croatian PT provider of individual private tutoring lessons:

I literally had a case of a father going to a loan shark to borrow money to pay for tutoring in chemistry. Keep in mind the amount he needs to pay. His daughter had problems and he paid tutoring to get her to the level to pass (PT provider, Croatia)

This sentiment is more concretely illustrated in the words of a Georgian parent, speaking about the period during which her family was making a decision concerning PT use:

If a family cannot afford to live a comfortable life and to provide a child with a good education at the same time, one should make a choice between the two. I wanted my child to have a good education. That is why I had to sell many things from my house. (Parent, Georgia)

In addition to its striking depiction of the hardship some families face in financing PT services, these quotes also illustrate the determination of some families to secure the funds necessary to ensure that such services are available for their children. A similar position was provided by a parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina, speaking about her experiences with different social groups within her child's class:

We have two children from a single parent in our class. She has a very low income but pays for private lessons. She wants them to succeed and would do anything in order to achieve that. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

While most of the above quotes cannot be considered as first-hand testimonies in which participants were speaking about their own parental experiences, but rather were based on participants' perceptions and understanding of others' actions and beliefs, they are illustrative of the great devotion and commitment of families in our societies to secure what they believe to be worthy for their children. However, for families from lower socio-economic backgrounds, the continuous and extensive PT described earlier, and the use of PT for personal growth, knowledge enrichment and skill development, is entirely out of reach. This situation was described by some parents to sometimes result in bitter feelings of regret and disappointment, as exemplified by the words of a parent from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

I know my daughter would benefit from more continuous use of PT, but times are such that I cannot afford that. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Indeed, the evidence from the present study demonstrates that these families generally use PT only in urgent situations, such as when a child has severe learning problems and failing grades at the end of the semester, or when there is a risk of dropping out of school. Unsurprisingly, the practices of parents from these social groups appear to be directly limited by their economic resources. In the following interview excerpt, a teachers' representative from Bosnia and Herzegovina captures this pattern of PT use amongst lower income families, and contrasts it directly with the differing patterns of PT use amongst wealthy families:

The most frequent users of private tutoring are those pupils whose parents don't have time for them, but have money. Those parents can get any tutor they want for however long. Poorer parents decide to use PT less frequently and mostly so that their children do not lose the year. ... They cannot afford more (Teacher union, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

This situation, in which PT services become a means for families from underprivileged backgrounds to secure their child's continuation of education within the formal system, is similarly portrayed by a Georgian parent:

If I could afford it, I would hire private tutors for all subjects. But there is no chance to take lessons in all subjects, so I should prioritize. Parents usually decide to use PT in subjects that are present on HE exams or in subjects in which their children have very low grades. But if you ask me, pupils need help in all subjects. (Parent, Georgia)

Once again, this reflection from a parent of lower socio-economic status signals the hardship placed on families in securing PT. In addition, it captures the general pattern of PT use for underprivileged families, where PT use is significantly more restricted than that amongst families from more privileged backgrounds and is almost exclusively for remedial purposes. In a situation of restricted financial

means, lower-income families are forced to be economical in their use of PT services and, as such, cannot use it for the broad purpose of general educational enhancement as is possible for higher-income families.

Together, the evidence presented in this section has demonstrated the differential patterns of PT use and differing educational functions of PT for pupils from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds. In doing so, these findings support Lareau's (2003) notion of *concerted cultivation*, a practice observed amongst middle class families in which parents actively foster their children's talents and skills and make deliberate and sustained efforts to stimulate children's development by scheduling their children in numerous activities and arranging many out-of-school classes aimed at cultivating children's cognitive and social skills. Although Lareau (2003) does not discuss PT in particular, she does speak about middle class parents who hire educators to help children complete homework and improve in school, which she argues are efforts aimed at and resulting in the institutionalisation, rationalisation and standardisation of children's leisure time. In line with Lareau's work, Ball (2010) argues that the use of bought-in services and enrichment activities are entirely limited to middle class parents for whom the process of *'making up a middle class child'* involves *the child's participation, from a very young age, in a range of structured, commercial enrichment activities'* (Ball 2010, p. 161). In his argument claiming that increasing amounts of the 'work of learning' is currently conducted outside of school and that middle class families seek out opportunities to maintain the social advantages of education for their children, Ball (2010) explicitly names private tutoring operating within the market of educational services as the service that defines and lies at the heart of the middle classes approach to education. Lareau (2003) and Ball (2010) further claim that, through such activities, parents aim to provide more systematic, pre-planned and regulated experiences believed to be beneficial for children in their academic life and beyond, an idea reflected in many of the stakeholders' statements presented previously. Indeed, Lareau's (2003) and Ball's (2010) ideas are clearly supported by the

data from the present research, which highlight the manner in which different social classes approach and use such organised activities, including PT.

9.3. Stakeholders' perceptions of the link between PT and educational inequity

On the whole, participants accepted the notion of PT as a phenomenon that increases the level of educational inequity and contributes to widening the gap between privileged and underprivileged pupils. Most argued that, due to the varying exposure of pupils to these supplementary educational services, PT contributes to differences in educational achievement, outcomes and prospects between pupils who can and cannot afford PT lessons. In this regard, PT is clearly viewed as a phenomenon endangering the principle of equal educational opportunities for all and, as such, contributes to the reproduction of the educational and social status of pupils.

Concerns about the implications of attending PT for pupils' attainment and achievement in the formal education system and for their social position in the future were repeatedly voiced by participants in all participating countries. In all contexts, the stakeholders most especially concerned by these issues were pupils and parents. The following words of an Azerbaijani university student illustrate his understanding that the inability of families from underprivileged backgrounds to afford PT services can have serious and far-reaching educational and social implications:

The idea of social justice fails with PT. Let's take one class in a school as an example. In the same class, you can find children from wealthy and not so wealthy families. The first group goes to a private tutor. The second group wants to go, but does not have the means for that. It creates differences between them in school and beyond. (University student, Azerbaijan)

Similarly, this position is echoed by an Estonian parent:

... For sure there are other kids that would need support, but whose parents cannot or do not consider it important to spend money on it. This means that the starting position for life is different for children. (Parent, Estonia)

Some participants were even more explicit in claiming that educational achievement and the transition to higher educational levels are directly related to the use of PT services. In these cases, participants expressed their awareness of the manner in which the differences in access and patterns of PT use contribute to differences in mainstream educational outcomes of pupils from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds, a view evidenced in the words of a Georgian educational expert from the National Curriculum Center:

Private tutoring hampers the development of the social function of education. It deepens inequality in access to quality education and produces social segregation. The more private tutors one has, the greater are his/her chances to get a higher education and to become successful on the job market. The fact that only half of school graduates apply to HEIs may be explained (along with other reasons) by the inability of a category of graduates to afford PT services. They may think that without access to PT services, their chances to pass the exams and get state grants are very low. (Educational professional, Georgia)

Or in the case of an Estonian Member of Parliament:

PT can be afforded only by people who can pay for it and hence it does not support the principle of equal educational opportunities...I think PT is rather common among people who are striving for success or are already successful in society. And this segregates our education. Those who have money can afford more successful educational paths and those who do not lag behind. (Member of Parliament, Estonia)

And finally, in the case of an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

PT in any case leads to social inequality. Nowadays every service, including educational ones, is charged. There is no more kicking the ball on the street for free. And of course these services are available only to those who can afford them. But that problem shouldn't be so easily ignored. It's easiest to say well, what now, the kids will all have the schools, but if we know that what is offered in school is not quite as good as PT then we need to change something. Otherwise the gap that is being created will be bigger and bigger over time. (Educational governance – Local level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Together, these quotes suggest that PT is viewed as a mechanism that maintains and deepens already existing differences between pupils from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds. Participants readily acknowledged that the inability of underprivileged social groups to afford PT services might have serious educational implications by contributing to the restriction of access to higher educational levels and reducing one's chances for obtaining high quality education. The last quote also emphasises a worrying trend towards the increasing commercialisation of current education systems and the erosion of the quality of formal education, and relates these phenomena to a growing divide between privileged and underprivileged social groups. Indeed, analyses in the present research revealed no evidence to support the opposing hypothesis sometimes presented in the PT literature (Dang & Rogers, 2008a, 2008b), in which access to supplementary PT is argued to have the potential to benefit families from underprivileged backgrounds. Under this hypothesis, it is argued that PT might contribute to the equalisation of educational outcomes for privileged and underprivileged groups of children by providing underprivileged pupils with an efficient and affordable tool for overcoming the deficiencies of the formal educational system and for gaining social mobility through the education system, while wealthier and more educated families have other ways to maintain

social superiority and may use these ways as well as, or instead of, supplementary tutoring (Bray, 1999, 2003).

However, some opposing voices were heard, predominantly amongst PT providers and teachers who questioned whether pupils' educational achievement could be directly related to PT use. These participants often claimed that any perceived effects of PT use are short-term and narrow, an opinion reflected in the following interview excerpt from an educational official from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

I wouldn't say that PT has a serious impact on society because it has short-term effects. So I don't believe that PT creates any kind of social gap and leads to social inequality of pupils. (Educational governance – Local level, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In some contexts, namely Georgia and Azerbaijan, this claim concerning the limited effects of PT use on pupil's knowledge and ability was sometimes related to the presence of corrupt PT practices, a situation illustrated in the words of an Azerbaijani university student:

Sometimes school teachers force students to take additional lessons. Then your marks improve, but your results are the same...For example, I had one mathematics teacher who forced me to attend his supplementary classes. In the beginning, I refused to go and my mathematics marks went down. Then my parents put me in his PT class. After that, everything was better, except my mathematics knowledge, which remained the same as before. (University student, Azerbaijan)

A similar opinion was found in the words of a representative of the Teacher Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who claimed that no difference between PT users and non-users could be found in the quality of acquired knowledge:

I don't think that PT has an effect on the quality of gained knowledge. In my opinion, pupils who are PT users don't have better knowledge.

But I believe that PT affects students in a way that those who can't afford PT can feel inferior and start to believe that they will never have the same or better chances in the future. (Teacher union, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

In addition to claiming that no difference can be expected in the quality of knowledge between those pupils who attend and those who do not attend PT classes, the above quote highlights another interesting element related to the differential use of PT services across different social groups. Namely, it suggests that access to and use of PT services might have an impact on pupils' perceptions of their chances for future success and of their overall position in society. In this participant's opinion, the inability of certain social groups to participate in PT lessons might serve to demoralise some pupils and, consequently, cause them to feel unnecessarily pessimistic about their future.

In addition to the argument that the effect of PT use was short-term and narrow, some participants offered another, potentially more problematic claim that aimed to devalue the differential effects of PT on the educational achievements of pupils from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds. Namely, these participants expressed the view that pupils from underprivileged backgrounds are generally more motivated, more mindful and exert greater effort in school than pupils from privileged backgrounds, who in turn supplement their inefficiencies through the use of PT services. Participants further argued that, when pupils from underprivileged backgrounds do use PT services, they might profit more than pupils from privileged backgrounds because they are more attentive and put more effort into their learning. This position was repeatedly expressed in interviews in all contexts, but was particularly salient in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. The following words of a Croatian principal in a vocational school explained this point in detail:

Those who lack money are often more motivated for learning and are putting in more effort. There are many examples when kids from

poor families, where parents do not even have secondary education, are actually motivated and know that education is important. These kids are mostly forced to rely only on themselves, so they have better working habits, and so it compensates for their bad background in many cases. This is that – if you do not have money, you should learn. (Principal, Croatia)

This perspective was similarly evident in the words of a Member of Parliament in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Those who have less perhaps appreciate education more; they fight more, aware that the only way to change something is with the knowledge gained. Those who have, they pay. (Member of Parliament, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Together, these statements make the somewhat problematic claim that different segments of society might fulfil their aspirations and achieve their goals through different mechanisms; where some pupils from underprivileged backgrounds apply large effort and motivation towards individual learning, while pupils from privileged backgrounds participate in supplementary (and of course paid) educational activities. If this argument is accepted, pupils from underprivileged backgrounds compensate for unequal exposure to educational activities through a very high investment in individual learning and, consequently, achieve similar outcomes to their more privileged colleagues.

Interestingly, these perspectives were particularly evident in the views of those participants actually responsible for developing and implementing educational policy at the system level. Arguably, these views might therefore be interpreted as the attempt of those participants to justify their potentially unpleasant and sometimes even conflicting thoughts about the (unfair) existence of the unequal treatment of pupils in the educational system. Indeed, rather than reflecting a valid explanation of the educational and social inequity related to the PT phenomenon, these perspectives of policy makers are more likely a justification of their own positions and (in)actions.

This becomes particularly dangerous when viewed as an attempt, on the part of these interest groups, at justifying the lack of policy measures aimed at raising equity in education.

Indeed, while some groups of stakeholders made claims to minimize the link between the use of PT services and educational inequity, the findings presented here generally support the notion that differential access and use of PT services across differing social groups is a real and worrying contributor to educational inequality. The implications of such inequity and the need for action are further discussed in the following section.

9.4. Stakeholder perceptions regarding the relevance of equity issues related to PT and the potential for policy change

When asked specifically about equity issues related to the PT phenomenon, most stakeholders' groups in all participating countries recognised and acknowledged the existence of the negative implications of PT use for the equality of educational opportunities for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds, but only a few emphasised equity issues related to PT as a particularly relevant educational problem. In fact, the analysis of interview data suggests that there is no extensive consideration of equity issues related to PT across different stakeholders groups, nor any indication of a particularly deep concern for this negative dimension of PT. Although participants generally expressed negative attitudes toward the existence of differences in PT use between pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds and negatively valued the fact that PT might lead to further inequalities in educational and societal spheres, the researchers' impression was that these statements were coloured in a politically correct tone rather than being the true expressions of participants' positions and concerns. Arguably, by using expressions and ideas that are socially acceptable and perceived as fair, the participants, especially those in charge of educational policy development and implementation, aimed to retain their self-perceptions of concerned individuals and to position themselves as socially responsible experts and policy makers.

Arguably, the generally low relevance afforded to equity issues along with the detached positions of stakeholders towards equity issues in general are the result of a view that inequalities are something naturally occurring in all societies or something that is not easy to combat. Overall, the evidence suggests that participants accepted the negative implications of PT on inequity in the education system as a signifier of wider societal changes that have occurred during the last 20 transitional years in all contexts, mostly as a result of economic reforms but in some places also as a result of war. In the views of participants, a general decline in social principles of justice, the marginalisation of vulnerable social groups and an augmentation of social inequalities in various spheres of life are among the most visible manifestations of these changes. The following words of a leader of the Teacher Union in Croatia demonstrate this perceived relationship between the education system and wider societal changes:

You cannot expect education to be an exception to the functioning of society as a whole. Injustice is actually the building block of our society. It is clear that we are not a society of equal opportunities.... When the whole system is unjust, you cannot expect that there would be no social divide in education. We should oppose that constantly, but I think it is impossible that education might change the system. (Teacher union, Croatia)

This quote, in addition to offering a very bleak suggestion that inequality has become a prominent feature in the lives of all Croatians, positions education within the wider framework of a changing societal system and illustrates the participant's willingness, but powerlessness to change such a system.

Apart from stakeholders representing teacher unions, parent and pupil groups similarly raised the issue of social and educational equity related to PT more openly and frankly than others. The following statement from a representative of a Parents' Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina positioned PT as a negative phenomenon due to its influence on the social differences between pupils:

Private tutoring is a very negative phenomenon that creates a gap between children and forces parents to pay for something that should be part of the formal educational system. It is no longer a problem of certain individuals, it has become a mass phenomenon and goes into extremes...But nobody cares (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The words of this parent point to the widespread scope of the PT phenomenon and emphasise the inability of the formal education system to counteract the negative implications of its extensive use. While understanding the limitations and unwillingness of policy makers to adequately address the problem of PT within the formal system, parents also evidently underestimate their own potential role and power for demanding change and contributing to the search for potential solutions. Instead, parents were often observed to act as disappointed and passive bystanders, accepting the current state of schools and searching for solutions outside the formal system, within the individual arrangements with private tutors. The words of a Georgian university professor, speaking from the position of a parent, capture this point:

All of us hope that our children will achieve a good education with private tutors and due to this we do not require better quality from schools. Schools don't feel pressure from our side and this relaxed attitude leads to a further decrease in quality. As a result, those who cannot afford the service cannot get even the minimum standard. Students simply waste their time in classrooms and either pay extra money for the service they should get there, or don't get it at all. (University professor, Georgia)

Regrettably, this resigned acceptance of the current state of affairs was found to be the dominant position towards PT and related equity issues in all participating countries and amongst most participants.

In Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, many participants expressed remorse for previous socialist times of former Yugoslavia, which they perceived as being a more egalitarian society

in which access to higher educational levels and the achievement of educational success were less influenced by the socio-economic backgrounds of pupils and their families. The following quote from a Bosnian parent depicts this situation of a changing system in a very cynical tone:

There is always a question of what to do with parents who can't afford PT for their children. Unfortunately, in 1991, we had our elections and we voted for a time of social inequality and now we need to deal with that. (Parent, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

And similarly, a Croatian teachers' union representative offers a statement that is less harsh but nevertheless emphasizes the negative features of the new system:

Somewhere along the line in the last 20 years we have become a society and an educational system that does not value or foster equal opportunities and equality. I do not know where we lost that. (Teacher union, Croatia)

In this clear reflection of nostalgic feelings for the 'good old times', this participant paints a picture of a previous system in which inequalities were less evident and education was viewed, at an individual level, as an instrument for progression up the social ladder and, at a societal level, as a tool for social progress.

The data from other interviews in these two countries also suggest that participants estimate present day education to be much less egalitarian than in socialist times and instead to be based more on values of competitiveness and consumerism. Interestingly, the data also suggest that, despite this estimation, people still adhere to the egalitarian values promoted in education during socialist times. Although participants were certainly aware that the pursuit of pupils' rights for equal opportunities within the previous system was more in the sphere of the socialist myth than true reality, they continue to believe that these values are more humanist and idealistic than

the proclaimed values of today's system, which positions education increasingly as a tool for competitiveness and a marketable good.

In the post-Soviet countries of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Estonia, equity issues related to the PT phenomenon was a particularly sensitive topic. Arguably, this was in part due to the previously demonstrated relatedness of these issues to the socialist legacy, but also to the possibility that new, more liberal values have been embraced in these societies. In these countries, participants generally showed a reluctance to speak openly and, as such, only a few statements about the stakeholders' position and attitudes towards equity issues were gathered. It is also possible that participants working in governmental structures in these countries did not want to emphasise negative aspects of the educational system and did not want to shed a negative light on their own work within the system.

Nevertheless, evidence from all participating countries indicates an overall lack of sensitivity (other than a declarative one) towards equity issues and a corresponding failure to attach any priority to actively address these issues. This is further reflected in the limited capabilities and willingness of policy makers to develop and implement any policy change that would lead to more equitable positions for different social groups in the formal educational system. The following statement from a Croatian State Secretary is a striking example of such a perspective:

It is an important issue for educational policy, which covers all of its shortcomings and failures with silence and a lack of reaction. I know it may sound strange since I am the State Secretary but that is how it is. By not doing anything, we are not trying to equalise the conditions of education and thus contribute to the implicit discrimination. (Educational governance – Ministerial level, Croatia)

While the above quote might be quickly characterised as an open and self-critical statement from one of the most important individuals in the Croatian education system at the time of interviewing, more careful consideration of this position actually illustrates an overall lack of ambition to improve the equity of the system. Although declaratively

accepting the value of equity in education and acknowledging the Ministry's disregard of the issue and laissez-faire policy towards it, this interview excerpt also suggests a lack of accountability and critical reflection on the role of educational policy makers and experts in securing optimal conditions for all pupils in formal education.

The data from other countries similarly indicate that the capacity of policy makers for developing and implementing policies aimed to alleviate educational and social inequities is very limited. On the whole, the predominant position of participants was that equity issues are just one of many educational problems reflected by the rising scope of the PT phenomenon and similarly influenced by PT use itself. Further, as these issues were shown to be low on the priority list, participants generally maintained that no specific interventions and measures targeted specifically towards tackling inequalities associated with PT use by pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds are needed. Instead, participants expressed the belief that general reforms oriented towards solving what were perceived to be the main problems of the system (e.g. structural reforms, curricula reform, reform of the system of entrance to tertiary education, etc.) would be more suitable and effective, in that they would likely also be beneficial for decreasing levels of PT use and, in turn, reducing the inequalities arising from its more negative elements.

9.5. Conclusions

On the whole, the evidence presented in this chapter confirms the dominant perspective, amongst educational stakeholders in all participating countries, of PT as an omnipresent phenomenon. According to this perspective, the existence of a well-developed, competitive and diversified PT market makes PT services accessible and affordable to a large majority of pupils. Participants further expressed the view that, as a result, even pupils from underprivileged socio-economic backgrounds are able to afford some form of PT service, at least occasionally. However, there was also evidence suggestive of a tendency, amongst certain stakeholder groups, to disregard the differential access and affordability of PT for pupils

from privileged and underprivileged groups and to 'misperceive' that almost everyone is using PT. Arguably, this tendency might be a reflection of the fact that a large proportion of these participants came from privileged socio-economic backgrounds, within which taking PT lessons is perceived to be a normative behaviour. Indeed, mere membership in privileged social groups might impact one's assessment of the scope of the PT phenomenon due to the high occurrence of PT use amongst one's immediate acquaintances and friends.

Analyses further suggested that the accessibility and affordability of PT services are not the only, or even the most relevant, issues contributing to the educational inequity of pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds, and indicated that limiting the exploration of equity issues to the question of access to PT services alone is probably overly simplistic. Indeed, the main source of inequity related to PT might come from more subtle and complex issues related to differential patterns of use, the quality and quantity of PT services used, as well as the broader educational and social functions of PT services. Specifically, participants claimed that, while it is possible that PT is accessible and affordable to a majority of pupils, the quality of PT providers and services and the reasons behind one's decision to use PT services are different for families of different socio-economic backgrounds. Specifically, pupils from more privileged backgrounds are in the position to hire more expensive, highly qualified and prestigious tutors and to approach PT in a more strategic and planned manner, in which the aim of PT use is educational enrichment, the development of wider personal and social competences or the timely prevention of potential educational problems. In contrast, pupils from underprivileged backgrounds were reported to use PT predominantly as 'a survival strategy' in critical moments in which educational failure is very likely. The observed presence of differential patterns and functions of PT use for pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds is additionally supported by the very universal nature of the findings, which demonstrated that the same core mechanisms are operating in all participating countries, regardless of the specific manifestations of patterns and functions of PT use in each country.

Furthermore, the findings presented in this chapter indicate that most participants were aware of the potential negative implications of PT use on the level of equity in education, as well as in the wider social sphere. Most participants recognised that the limited ability of underprivileged social groups to afford PT services might influence pupils' attainment and achievement at various educational levels in the formal system, might limit their access to higher educational levels and decrease their chances on the job market in the future. On the whole, these findings indicate a sense of urgency for the development of educational policies aimed at addressing the issues of equity related to PT. However, the analysis of stakeholders' perspectives of the relevance of equity issues related to PT suggests a limited willingness and capacity of policy makers to address the issue. Indeed, the negative implications of PT on educational inequity were perceived as unpleasant side-effects of the wider societal changes that have occurred during the last twenty transitional years rather than a pressing topic in need of direct attention at the policy level.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, in some contexts, participants were not always ready and willing to speak openly about equity issues related to PT and, in that respect, neglected the problem of inequality inherent in the PT phenomenon. For many governmental officials and educational experts working in governmental agencies, especially those from Azerbaijan and Georgia, the issue of differential access to PT services and differential patterns and function of PT use amongst pupils from privileged and underprivileged backgrounds was too sensitive for discussion. Arguably, these participants feared that acknowledging the problem might undermine their reputation as policy makers or paint a negative picture of the educational system as a whole.

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CHAPTER X

CONCLUSIONS

Boris Jokić

The findings presented in the analytical chapters confirm the position of private tutoring (PT) as an all-encompassing phenomenon in all five research contexts, supporting the notion that PT transcends national and class boundaries (Mazawi, Sultana & Bray, 2013). In this last chapter, the main contributions of the present research to the academic field of PT are highlighted, with special emphasis on a reconsideration of the conceptual framework presented in Chapter Two. This is followed by a brief consideration of the limitations of the study and propositions for future research efforts examining the PT phenomenon.

Revisiting the conceptual framework

From the outset, the present research established the decision concerning the use of PT as a focus of its investigation. It has been said that this decision, made by parents and pupils, is always conducted in relation to two interacting constructs: the perspectives of parents and pupils regarding the formal education system and their educational aspirations. First, perspectives regarding the formal education system represent a complex and multifaceted collection of information, attitudes and beliefs that includes:

- information about the pupil's educational achievement and progress;
- pupil and parental views on curricular content;
- views regarding teaching delivery or the overall teaching and learning process;

- the perceived adequacy of educational and psychological preparation for high stake assessment;
- beliefs regarding the quality of education offered in the formal education system;
- parental assessment of their child's individual motivation and work habits in fulfilling the requirements set within the formal system of education;
- perspectives regarding the behaviours of others;
- and any other element incorporated within the complex system of formal education.

Second, educational aspirations represent the ambitions and goals held by pupils and parents with regards to both immediate and future educational experiences and outcomes. Evidence presented in each of the analytical chapters confirms the hypothesis that, when deciding whether or not to use PT services, parents and pupils weigh these two constructs against one another and, based on this 'imaginary calculation', make a decision regarding the use of PT services.

As with all other decisions, the decision concerning PT use is also directly affected by the context in which it is being made. In the present research, an ecological model loosely based on Bronfenbrenner's (1976) model was developed, which placed this decision at the centre of a series of five socially organised subsystems representing a set of nested and interconnected structures that all have a potential to influence the decision and upon which this decision can have a reciprocal effect. These structures range from the immediate individual characteristics of the pupil to the most remote setting of the larger society. This conceptualisation allowed for a contextually-positioned, multidisciplinary exploration of the familial decision concerning the use of PT services. Furthermore, the conceptualisation informed the methodological approach, where individuals from different spheres were selected as participants. Arguably, the placement of the decision at the core of the conceptual framework, which itself is grounded within a wider model, represents an original contribution of the present research to the field of PT research.

Main findings

Although each chapter incorporates a detailed discussion of the results, it is important to depict here the main findings across contexts and amongst groups of stakeholders. Unsurprisingly, various features of the formal education system, by informing familial perspectives regarding that very system, play an important role in the parental and pupil decision concerning PT use. In the first instance, curricular issues, expressed through problems related to the excessive breadth and width of the curriculum, a large number of subjects, subject content that is of low relevance or poorly adjusted to the assigned number of teaching hours, and a lack of horizontal and vertical consistency, exert a negative effect on all involved in the educational process by impeding both teacher practices and, even more importantly, pupils' learning. In cases where families perceive these deficiencies to pose a threat to the achievement of personal educational aspirations, the decision to use PT services might be made in order to maintain or improve pupils' chances of reaching educational goals. A second, and perhaps even more salient, feature influencing parental and pupil perspectives of the formal education system was the assessment arrangements and practices of the system. In the case of school assessment, information related to an individual pupil's achievement is typically used by parents and pupils to monitor and scale educational aspirations. Arguably, the likelihood of deciding to use PT increases when such information does not correspond to personal educational aspirations. External assessment, and especially high-stake assessment occurring at educational transition points where it can serve a gate-keeping role for future educational and life outcomes, plays a particularly important role in the decision concerning use of PT services. This is in line with numerous findings from other contexts (Bray & Lykins, 2012; Neto-Mendes et al., 2013; Tansel, 2013). At these moments, parents and pupils become more likely to opt for PT services as a means to safeguard the achievement of their personal educational aspirations. Especially dangerous are situations where curriculum and assessment practices are not carefully coordinated. In these situations, PT use

becomes almost inevitable as a compensatory method for meeting educational aspirations. Analysis also demonstrated significant differences between countries with regards to the systemic elements most highly related to the decision concerning PT use. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, the focus appears to be more highly geared towards curricular issues. Arguably, this might be in part due to the fact that both Balkan countries did not have a centralised system of high stake external assessment at the time the research was carried out. In Azerbaijan and Georgia, issues surrounding assessment were more clearly dominant in shaping perspectives of the formal systems of education. Regardless of its focus, criticism of systemic elements by most stakeholder groups was consistent across all country contexts.

The present research has further indicated that the professional competences of teachers and teaching practices are also related to the parental and pupil decision concerning PT use. Here, several important elements emerged. First, stakeholders from all countries consistently reported the view that pre-service and in-service teacher training was not adequate for preparing teachers for the challenges they face in everyday practice. Due to these shortcomings, teaching practices may be perceived as inappropriate and inefficient and, consequently, negatively influence parental and pupil perspectives on the formal system of education. This connection between pre-service and in-service teacher training and PT use are consistent with findings reported by Silova (2009) examining the teaching profession in Caucasus and Central Asia. Interestingly, these findings were common for all contexts and characteristic of nearly all groups of stakeholders, including teachers and teacher trainers themselves. Data analyses further indicated several objective obstacles in teachers' professional contexts that impede effective teaching practices, including the large number of pupils within individual classes, the ineffective and maladjusted pace and rhythm of classroom work and, in some contexts, working in shifts. In order to compensate for these deficiencies, parents and pupils may opt for PT services. One of the specific contributions to the literature arising

from the chapter examining matters related to teachers and teaching practices was the exploration of teachers' motivation to provide PT services. Here, the findings confirm a 'common sense' proposition that financial reasons are most frequently behind teachers' decision to provide PT. However, the research also indicated that the implications of such an engagement are not always negative. For a certain number of teachers, PT lessons are seen to serve a role in professional development and elicit levels of professional satisfaction not always present in their everyday work in schools. Further, comparative analyses suggested the interesting hypothesis that personal satisfaction stemming from PT provision is directly related to whether or not it is deemed financially necessary by teachers providing the service. In Georgia and Azerbaijan, where the financial status of teachers nearly forces them to provide PT services, these notions of personal satisfaction did not appear. In contrast, in Estonia and Croatia, where PT service provision offered a supplementary but not necessary financial contribution, the reasons given for providing PT were different.

The examination of individual pupil characteristics influencing the decision concerning PT use also offers a new contribution to the field of PT research. Here, pupils' motivation for learning in school emerged as an important element influencing the decision concerning PT use. However, the relationship between pupil motivation and this decision is certainly not a simple one. In some cases, decreased motivation for learning in school appeared to be contributing to the increased use of PT services. In these cases, it seems that families perceive PT as a remedial mechanism used to ensure that educational aspirations, be they to remain in education or obtain a certain educational level, might be fulfilled. In contrast, high levels of motivation for achieving personal educational aspirations were reported to similarly contribute to an increased likelihood of deciding to use PT services, most often during competitive periods within the formal system of education. Interestingly, a number of other elements such as building self-confidence and combating social fears and anxieties emerged as positive effects of PT use for the individual pupil. The examination of

individual characteristics related to the decision concerning PT use also addressed the failure of the formal systems of education in all researched contexts to sufficiently address the individual needs and characteristics of pupils. In all cases, this predominant 'one size fits all' feature of formal education was seen as an important influence on the decision concerning PT use where, in order to compensate for the lack of an individualised approach within the formal system, families might perceive PT as an appropriate avenue for addressing the individual needs of pupils. Interestingly, the consideration of individual characteristics was most prominent in Estonia and Croatia, societies which might be argued to be the most individualistic among the five researched contexts. Parents and educational experts were the stakeholder groups most vocal about the apparent inability of the formal system to cater to the needs of the individual pupil.

Parental perspectives on education and parenting styles were additionally found to play a vital role in the decision concerning PT use. Here, the evidence suggests that parental dissatisfaction with the perceived deficiencies of the formal system of education lie at the core of the decision concerning the use of PT services, a finding consistent in the views expressed by both parents and other stakeholders. Furthermore, parental obligations and other features of parental 'life contexts' and the multiplicity of adult professional and social roles were reported to make parents feel less willing or able to support the educational needs of their own children. In all contexts, this was reported to be a reason for which parents might opt to pay for PT services. While parents themselves reported often feeling helpless in such situations, other stakeholder groups viewed the parental decision to rely on outside help as a shifting of responsibility. Arguably, these discrepancies are indicative of a lack of cooperation between various stakeholder groups within education systems. A number of issues located within the wider societal sphere were also found to be related to the familial decision concerning PT use. The chapter dedicated to this topic explored the shift from socialist times, in which PT existed but was generally kept hidden, to the transitional period of the last 23 years, which brought a widened scope and more

open discussion concerning PT and an even more open promotion of PT services. The depiction of this shift confirmed the hypotheses of Silova & Bray (2006) and serves to suggest that PT use has become a normative behaviour in most contexts. Further, there has been an increased tendency to conform to this normative behaviour. This was observed to be especially critical during the highly competitive periods of a pupil's journey through the education system, where information regarding the behaviour of others, combined with the active promotion of the necessity of PT and high stakes assessment, produce a particularly fertile ground for opting to use PT services as a means to secure one's educational future. Interestingly, this trend was characteristic in all research contexts.

In an examination of the issue of social equity, the findings from the present research indicated that a highly developed PT market has led to a situation in which some form of PT service is accessible and affordable to a large majority of pupils in all contexts. However, analyses further suggested that the accessibility and affordability of PT services are not the only, or even the most relevant, issues contributing to the educational inequity of pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds, a finding also demonstrated in recent work examining PT in the Mediterranean region (Hartmann, 2013; Lamprinou & Afantiti Lamprinou, 2013; Mazawi, Sultana & Bray, 2013). Indeed, the main source of inequity related to PT might come from more subtle and complex issues related to differential patterns of use, the quality and quantity of PT services used, as well as the broader educational and social functions of PT services. A particularly important finding arising from the present research was that social equity issues were not central in the perspectives of stakeholders in any researched context.

Taken together, the findings suggest that negative perspectives on the formal system of education in relation to personal educational aspirations will result in a higher likelihood of opting for PT services. From this starting point, it is clear that systems characterised by various elements indicative of perceived system deficiencies might be expected to elicit a larger scope of PT use. However, it is perhaps

possible to argue that, in light of the ever changing and increasing educational aspirations of parents and pupils, some form and scope of PT is always expected, even in cases in which a majority of the population holds positive views on the formal system. Furthermore, each of the spheres in which this decision has been placed has the potential to influence both perspectives on the formal system and educational aspirations. For example, while personal educational aspirations are perhaps most influenced at the level of the individual, the interaction between the pupil and the formal system of education will similarly inform pupil and parental perspectives. Similarly, while elements embedded in the levels of school and educational policy will be more prominent in informing perspectives on the formal system of education, they will also be used in scaling educational aspirations. Finally, even the most remote sphere of society will have an influence on the way education is perceived in a specific context and, through perceptions regarding the behaviour of others, will also have an impact on the educational aspirations of individual pupils and parents.

Implications for the future research

As an exploratory research endeavour, the aim of this project was not to develop a hierarchy of influences on the decision concerning PT use. In fact, one of the main qualities of the research was its aim to serve as a generator of hypotheses for future research efforts that would more closely examine and perhaps even model various elements housed within the proposed conceptual framework. Future research might further examine specific relationships between the constructs at the core of the decision concerning PT use explored here, as well as the effects each element has on this decision and on actual PT use. Future research efforts will also need to pay more particular attention to the diverse perspectives of the various actors observed to be playing various roles within the PT phenomenon.

Methodologically, the present research has tried to address some of the deficiencies existing in the field. Through its close relationship with the initial PT project 'Monitoring Private Tutoring', a basis for a methodologically more complete consideration of

the PT phenomenon was established for the present project. This augmentation of quantitative data with a qualitative research design is especially appropriate for the field and answers many calls from PT researchers (Bray, 2010). Arguably, the design itself is also innovative in its attempt to include the perspectives of various stakeholders with potentially contrasting views on the PT phenomenon and its implications. While the selection of the participants within specific country contexts was somewhat straightforward, the assurance of comparability across research contexts was a particularly challenging methodological procedure. The comparative nature of the project proved to be an appropriate way of analysing this complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. Although the basis for the comparison between research contexts in the present research has been carefully established, future comparative research efforts should include more contexts which would allow for a more complete picture of the phenomenon. Finally, although the present research tried to adopt a holistic analytic lens with regards to PT, there is still a large need for combining approaches and concepts from different disciplines such as education, economy, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, political sciences, ethnography and anthropology.

Limitations of the study

The research project and this book itself have several limitations. First, the explorative nature of the study, although one of its main strengths, does not allow for any conclusions regarding causality with respect to the decisions concerning PT use. Secondly, the selection of participants, although carefully conducted, is open to criticism in its identification of individuals and organisations included in the research. Together, these limitations both impede the degree to which the findings can be generalized. Thirdly, as a collaborative effort of five research teams in five contexts, this project was vulnerable to the risks of a lack of coherence and control over the research process. Although the methodological design and procedures for quality assurance attempted to address all of these deficiencies, they nevertheless might have had implications on the research findings

and conclusions. Finally, by focusing on the decision concerning PT use, the present research limits its overall scope in its examination of the PT phenomenon. Specifically, it does not provide evidence on other vital facets of the phenomenon, such as PT provision and effects of PT. Despite these limitations, it is the authors' belief that both the research and its results provide a fertile ground for future examinations of both the decision concerning PT use and the PT phenomenon in general.

The perspectives of the participants and the plethora of evidence from all five contexts presented here confirm the notion that PT has moved beyond being just a shadow of the formal education system towards becoming a system of its very own (Bray, 2010). This notion of an emergence from the shadow is strongly evident in all chapters of this book, and is perhaps an apt place for conclusion. Indeed, the features and outcomes of this process are to be determined and documented by future research, in which the complex and multiple implications of this shift on the individual and on formal systems of education, including such core issues such as the nature of formal schooling, issues of equity, the rights of an individual to quality education, and the financing of education will need to be carefully considered. Sadly, these new realities will make the goal of constructing and maintaining formal systems of education of respectable quality and with adequate levels of equity even more challenging. Time, understanding through research and dedicated and informed policy changes will determine the future journey of this emerging phenomenon.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A Interview Schedule

1. General information
2. On the most general level, what do you think about when you hear the term 'private tutoring'?
3. In your own words, how would you describe the phenomenon?
4. Have you ever had any personal experience with PT? (personal use, use by children, personally providing PT or knowing someone who has provided PT services)
5. Could you please briefly describe these experiences?
6. What is your impression about the scope of the PT phenomenon in XYZ country?
7. Do you perceive any changes in the trends of PT use in the last five years?
8. Do you have an impression that the phenomenon is rising, constant or declining?
9. In your opinion, what are the reasons behind this change?
10. In your opinion, at what educational level(s) does the PT phenomenon appear?
11. Do characteristics of the phenomenon vary at different levels (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary)?
12. In your opinion, at what level is it most prominent and have the most impact?
13. In your opinion, are there different types (private lessons, preparatory courses...) of PT in XYZ country?
14. In your opinion, do they serve different functions (remedial vs. enrichment)?
15. Would you say that different types of PT elicit different organizational structures?
 - Individual or small group lessons
 - Preparatory courses
16. In your opinion, who are the users of PT?
17. What are their characteristics (type of pupils, parents...)?
18. What are the reasons for PT use?
19. In your opinion, who are the providers of PT?
20. What are their characteristics (students, teachers...)?
21. What are the reasons for the provision of PT?
 - Economic
 - Social
 - Personal
22. To your knowledge, what are some of the factors driving the supply and demand of PT?
 - Economic
 - Unemployment
 - Teaching profession – salary levels, teacher status

Social

- Instrumentality of education
- Value of education in society
- PT as a fashion trend among pupils and parents
- Social pressure to take private lessons

Educational

- The structure of the educational system – hierarchy, diversification...
- Classroom processes
- Curricular issues
- Assessment issues
- Preparation for and progression to higher educational levels – state Matura/entry exams (include entry exams for secondary education and/or masters level if applicable)

23. In your opinion, what is the general impact of PT on:

Education

- Influence on classroom dynamics
- Deformation of the curricula
- Reduced/increased vertical mobility in the system
- Corruption (include 'special treatments – special favours' if applicable)

Society

- Social inequality
- Human capital

Economy

- Shadow economy
- No taxation and financial loss to the state budget
- Informal payments – extra salaries for providers, extra costs for users

24. Overall, would you say that PT is a predominantly positive or negative phenomenon? Does it require some action?
25. How important do you consider the issue of PT in comparison with other educational issues/problems?
26. In your opinion, what are the possible policy options for PT in our country and which institutions are in the position to provide and implement possible options for addressing the phenomenon? Please describe in detail proposed options. (Probes should be posed for each proposed option)
27. At what type of PT should they be aimed?
28. Which educational level should they target?
29. Should they be more concentrated on the demand or supply side of the PT chain?

30. What are the organizational aspects of the proposed options?
31. In your opinion, who is responsible for their development and implementation?
32. What are the particular strengths of the proposed options?
33. What are the biggest threats to the feasibility of the proposed options in our country?
34. What is the targeted impact of the proposed options?
35. What are the possible side effects of the proposed options?
36. Who needs to be involved in developing possible options for addressing the PT phenomenon?
37. What would be their role?
38. What would be the role of your particular organization?

APPENDIX B – Focus group protocols - teachers

Focus groups – Teachers

1. INTRODUCTION

Guidelines for the moderator:

- Describe and define the phenomenon;
- Emphasise the global character of the phenomenon;
- State the results of the previous research;
- Specifically note the results on the prevalence of PT in the case of Mathematics
- Explain the importance for researching and reporting;
- Assure participants of the value of their perspectives;

2. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE PHENOMENON

- What are your feelings and thoughts upon hearing the term 'private tutoring' or 'private instructions'?
- How would you estimate the scope of PT in your country in general and for mathematics in particular?
- Do you see the phenomenon increasing/decreasing in the last 5-10 years_

3. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH THE PHENOMENON

- Did you have personal experience with PT (as a parent, teacher of pupils who use PT services or maybe a provider of PT lessons)? How would you describe these personal experiences?
- Probe specifically:
- If they provided services (go to third probe)
- If not, who provided it;
- In what manner(one to one, group, class);
- For what purposes(remedial, enhancement, external assessment);

4. RATIONALE FOR USAGE

The reasons for the usage of the PT services can be various. Could you please explain your thoughts about reasons why parents use/pay PT services for their children?

Probe for:

- Personal elements
- Characteristic and learning/work habits of the pupils as the reason behind usage

- General orientation towards educational success
- Specific educational goals – state Matura, qualification for the higher educational levels...
- Fashionable trend
- Educational elements
- The nature of the subjects
- Curricular content
- Teaching/learning practices in mainstream education
- Assessment issues
- Preparation for and progression to higher educational levels
- Social elements
- The present and future role of education in society
- The present and future connection between employability and education
- Competitiveness of the society

4. RATIONALE FOR PROVISION

There are different providers of PT services in general. Some of them are your colleagues. The reasons for the provision of the PT services can be various. Could you please explain your thoughts about reasons why some teachers provide PT services?

Probe for:

- Unemployment
- Financial status of teaching profession
- Social status of teaching profession
- Helping pupils

5. IN WHAT WAYS ARE PT LESSONS DIFFERENT THAN MAINSTREAM EDUCATION YOU PROVIDE?

6. EFFECTIVENESS/IMPACT OF PT ON THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL OF PUPIL

Like in the case of any educational effort, the effectiveness of PT can be at varying levels. What would you say about the effectiveness of PT lessons?

What were/are the effects of PT on the level of individual pupil?

Probe for:

- Increasing educational chances
- Catching up
- Over reliance on PT

7. IMPACT ON THE MAINSTREAM EDUCATION & SOCIETY

In your opinion what is the nature of influence of PT on?

Probe for both negative and positive features:

- The level of education
- The way pupils learn in mainstream education
- Modification of the contents they learn
- The way teachers teach
- Classroom processes
- Assessment issues
- Corruptive elements in education
- The level of society
- Social inequality – the fact that privileged can afford PT
- Human capital – the fact that additional educational provision raises the human capital of the society
- Shadow/grey economy

8. REQUIRED ACTIONS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Does PT require any action by educational stakeholders?

What actions could be taken regarding PT?

Which stakeholders could/should initiate and carry out these actions?

What, if any, would be the role of teachers in these actions?

APPENDIX C Focus group protocols - parents

Focus groups – Parents of children receiving PT

1. INTRODUCTION

Guidelines for the moderator:

- Describe and define the phenomenon;
- Emphasise the global character of the phenomenon;
- State the results of previous research;
- Explain the importance of research and of reporting PT use;
- Assure participants of the value of their perspectives;

2. GENERAL IMPRESSION

What are your feelings and thoughts upon hearing the term 'private tutoring' or 'private instructions'?

3. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

All of you have had some experience with PT. How would you describe your personal experience and those of your children with PT?

Probe for:

- Description of the service;
- Who provided it;
- How did you decide upon the specific tutor/class? How did you find about her/him or approached him (ads, recommendation...)?
- In what manner(one to one, group, class);
- For what purposes(remedial, enhancement, external assessment);
- In what subjects;
- At what price per lesson/course;
- When did they decide to take lesson(includes age/level of education but also specific contents);

4. RATIONALE FOR USAGE

The reasons for using PT services can be various. Could you please explain the reasons for your decision to use/pay for PT services for your children?

Probe for:

- Personal elements
- Characteristics and learning/work habits of pupils as the reason behind usage
- General orientation towards educational success

- Specific educational goals – State Matura, qualification for higher educational levels, etc.
- Educational elements
- Curricular content (maladjusted (poor match with level of pupils), curricular overload, etc.)
- Teaching/learning practices in mainstream education (inadequate, not individualised, schematic, etc.)
- Assessment issues (Inappropriate assessment procedures in mainstream education, etc.)
- Preparation for and progression to higher educational levels (external assessment, mismatch between curricular content of secondary education and higher education entry requirements, etc.)
- Social elements
- The present and future role of education in society
- The present and future connection between employability and education
- The competitiveness of society

5. IN WHAT WAYS IS PT PROVIDION DIFFERENT THAN MAINSTREAM EDUCATION?

6. EFFECTIVENESS/IMPACT OF PT AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

As with any educational effort, the effectiveness of PT can vary. In your experience, what would you say about the effectiveness of PT lessons used by your children?

How satisfied are you with the PT lessons attended by your children?

What are the main sources of your satisfaction/dissatisfaction?

What were/are the effects of PT at the level of the individual pupil/your child?

Probe for:

- Increasing educational chances
- Catching up
- Over reliance on PT

7. IMPACT ON MAINSTREAM EDUCATION & SOCIETY

Overall, would you say that PT is a positive or negative phenomenon?

Do you see PT as an expression of pluralism in education where you as a parent can acquire educational service or a replacement service caused by inadequacies of mainstream educational system?

In your opinion, what is the nature of the influence of PT at:

(Probe for both negative and positive features)

- The level of education?
- The way pupils learn in mainstream education

- Modification of the content they learn
- The way teachers teach
- Corruptive elements in education
- The level of society?
- Social inequality – the fact that only the privileged can afford PT
- Human capital – the fact that additional educational provision raises the human capital of the society
- Shadow/grey economy

8. REQUIRED ACTIONS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Does PT require any action by educational stakeholders? (Should it be diminished or maybe stimulated and increased?)

What actions could be taken regarding PT?

Which stakeholders could/should initiate and carry out these actions?

What, if any, would be the role of parents in these actions?

This book is an excellent contribution to the literature. Its contributions are methodological, factual and analytical. The comparative qualitative approach provides contextualized analysis of private tutoring in the five countries, with a carefully prepared set of lenses. The book will stimulate methodological commentary in addition to its substantive contribution.

Mark Bray, UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education,
The University of Hong Kong

Methodologically the book is a pioneer of qualitative research in this field. It demonstrates how qualitative data can be collected, analysed and interpreted with the transparency and rigour associated with quantitative studies, and the authenticity expected of qualitative research.

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