INTERNATIONAL PEER-REVIEWED RESEARCH JOURNAL OF SATYA RANJAN COLLEGE (IPRJSRC)

A Peer-Reviewed Multidisciplinary Multilingual Research Journal

E-ISSN: _____ P-ISSN: _____

DOI: _____

Volume I, Issue I, November 2026, Page No: 92-102

Published by Satya Ranjan College, Kalain, Cachar, Assam, India

Website: https://srcjournal.org/

Socio-Demographic Disparities in Private Tutoring Expenditure: A Case Study of Hailakandi District, Assam

Dr. Abdul Basith Laskar

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics, M. C. Das College, Sonai, Cachar, Assam, India

Abstract

Education expenditure is a critical investment in human capital formation and sustainable development. While educational spending occurs at both institutional and household levels, private tutoring has emerged as a significant component of household expenditure on education in India. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2025), nearly one-fifth of rural Indian students enrolled in Classes I–VIII receive private tutoring, with an average annual expenditure exceeding Rs. 2,000. The rapid expansion of the private tutoring sector has generated concerns regarding its implications for educational equity. Since private tutoring involves additional financial costs, children from economically disadvantaged households often face limited access to supplementary learning opportunities, whereas those from financially better-off families are more likely to receive quality tutoring. This unequal access may widen disparities in academic performance, examination outcomes, and future educational and employment opportunities. Despite the growing importance of private tutoring in the education system, empirical evidence on household expenditure on private tutoring at the micro level remains limited, particularly in the context of Assam. Against this backdrop, the present study examines the variations in private tutoring expenditure across different socio-demographic groups in Hailakandi district of Southern Assam. The study is based on primary data collected through a field survey of 383 households using a structured interview schedule. Descriptive and comparative analyses are employed to identify expenditure patterns and disparities among different population groups. The findings are expected to contribute to the existing literature on household educational expenditure by providing district-level evidence on socio-demographic inequalities in private tutoring. The study also highlights important policy implications for promoting equitable access to quality education and reducing educational disparities.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Private Tutoring, ASER, Southern Assam, Hailakandi.

1. Introduction:

Private tutoring, often referred to as *shadow education*, has emerged as one of the fastest-growing segments of the education sector across the world. Over the last two decades, it has expanded rapidly and now permeates almost all socio-economic strata in both developed and developing countries (Bray, 2005). The growing demand for supplementary education reflects increasing academic competition, rising parental aspirations, and concerns regarding the quality of formal schooling. As a result, private tutoring has become an integral component of contemporary education systems.

The prevalence of shadow education is particularly remarkable across Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe, where more than half of school-going students reportedly participate in some form of private tutoring. Moreover, its expansion is no longer confined to these regions; participation in private tutoring has also been steadily increasing in countries such as the United States and Canada (Buchmann et al., 2010). This global expansion has transformed private tutoring into a multi-billion-dollar industry. It has been estimated that worldwide expenditure on shadow education exceeded US$100 billion annually by 2018 (Forbes, 2012), highlighting its growing economic significance alongside formal education.

India is no exception to this global trend. In recent decades, private tutoring has witnessed remarkable growth, particularly in urban areas where a substantial proportion of secondary and senior secondary students regularly attend coaching classes (Azam, 2016). The rapid expansion of coaching centres in India has been driven by multiple factors. First, there exists a widespread belief among parents and students that private tutoring provides a competitive advantage in public examinations. Second, performance in the Grade X and Grade XII board examinations plays a crucial role in determining admission to prestigious higher educational institutions and preferred academic streams. Consequently, intense competition for limited educational opportunities has substantially increased the demand for private tutoring.

However, the phenomenon of private tutoring is no longer restricted to urban centres or students enrolled in higher grades. In recent years, it has increasingly spread to rural areas and among students at the elementary level. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2015), nearly one-fifth of rural Indian children studying in Classes I to VIII attend private tuition, with an average annual household expenditure exceeding ₹2,000. This indicates that supplementary tutoring has become an important component of household educational expenditure even among rural families.

Despite its growing popularity, the rapid expansion of private tutoring has raised important concerns regarding educational equity and social justice. Critics argue that the increasing reliance on private tutoring may widen existing disparities in educational achievement between economically advantaged and disadvantaged households (Jung & Lee, 2010). Since private tutoring requires additional financial resources, economically weaker families often find it difficult to afford quality supplementary education, even when they recognize its potential benefits. In contrast, children from financially well-off households are more likely to access better-quality tutoring services (Kenayathulla, 2013). Such unequal access enables these students to develop stronger examination skills, achieve better academic performance, secure admission to reputed institutions, and ultimately enjoy better employment opportunities and higher lifetime earnings. Consequently, private

tutoring has the potential to reinforce existing socio-economic inequalities through unequal educational opportunities.

From a policy perspective, household expenditure on private tutoring represents a significant private cost of education that may adversely influence educational participation, particularly among low-income households. Therefore, understanding the determinants and distribution of private tutoring expenditure has become increasingly important for designing equitable educational policies. Nevertheless, empirical evidence on the socio-economic determinants of private tutoring expenditure remains limited in India, especially at the district level.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines the nature and extent of private tutoring expenditure across different socio-demographic characteristics of students in Hailakandi district of Southern Assam. By analysing household-level data, the study seeks to identify variations in tutoring expenditure across income groups, gender, caste, parental education, and other socio-demographic dimensions. The findings are expected to contribute to the growing literature on household educational expenditure and provide evidence for policy interventions aimed at reducing educational inequalities.

The remaining of the paper is organised as follows. **Section 2** presents the conceptual framework, discussing the relationship between education and sustainable development along with the determinants of household expenditure on private tutoring. **Section 3** describes the research methodology, including the data source, sampling design, and analytical methods. **Section 4** presents the empirical results and discusses the major findings. Finally, **Section 5** concludes the study by highlighting the principal findings, policy implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

2. Review of Literature:

2.1 Linkage between Education and sustainable development: A Theoretical Overview

Education is the most important and basic need for human and its development. Through education human learn to change their lifestyle and attitude to meet certain goals. It teaches human to live for its sustainability.It is only through education that one acquires the knowledge about the subjects like science, economics, politics agriculture and environment.According to the World Commission Environment and Development Report 1987, "Sustainable development is the development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. The basic need for attaining the sustainable development is the education. Through education students learn to cultivate their knowledge and utilize their innovative mind to meet SD i.e. to create a better world for present generation and future generation.The process of education should be such that, students learn to relate the subject taught in classroom to their real-life environment and utilize their knowledge to change the behavior and adopt sustainable lifestyle. Therefore, Quality education is the most important for students for their overall development. It is only through quality education that students develop their knowledge, and skill. Utilizing their knowledge and skill students can make the world a better and easy to live in. Therefore, Students are the future of world, investment on students for their education is the investment on human capital. Education builds and develops the knowledge, capability and skill of people, which in turn improves the human capital (Sen,

1997). These educated and skilled people transform to productive workers and produce the goods and services, and lead to increase the growth and development of the country.

Education and economy are interrelated to each other. Education investment is a kind of investment for future return. The increase in the education expenditure increases the growth and development of a country. An economy of any nation cannot be improved without education, and education cannot be improved without improvement on education expenditure (Chandra, 2010). A developed country with an ease can improves the education expenditure but it's not possible foran underdeveloped or any developing country to increase the education expenditure without its economic growth. There is a vicious circle, Lack in the education expenditure lowers their knowledge attainment and their capacity, which raises the problem of employment for the people of developing and under developed countries resulting lower the growth and development of the economy. Expenditure should be made to improve the education infrastructure and quality of education provided in primary and higher school should be improved, such that every student gets the same opportunity to acquire the same knowledge. A quality education should be the provision for the students, as it is only the key through which students learn better and this helps sustain their future. The present education system for students is all about scoring the max grade, rather than the quality of education. If a quality education is being provided to students in institutes itself, there is no requirement of private tutorials. Lack in the quality of education provided in education institutes pushes the students to opt for private tutorials. Not all the students of different economic sections can afford for private tutorials, lowering the opportunities for them to become future human resource. This creates the unsustainable economy for job requirements and fulfillment in future. Private tutorial is seen as an anti risk of failure by the students and parents. This is a serious issue; students depending on private tutorials for high grading are a failure for the education system and institutes (Chamberlain, 1919). Therefore, government should take responsibility for proving quality education and equal opportunity for students of all economic sections.

2.2 Factors Influencing Households' Tutoring Expenditure: A Conceptual Framework.

In order to understand the growing phenomena of private tutoring and to design policy, it is essential to understand what factors that determine demand for private tutoring. Evidence suggests that there are both several factors which can influence decisions about private tutoring expenditure. Scholars have shown divergent opinion regarding the factors that can affect participation and decisions to spend on private tutoring.

Empirical evidence supports our intuition about what factors tend to increase private tutoring expenditure of the households. Studies conducted by Assaad and El-Badawy (2004) in Ezypt, (Kim & Lee, 2004) in Korea, (Tansel & Bircan, 2006) in Turkey and (Dang, 2007) in Vietnam found the variables that most influence attendance at private tutoring include household income (household wealth for Egypt, household expenditure in the case of Turkey and Vietnam), parental education, and whether the household lives in an urban area. The latter two variables arguably correspond to household tastes for education. All these variables predict higher student attendance at private tutoring, meaning that student from richer section and more educated households living in urban areas will be more likely to attend and spend more on tutoring classes.

In addition to this, other factors that may matter across countries are the student's grade level and household size. In Egypt, students in diploma-granting years spend more on

private tutoring (Assad & El-Badawy, 2004); in Vietnam, the closer students are to the last grade in their current school level, the more they spend on private tutoring (Dang, 2007). And in Korea, Turkey, and Vietnam, the number of children in households is found to be negatively correlated with private tutoring expenditures (Kim and Lee, 2004; Tansel and Bircan, 2006; Dang, 2007). Presumably, the grade-level pattern reflects the use of private tutoring to prepare for the school-leaving examinations, while the household-size effect hints at the much-studied quantity-quality tradeoffbetween number of children and average child educational achievement. However, these variables are not used in all the studies, and the household size variable is likely to be endogenous which may bias estimated results. Thus, it is not possible to investigate whether these two patterns hold for all these five countries, or to draw firm conclusions from them. Beyond this core group of factors, other variables that affect spending on private tutoring vary from country to country. This diversity of findings may simply reflect differences in the models or in the variables available in the data sets of the different countries; alternatively, it could reflect country-level differences, region specific differences in tutoring patterns, perhaps as a result of differing institutions, cultures, or relative prices.

In the context of India Azam (2016) demonstrates that the demand for private tutoring is inelastic at each stage of schooling, which implies that private tutoring is a necessary good in the household consumption basket. He found that students from urban areas, private schools, and from better economic backgrounds, better educated parents are more likely to take private tutoring. He also outlines that there is the evidence of pro-male bias in decisions regarding participation and amount of spending on private tutoring. Moreover, in Malaysian context Kenayathulla (2013) suggests that higher-income households, urban households, households with greater numbers of school-age children, and households whose heads have secondary, upper secondary, and university education are more likely to enroll their children in private tutoring and to spend more on tutoring, once their children are enrolled. Female heads of household spend more than male heads of household, conditional on enrollment in private tutoring. Similarly, ethnicity, households' have own house are likely spend more on tutoring expenditure.

Thus, from the above empirical literature it is found that there are several factors such as gender, residence, number of school going children, parental level of education, size of the households, socio-economic status, students' grade level etc. that can influence participation and spending decisions on private tutoring. In fact, these factors are not exhaustive and require further research in order to explore the important factors that determine the participation and amount of expenditure on private tutoring.

3. Methodology:

The study is conducted in Hailakandi district by collecting primary data through field work. As per 2011 India census, Hailakandi had a population of 659,296 of which male and female were 337,890 and 321,406 respectively. Males constitute 51.25 percent of the district's population and female's 48.75 percent. Average literacy rate of Hailakandi in 2011 were 74.33 percent compared to 59.64 percent of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 80.74 and 67.60 respectively. As per 2011 India census density of Hailakandi district for 2011 is 497 people per sq. km compared to 427 in 2001. Hailakandi district administers 1,327 square kilometers of areas. According to 2011 census, 92.70 percent people lives rural areas and only 7.30 percent people lived in urban areas. Average literacy

rate in Hailakandi district (urban) as per census 2011 is 92.93 percent of which males and females are 95.31 percent and 90.54 percent literates respectively. Literacy rate in rural areas of Hailakandi district (rural) is 72.73 percent as per census data 2011. Gender wise, male and female literacy stood at 79.51 and 65.57 percent respectively.

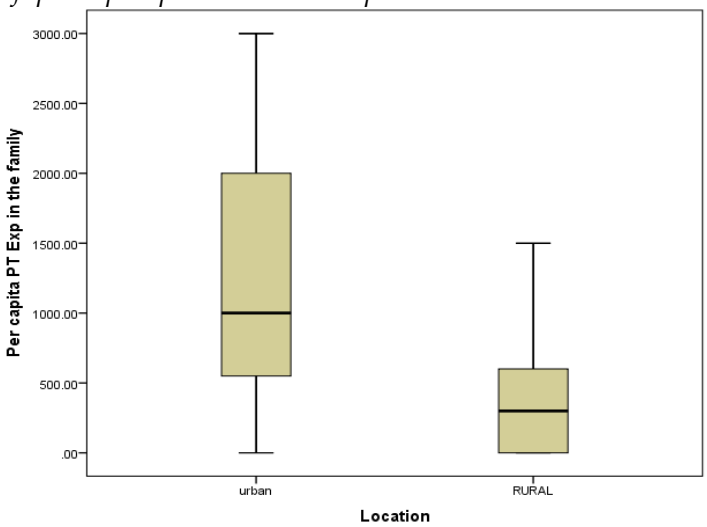
The study uses multi-stage stratified random sampling to collect data from households. The sample size covers 383 households from the study unit. Hailakandi district has five development blocks viz. Algapur, Hailakandi, Lala, Katlicherra & South Hailakandi development Block. To analyse the data, we have used different forms of diagrams like box-plot, bar diagram to understand the nature of private tutoring expenditure across different socio-demographic characteristics.

4 Results and Analysis:

4.1 Disparity of per capita private tuition expenditure between urban and rural area

Figure 1 in the form of blox plot summarises the disparity of per capita PT expenditure (PCPTE) on the basis of place of residence. It is observed that PCPTE in the family is higher in urban area than in rural area. It is revealed that in urban area average PCPTE in the family is more than Rs. 1000, while it is lower in rural area as around Rs. 400 only. Blox plot clearly represents magnitude of standard deviation (SD) through the length of the ractangle. It is to be noted that higher the length of the ractangle, higher will be the SD and lower the length of the rectangle, lower will be the SD. This follows that disparity in PCPTE in the family is quite high in urban area than in rural area.

Figure 1 Disparity of per capita private tuition expenditure between urban and rural area



Source: Authors' calculation based on field survey

4.2 Mean and SD of the PCPTE in the family based on socio-demographic characteristics

Table 2 outlines the mean and standard deviation of monthly per capita private tuition expenditure (PCPTE) of the family on the basis of different socio-demographic characteristics. Regarding guardians' occupation it is depicted that those families whose guardians are government employees, their monthly expenditure on private tuition is highest (Rs. 888.61) with a high SD followed by non-farming (Rs. 504.07), others (Rs. 323.86) and farm sector (Rs. 252.40). In terms of religion it is demonstrated that monthly per capita private tuition expenditure of the Muslim family is higher by Rs. 73.05 than Hindu family.

Similarly, in regard to caste it is observed that PCPTE of the family is higher in general category households (Rs. 645.81) than backward category (Rs. 542.42).

When PCPTE of the family is decomposed into type of houses such as pucca, semi-pucca and kucha it is revealed that monthly PCPTE is highest among those households who have pucca houses (Rs. 774.45) followed by semi-pucca (Rs. 433.06) and kutcha (Rs. 385.92). Similarly, it has also been observed that those households who read newspapers regularly, their monthly PCPTE on its children are higher (Rs. 1039.31) than those households who do not read newspapers (Rs. 482.33) regularly.

Table 1 Mean and SD of the PCPTE in the family based on socio-demographic characteristics

Occupation of the Guardian	**Mean**	**SD**
Government Sector	888.61	766.55
Non-Farming	504.07	604.90
Farming	252.40	333.05
Others	323.86	436.45
Religion		
Hindu	567.67	604.09
Muslim	640.72	725.46
Caste		
General	645.81	716.51
Backward	542.42	604.57
House Type		
Pucca	774.45	748.70
Semi-pucca	433.06	497.96
Kucha	385.92	573.78
Newspapers		
Yes	1039.31	788.85
No	482.33	593.08
Asset Holding		
Quartile 1	431.97	581.61
Quartile 2	437.55	529.61
Quartile 3	721.61	754.50
Quartile 4	876.05	755.43
Per Capita Consumption Expenditure		

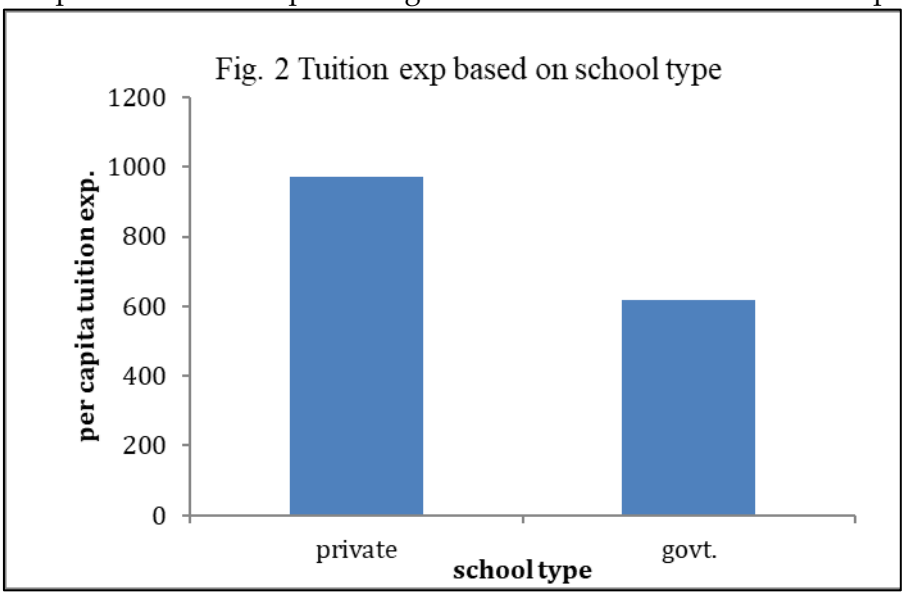
Quartile 1	246.72	299.44
Quartile 2	432.75	478.55
Quartile 3	747.79	717.47
Quartile 4	1081.28	836.29

Source: Authors' calculation based on field survey

Table 2 also provides the average monthly PCPTE of the households on the basis of asset holding and per capita total consumption expenditure of the family. It is seen that average PCPTE of the family is highest in fourth quartile (Rs. 1081.28) followed by third and fourth quartile as Rs. 747.79 and Rs. 432.75 respectively. On the other hand, it is lowest in first quartile as only Rs. 246.72. Similarly, in regard to asset holding it has been observed that those families who hold highest asset, their PCPTE are more (Rs. 876.05) than lowest asset holding families (Rs. 246.72).

4.3 Disparity of Tuition Expenditure between Govt. and Private School

Figure 2 summarises the disparity of private tuition expenditure between government and private schools. It is depicted that per capita tuition expenditure is higher in private school about Rs. 1000 per month as compared to government schools around Rs. 600 per month.



4.3 Disparity of Tuition Expenditure at Different Levels of Education

This phenomenon will lead to social inequality in the form educational attainment via inaccessibility of the private tuition by the poorer sections of the society. More specifically, it is reported in the study (see table 2) that on an average a student spends about Rs. 616 per month on private tuition in which a secondary level student spends around Rs. 477 and a higher secondary level student incurs Rs. 953 per month, and this figure is slightly low at under graduate level (Rs. 424 per month). However, when we disintegrate it into different streams then it is observed that a science student spends Rs. 2066 per month followed by commerce (Rs. 763) and arts (Rs. 367) at higher secondary level as depicted in the figure 2. This expenditure pattern clearly demonstrates that it will be very difficult task for the poor sections of the society to spend more on private tutoring. In fact, this private tuition phobia

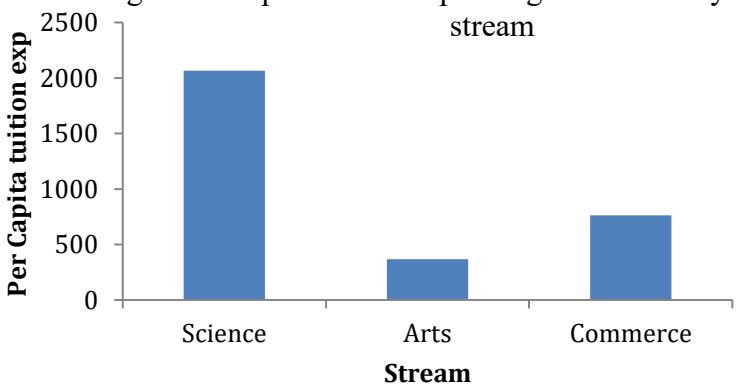
makes the attitude of the poorer guardians not to admit their children in science stream as a poor family could not spent more than Rs. 2000 per month on tuition. This will adversely affect the existing gap of educational skill between the richer and poorer section of the community not only in terms of educational attainment, but also in diversity in educational choices.

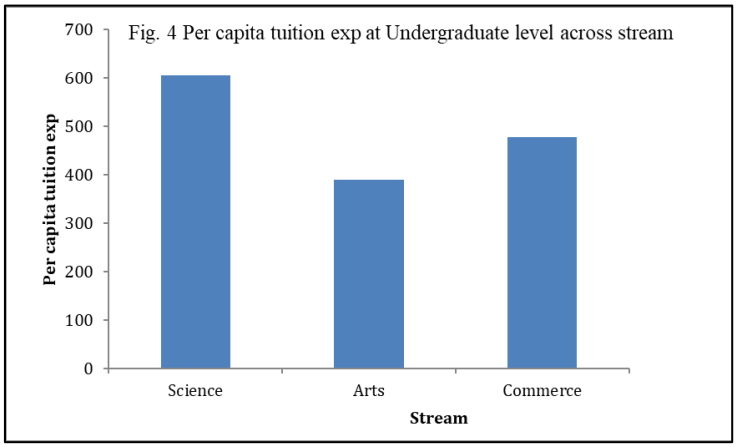
Table 2 Per capita expenditure on hiring private tuition across streams at different levels of education

Standards		Tuition expenditure (Per Capita in Rs.)	Total
Secondary		476.58	476.58
Higher secondary	Science	2065.87	952.27
	Arts	366.90	
	Commerce	763.46	
Under Graduate	Science	604.55	424.72
	Arts	389.13	
	Commerce	477.78	
Total			616.04

Source: Collected from field survey during January to March, 2016

Fig. 3 Per capita tuition exp at Higher Secondary level across stream





5. Conclusion:

Our present study reveals that private tuition is a burgeoning phenomenon in Southern part of Assam along with the developed and developing nations of the world. The study clearly reveals that per capita private tuition expenditure is more than Rs. 600 per month in a household of a student. The picture is very gloomy when we disaggregate it in to different level like higher secondary, undergraduate and across streams. A household has to spend around Rs. 2100 followed by Rs. 763 and Rs. 367 per month for science, commerce and arts stream respectively.

Thesefindings draw attention to the fact that the phenomenon of private tutoring exacerbates inequality, because more affluent households can afford to send their children for private tutoring and spend also more expenditure on it while others cannot. In this case, children from low-income families should be given an equal opportunity to access resources which children from wealthy families are able to acquire through private tutoring. This is a challenge against the Right to Education Act, 2010 that provides equal opportunities for the students in education. Thus, obvious policy is, firstly, to assist the disadvantage sections through remedial education after class so that they can at least access the benefit of tutoring. Secondly, attempt must be taken to regularize the private tutoring market. This may be done through registering the private tutors and also tutoring centres so that they cannot charge excess prices for private tuition.

References:

1. ASER, "Annual Status of Education Report," ASER Centre, New Delhi (2025)
2. Assad, R., & El-Badawy, A. (2004). Private and Group Tutoring in Egypt: Where Is the Gender Inequality. Retrieved from
3. Azam, M. (2016). Private Tutoring: Evidence from India. *Review of Development Economics*, 20(4), 739–761
4. Baker, D. P., Akiba, M., Letendre, G., & Wiseman, A. W. (2001). Worldwide shadow education outside-school learning, institutional quality of schooling and cross-national mathematics achievement. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 23*(1), 1-17.
5. Buchmann, C. (1999). The state and schooling in Kenya: Historical development and current challenges *Africa Today, 46*(1), 95-116.
6. Cameron, A., & Trivedi, P. (2009). Microeconometrics using stata. Texas: Stata Press.

7. Chandra, Abhijeet (2010). Does Government Expenditure on Education Promote Economic Growth? An Econometric analysis. http://mpra.ub.uni-munchen.de/25480,28.
8. Cheo, R. & Quah, E. (2005). Mothers, Maids and Tutors: An Empirical Evaluation of Their Effect on Children's Academic Grades in Singapore. Education Economics, 13(3), 269-285.
9. Dang, H. A. (2007). The Determinants and Impact of Private Tutoring Classes in Vietnam. Retrieved from www.phd.edu website:
10. J. H. & Lee, K. H (2010). The determinants of private tutoring participation and attendant expenditures in Korea. Asia Pecific Journals of Education, 11(1), 159–168
11. Kenayathulla, H. B. (2013). Household expenditures on private tutoring: emerging evidence from Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 14(1), 629–644
12. Kim, S., & Lee, J. H. (2001). Demand for Education and Developmental State: Private Tutoring in South Korea. Retrieved from http//ssrn.com website
13. Laskar, A.B. (2016). Private tutors and academic performance: Does number matter? *Assam Economic Review*, 9(1), 232-245.
14. Mullahy, J. (1986). Specification and testing of some modified count data models. Journal of Econometrics, 33(3) 341 – 365.
15. Sen, Amrtya (1997). Human Capital and Human Capability; Elsevier Science Ltd. World Development, 25 (12), 1959-1997
16. Tansel, A., & Bircan, F. (2006). Demand for education in Turkey: A tobit analysis of private tutoring expenditures. *Economics of Education Review, 25*(3), 303-313.
17. Winkelmann, R. and Zimmermann, K. (1995). Recent developments in count data modeling: Theory and applications. Journal of Economic Surveys, 9(1), 1 – 24 .
18. Wooldridge, J. (2002). Econometric analysis of cross section and panel data. Cambridge, MA: The MIT press.