

Policies and Tensions in the Financing of Education:

**Perspectives from UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning
(IIEP)**

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Distinguished members of the audience
Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great pleasure to be with you today. It is also a great honour. I am aware that many have come from outside the NUEPA campus as well as from within it, and I express sincere thanks for your time and attention.

I address this audience on the theme of financing of education with some hesitation, since I know that many of you are experts in this subject. NUEPA has a long history of path-breaking work in this domain, and many among you have additional expertise from other institutions and contexts. I trust that we shall be able to benefit from this expertise during the period set aside after the lecture for discussion. And I also hope that the perspectives that I shall present will complement yours and perhaps stimulate further thinking.

You will have noted from my title that I will address the topic from the perspective of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), of which I became the eighth Director in March 2006. I will talk about some of IIEP's past work in this domain, and about plans for the future. I shall also refer to some of my own work. Much of my work was conducted independently of IIEP, but parts were collaborative ventures which result from longstanding personal links. My connections with IIEP commenced over 30 years ago, and several of my books which touch on aspects of financing have been published by IIEP (Bray 1999a, 1999b, 2000). The work of IIEP in the domain of educational financing has some overlap with that of other institutions, but also has distinct characteristics arising from IIEP's mandate as a

UNESCO body responsible for capacity development through training, research and technical assistance.

To set the context, I will begin by remarking on some historical and contemporary ties between IIEP and NUEPA, and by explaining the nature of IIEP's research in the financing of education. I will then turn to aspects of my own research, showing how it fits both with the IIEP mandate and with broader development issues. I will next address IIEP's role within the UNESCO framework, and some of the opportunities and challenges ahead, before concluding with remarks on the complementary roles that IIEP and NUEPA can play.

Institutional Links and Mandates

Professor Ved Prakash has explained in his introductory remarks some aspects of the common histories of NUEPA and IIEP, which indeed deserve recall. Our two institutions can be viewed as siblings of which UNESCO is the parent. NUEPA, whose ancestry goes back to 1962, is the slightly older sibling, since IIEP was established in 1963. NUEPA's origins were in the Asian Regional Centre for Educational Planners and Administrators (ARCEPA), which in 1965 became the Asian Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (AIEPA). Four years later, it evolved into the National Staff College for Educational Planners and Administrators (NSCEPA), before becoming in 1979 the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), and finally in 2006 the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA).

IIEP's name, by contrast, has been stable. During the late 1980s the IIEP leadership considered changing IIEP's name to encompass management and/or policy-making as well as planning. This discussion was partly stimulated by debates on ways the changing nature of planning and the possible need for new vocabulary (Caillods 1989). However, the leadership decided that the existing name had adequate focus and also deserved retention because it had become established as a brand label with which the relevant public was familiar.

IIEP was established under the guidance of Philip H. Coombs, whose 1968 book *The World Educational Crisis* was prepared during the period of his Directorship (1963-68) and became a major classic. Coombs devised an innovative structure which included a 12-member Governing Board and which conferred intellectual and functional autonomy within the framework of UNESCO's mandate (Antoniades 2005, pp.21-28;

UNESCO 2005, p.5). IIEP's statutes (IIEP 1962, Article 1) state that its purpose is "to promote instruction and research on educational planning in relation to economic and social development". The Statutes add that to realise this purpose IIEP will:

- "provide instruction, by organizing in-service training courses, seminars and symposia, for senior civil servants, educational planners and economists or experts attached to institutions responsible for the promotion of social and economic development", and
- "endeavour to co-ordinate existing knowledge and experience gained on this subject, and to promote research into new concepts and methods of educational planning likely to further economic and social development".

In 1993, UNESCO's Executive Board decided that IIEP should also use its expertise to provide technical assistance (UNESCO 1993, para.39). IIEP's mission is to assist UNESCO Member States by strengthening their capacities to improve their educational policies, translate them into sound and sustainable education plans, and implement them in the most efficient and effective ways.

IIEP is also proud to have played a strong role in staff development for NUEPA and its predecessors. A considerable number of NUEPA personnel have received training at IIEP through either the Advanced Training Programme (ATP) or the shorter Visiting Trainees Programme (VTP). Staff development has also been achieved through collaboration in research, and a significant number of IIEP publications have been authored by NUEPA personnel (e.g. Sharma & Sanyal 1990; Varghese & Tilak 1991; Govinda & Varghese 1993; Govinda 1999; Prakash 1999; Juneja 2001; Sujatha 2002). The corollary has been the publication by NUEPA of various works by IIEP staff (e.g. Lourié 1992; Sanyal 1994; Hallak 1999). NIEPA has also organised major training programmes in collaboration with IIEP (e.g. Sanyal et al. 1988). These joint programmes were indeed mutually enriching.

IIEP has further benefited from NUEPA staff in IIEP's Resident Fellow programme. N.V. Varghese, who today is a senior member of IIEP staff, was initially on the NIEPA staff and came to IIEP as an ATP trainee (1984-85) before returning to NIEPA. He moved to Paris as an IIEP Resident Fellow in 1988-89 before again returning to NIEPA until in 1998 he joined IIEP on a permanent basis. R. Govinda is another distinguished figure in NUEPA who has been a Resident Fellow at IIEP (1992-94).

A specific embodiment of links between IIEP and NIEPA took the form of a Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1992 by Jacques Hallak, who was then Director of

IIEP, and Satya Bhushan, who was then Director of NIEPA. This document provided for an ongoing partnership between the two institutions in both training and research, and remains active in both intent and practice. NIEPA became an IIEP depository library, receiving automatically all books by IIEP published in English, and IIEP has much appreciated NIEPA's reciprocity in providing publications for its own Documentation Centre.

Also deserving specific note is the Asian Network of Training and Research Institutions in Educational Planning (ANTRIEP). This body was established in 1995, in large part through the leadership of IIEP and with NIEPA as the focal point, and now has 20 members (see www.antriep.net). NIEPA/NUEPA has produced regular issues of the ANTRIEP newsletter, and has collaborated with IIEP in organisation of seminars and sponsorship of other forms of professional development. An example of the way in which the tone was set is the 1998 volume of proceedings from an ANTRIEP seminar co-edited by Gabriel Carron and Anton De Grauwe in IIEP and R. Govinda in NIEPA.

IIEP Research on the Financing of Education

From the outset, financing of education was identified as a major theme for IIEP research. In 1965, Coombs prepared an *Inventory of Major Research Needs* which listed financing as one of the eight priorities (Coombs 1965, pp.25-27). The three sub-topics, which remain very relevant, were:

- Methods of Financing Education: A Comparison,
- How Much Should a Nation Spend on Education?, and
- Financing the Expansion of Compulsory Education.

Early IIEP publications on these themes included Hallak (1969), Coombs and Hallak (1972), and Ta Ngoc et al. (1972).

Turning to more recent times, under the heading 'Economics of Education – Costs and Financing' the 2007-08 IIEP Publications Catalogue listed 46 books in the English-language section (IIEP 2007a, pp.32-35). A further 18 books on this theme were in the French-language section, together with four books in the Spanish-language section. Additional documents were available in journals and through the website and other formats. Especially notable were three IIEP series:

- *Financial Management of Education Systems*. Eighteen items were published between 1995 and 2003. The chief focus was on budgeting, and the series

included studies of Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Mozambique, Slovenia, Thailand and Vietnam.

- *Mechanisms and Strategies of Educational Finance*. This series embraced 10 items published between 1999 and 2004, and had a particular focus on private and community schools. It included studies of Benin, Cambodia, Cameroun, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania and Togo.
- *Student Loans*. Nine items were in this series, including case studies of China, Hong Kong, Mauritius, Sweden, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines. The books were published between 2003 and 2006.

These publications resulted from work during the periods of IIEP's sixth and seventh medium-term plans. Thus the sixth medium-term plan (IIEP 1995, p.25), which covered the years 1996 to 2001, observed that:

Education systems mobilize very considerable human and material resources, and hence financial resources. These resources are in most cases supplied to schools by the public authorities, but also by families and communities, business and industry, and cooperation agencies. The continuing high population growth in many developing countries, wider access to basic education, and the growing social demand for post-primary levels of education, accentuate the financial needs of education systems. Faced with increasing needs, the resources that the public authorities can mobilize are limited by economic crisis, recession or inadequate growth, indebtedness, and the need to restore macro-economic balances.

The document proceeded to highlight the need for research on funding policies, budgetary management, and cost analysis.

These themes were echoed and taken a step further by the seventh medium-term plan (IIEP 2001, pp.71-72), which covered the years 2002 to 2007. The document highlighted changes in the environment for funding and managing education systems in the context of globalisation and new technologies such as the internet. Stressing the need for sector-wide approaches, the document presented five objectives in the domain of education and financial management:

- better understanding of education costs;
- analysis of the different kinds of school financing and management;
- anticipating needs and improving budget preparation;
- using audits to improve management systems; and

- improving the information system for management and monitoring.

Under each heading were presented specific outcomes for the research, which included not only increased knowledge and enhanced understanding but also preparation of simulation models and guidelines for action to improve management.

The eighth medium-term plan (IIEP 2007b), which has been designed to cover the period 2008 to 2013, again seeks to build on institutional strengths while charting new areas. The document commences by noting dimensions of poverty, inequalities, social instability, and globalisation and the knowledge society. Specific reference is made to the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals set in 2000, and to the Education for All (EFA) targets set by the global community in the same year. The document then notes links between the different components of IIEP work, which are classified as training and organisational support, producing new knowledge, and sharing knowledge for informed decisions. Under the heading of producing new knowledge, the section on costs and financing prioritises work on household costs of education, public-private partnerships, and implementation of fee-free education initiatives at primary level.

Aspects of my Own Research, and the Fit with IIEP Interests

Three dimensions of my own research may usefully be highlighted here. My remarks will show links with IIEP foci as well as with broader development objectives which may be served by both the academic community and institutions such as IIEP.

Community Financing and Household Costs of Education

During the mid-1980s I developed a research focus on community financing of education. This built on my experience as a teacher in community schools in Kenya and Nigeria, which had contributed to an earlier publication (Bray et al. 1976). Work for the Commonwealth Secretariat led to a pair of books (Bray 1986a; Bray with Lillis 1988) which were widely recognised as an innovative contribution to a theme which had received little scholarly or policy-oriented attention (see e.g. Crossley & Onagi 1987; Ozanne 1989; Narman 1990). NIEPA's Jandhyala B.G. Tilak (1989, p.285) generously wrote about the 1988 volume that:

Though the book is largely devoted to a few African, and a few Asian ..., and one South American ... country, education finance planners in most developing countries can hardly afford to miss it.

The book recognised that in many settings government resources were inadequate to provide sufficient quantity and quality of education, and that community resources were required to fill the gap. In some countries the community inputs occurred by default, but in other countries educational planners had active policies to elicit community contributions and to secure appropriate balances.

Another reviewer of the 1988 book (Kearney 1989, p.313) described it as an “excellent beginning”, and with the latter word in mind I followed up on this theme in the mid-1990s as a Visiting Research Fellow at the World Bank in Washington DC. One book published at that time (Bray 1996a) addressed the topic of community financing within the context decentralization of educational administration, which was being advocated by international agencies with increasing vigour. During this period and subsequently, decentralization was also recognised by IIEP as a force which significantly changed the landscape of educational planning (Malpica Faustor 1995; Govinda 1997; McGinn & Welsh 1999; Lugaz & De Grauwe 2006). Decentralisation required strengthened capacity at sub-national levels and new relationships between the various actors at national, provincial and local levels.

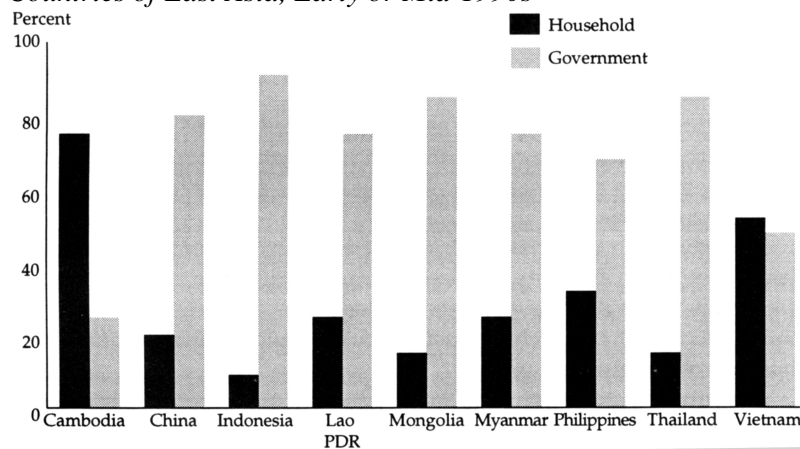
A related book produced during that period (Bray 1996b) focused on household and community financing in nine countries of East Asia. This work was published by the World Bank in association with UNICEF, having originated in a study commissioned by the latter. The book focused on nine countries which could be classified in three groups:

- ◆ *Longstanding capitalist*
 - Indonesia,
 - Philippines,
 - Thailand.
- ◆ *Longstanding socialist*
 - China,
 - Laos,
 - Vietnam.
- ◆ *Recently converted from socialism to capitalism*
 - Cambodia,
 - Mongolia,
 - Myanmar.

The study showed that in some countries household costs were considerable even in public systems of education (Figure 1). This was the case even in the three countries (Cambodia, Mongolia and Philippines) in which fee-free provision of education was enshrined in the national constitutions. Household costs were especially high proportions of total costs in countries which had recently converted from socialism to capitalism and

in countries which remained socialist. To some extent this reflected deliberate government policies; but, particularly in the countries with the greatest proportions of household expenditures, patterns arose by default. In these countries economic restructuring had plunged government financing into crisis, and households were forced to make substantial expenditures to bridge gaps with the goal of securing education of adequate quantity and/or quality. This matches the findings of research in India by Tilak (e.g. 2000, 2003).

Figure 1: Government and Household Financing of Public Primary Education in Nine Countries of East Asia, Early or Mid-1990s

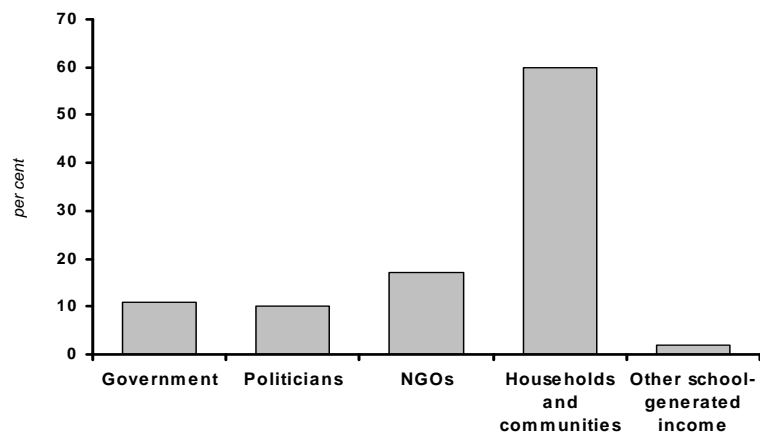


Source: Bray (1996b), p.32.

Among the components in Figure 1, the pattern in Cambodia was the most striking: even in public primary education, resources provided by the government were estimated to be less than a third of those provided by households. NUEPA's Jandhyala Tilak had found similar patterns in Cambodia a few years earlier (Tilak 1994). Both UNESCO and UNICEF desired deeper investigation, and commissioned me to undertake a more detailed study in conjunction with Cambodia's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. During 1997 and 1998, I worked with teams at the national and provincial levels to collect data from a stratified sample of primary schools and their communities in 12 of the country's 23 provinces and municipalities. The definitions of both government and household costs aimed to be comprehensive. Government costs were defined to include not only teachers' salaries and materials, but also administration and training. Household costs were defined to include uniforms, levies of various kinds, transportation to and from school, books and stationery, and supplementary private tutoring.

Figure 2 summarises the findings of the Cambodian study, which was published by IIEP in collaboration with UNICEF under the title *The Private Costs of Public Schooling* (Bray 1999a). It provides more detail than Figure 1, showing inputs from external aid agencies and from school self-generated income in addition to inputs from the government and from households. A further category covered resources provided by politicians. The data were collected during a time in Cambodia’s history when politicians from two major rival groups were competing for ascendancy. It seemed likely that some of the funds expended by politicians came from government sources, and thus that the category of politicians’ inputs and government inputs overlapped. However, the sources of the funds allocated by the politicians were not transparent, and the study therefore retained the category as a separate item.

Figure 2: Sources of Finance for Public Primary Schools in Cambodia, 1997/98



NGOs = Non-Governmental Organisations

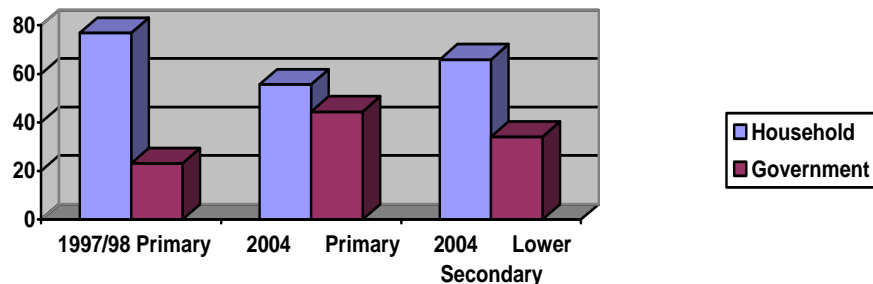
Source: Bray (1999a), p.42.

Several years later I undertook a follow-up study, this time commissioned by the World Bank. This was especially interesting because few studies of this type from any region of the world had examined changes in household costs over time in a systematic way. The research permitted the monitoring of changes through the same sample of primary schools. Since the follow-up study also required data from lower secondary schools, it also permitted comparison across levels of education.

Figure 3 shows an extract of data from Figure 2 to indicate the balance between household and government resourcing in 1997/98, which is then compared with the findings from the 2004 survey of primary schools. The proportionate burden on

households was shown to have decreased. This reflected in particular the impact of the Priority Action Programme (PAP), which had been launched by the government with support from external aid agencies in 2000 in order “to reduce the cost burden on the poorest families to increase participation of their children in grades 1-9” (Cambodia 2001, p.1). At the same time, the research showed that the households still had to meet large proportions of the total cost of lower secondary schooling – and since the unit costs of lower secondary were much higher than those of primary (estimated at 392,000 riels compared with 154,000 riels), low-income families which somehow managed to overcome the financial barriers at the primary level evidently found themselves confronting even greater barriers at the lower secondary level.

Figure 3: Balances between Household and Government Financing, 1997/98 and 2004, Primary and Lower Secondary Schooling, Cambodia



Source: Bray & Bunly (2005), p.67.

The fact that the 1999 book on *The Private Costs of Public Schooling* was published by IIEP is one obvious indicator of the match between my research and the interests of IIEP. More broadly, the research fitted the priorities of IIEP’s six and seventh medium-term plans, as described above. IIEP work was commonly cited alongside my work by independent analysts (e.g. Tietjen 1999; Daun 2002; Hannum 2003; Vinokur 2004), and my research on household costs was cited alongside IIEP work in UNESCO’s *EFA Global Monitoring Report* (UNESCO 2003, 2005b). This exemplifies the convergence of the research that I conducted and that IIEP conducted in serving a wider audience of academics and professionals.

Student Loans for Higher Education

Another dimension of my research with connections to IIEP concerned student loans for higher education, on which my publications during the 1980s and 1990s focused on Hong Kong and mainland China (Bray 1986b; 1991; Li & Bray 1992). My research

benefited from participation in a workshop organised under IIEP auspices in Malaysia during 1990 which was also attended by NIEPA's Jandhyala B.G. Tilak (see Tilak 1992); and in turn my writings contributed to IIEP-sponsored cross-national work (Woodhall 1991a).

Conceptually, this work on student loans could be linked to that on household financing of primary and secondary education. Philip Coombs (1985, p.230) had noted the strong tendency of education systems to subsidise high-income groups more than low-income groups. Because children in low-income families were more likely to drop out of the system before reaching the tertiary level, fee-free higher education was more likely to benefit the rich than the poor. Coombs presented data from Latin America which suggested that cumulative public expenditure per pupil was in the region of just US\$113 for low-income groups but US\$4,753 for high-income groups (Table 1). Similar remarks were made in the same year by Psacharopoulos and Woodhall (1985, pp.272-277), who described various student loan schemes for higher education (pp.152-156). They argued (p.280) that:

Although the introduction of fees and student loans would not, by itself, ensure more equitable distribution of education opportunities, in many cases it would be a step in the right direction and would reduce the anomaly in many developing countries that permits those who reap the greatest financial rewards from education to enjoy the greatest subsidy.

Table 1: Public Expenditures on Education Per Child by Income Groups: A Composite Profile of 19 Latin American Countries (ca. 1970)

<i>Population by income level</i>	<i>Percentage of total population</i>	<i>Average years of schooling</i>	<i>Cumulative public expenditure per pupil (1970 US dollars)</i>
Low	65	2.5	113
Medium low	20	8.6	596
Medium high	10	14.2	2,687
High	5	17.0	4,753

Source: Coombs (1985), p.242.

Some of Woodhall's follow-up work on student loans was conducted under IIEP auspices. Specifically, Woodhall led a set of forums from which were developed publications on student loans in Western Europe and the USA, Asia, English-speaking Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean (Woodhall 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1993). The

books were part of a series which also included focus on Central Asia and Mongolia (Kitaev 1996), and which paralleled a focus on sub-Saharan Africa (Péano 1999).

Subsequently, IIEP co-published with UNESCO's Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education the set of studies mentioned above on student loans in China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines. The synthesis report (Ziderman 2004, p.15) observed that student loan schemes were in place in over 50 countries around the world, and that elsewhere proposals to introduce such schemes were a recurring theme of political debate. One factor in this debate was the mixed record of student loans, since many schemes had disappointing performance in meeting their objectives and in securing financial sustainability. The Hong Kong scheme on which my research had focused was among the older and relatively successful ones; but that scheme underwent various instructive changes (Chung 2003). Ziderman's synthesis study concluded (2004, pp.93-105) with a set of lessons from experience, highlighting the merits of alternative models.

The Shadow Education System

A third dimension of my work can also be linked to household costs, and was stimulated by the 1996 book on the nine countries of East Asia and the follow-up work in Cambodia (Bray 1996b, 1999a). Part of this research focused on supplementary private tutoring, which was a huge phenomenon in Cambodia. Particularly problematic, I felt, were circumstances in which classroom teachers provided private lessons for their own pupils at the end of the school day. I understand that this phenomenon has also been evident in India. The practice opens the system to a form of blackmail in which teachers, who set class examinations and determined which pupils would proceed from one grade to the next, can pressurise their pupils to pay for extra lessons in order to complete the curriculum which have not been fully covered during the period of normal schooling (Bray 1996b, p.16; Bray 1999a, p.61). With a broader comparative lens, I realised that private tutoring was common in other parts of the world, especially in East Asia, but that it did not always take the same form or have the same implications for household costs, social stratification and classroom learning.

My first book to focus exclusively on this theme was published in 1999 in IIEP's series 'Fundamentals of Educational Planning' (Bray 1999b). Following Stevenson and Baker (1992), the book used the metaphor of a shadow with the title *The Shadow*

Education System: Private Tutoring and its Implications for Planners. The metaphor fitted the phenomenon well for several reasons. As the book explained (p.17):

First, private supplementary tutoring only exists because the mainstream education exists; second, as the size and shape of the mainstream system change, so do the size and shape of supplementary tutoring; third, in almost all societies much more public attention focuses on the mainstream than on its shadow; and fourth, the features of the shadow system are much less distinct than those of the mainstream system.

The book added (pp.17-18) that shadows can of course be useful:

Just as the shadow cast by a sundial can tell the observer about the passage of time, so the shadow of an education system can tell the observer about change in societies. However, in some countries parents, educators and politicians are highly critical of the ways in which private tutoring has come to dominate the lives of families and pupils. Tutoring commonly creates and perpetuates social inequalities, and it consumes human and financial resources which perhaps could be used more appropriately in other activities. Critics add that private tutoring can distort the curriculum in the mainstream system, upsetting the sequence of learning planned by mainstream teachers and exacerbating diversity in classrooms. In this sense, unlike most shadows, private supplementary tutoring is not just a passive entity but may negatively affect even the body which it imitates.

The book was the first cross-national study to focus in a substantial way on the phenomenon. It was reviewed very positively in professional journals (see e.g. Postlethwaite 2000; Chapman 2001; Wang 2001; Choi 2005), and is regarded as a foundation item in a literature which has since grown (see e.g. Foondun 2002; Baker & LeTendre 2005; Silova et al. 2006). IIEP has itself been a major sponsor of that growing literature, including through the invitation to me to write a second book on the theme. This work was included in the series 'Ethics and Corruption in Education'. It was entitled *Adverse Effects of Supplementary Private Tutoring: Dimensions, Implications, and Government Responses* (Bray 2003), and has also been widely welcomed (see e.g. Thomas 2004; Irvine 2005; Roy 2005; Seth 2006). A chapter on this theme was included in the synthesis volume on ethics and corruption which attracted considerable attention worldwide (Hallak & Poisson 2007, pp.257-272).

As a follow-up on this work, in July 2007 IIEP hosted a Policy Forum entitled ‘Confronting the Shadow Education System: What Government Policies for What Private Tutoring?’. That event built on the tradition of IIEP Policy Forums by bringing together policy-makers, planners, researchers, practitioners and parents from a wide range of perspectives. The occasion advanced understanding by widening the focus of previous discussions and by concentrating on the practical implications for policy-makers and planners. Contributions included a paper by Sujatha (2007) which was based on her work in NUEPA and was especially valuable since it presented empirical data of a type not previously available. The Policy Forum agreed that the topic deserved considerably greater attention by planners, since it has major implications for social stratification, for mainstream school systems, and for household costs. New technologies are bringing new forms of tutoring, and the existence of companies in India which provide tutoring for pupils in Europe and North America over the internet is particularly noteworthy (Nanda 2005). This sort of market-driven activity which operates on a cross-national basis through cyberspace raises issues for planners which would have been inconceivable to previous generations.

Supporting the Priorities within the UNESCO System

As a UNESCO Institute, IIEP must naturally fit within the priorities of its parent body; and in turn the work of UNESCO must fit that of the United Nations as a whole. In most domains this is straightforward. IIEP’s medium-term plans make explicit links to the priorities of both UNESCO and the wider United Nations system (e.g. IIEP 2007b, pp.12-15). At the same time, IIEP has the necessary intellectual autonomy to be able to advance on cutting-edge themes that might not be possible if the agenda were controlled by the political imperatives of UNESCO’s 193 Member States. The Institute’s work on corruption could be an example. Like UNESCO as a whole, IIEP’s principal focus is on low-income and developing countries. Thus, while some of the research mentioned above has concerned the prosperous parts of Asia and Europe, much more has focused on sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Latin America.

As a UNESCO body, IIEP benefits from access to governments through the UNESCO National Commissions and through the UNESCO governing bodies including the biennial General Conference. This is of great importance to IIEP’s work, since it assists in the translation of research findings into policy and practice. That, indeed, is part of IIEP’s mandate in a way that it is not generally the case for universities and many

comparable bodies. IIEP views itself as a body responsible for capacity development, and its research will be of little use if it merely lies between the covers of books and journals. This requires IIEP to select themes for research that have policy relevance, and to pay attention to dissemination and follow-up. One way to ensure that the research is used is to involve local researchers in the conduct of the work. IIEP has a long tradition of doing this, and gives it priority even if at times it slows down the process of the research.

In the domain of finance, a usual complaint from individuals and organizations is that they do not have enough money. IIEP's work shows that this complaint may not always be completely valid. A significant element of IIEP work is related to flows of external aid, and IIEP views with concern the fact that aid to basic education, which had risen from US\$2.7 billion in 2000 to US\$5.1 billion between 2000 and 2004 – i.e. the years immediately following the 2000 World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal – fell in 2005 to US\$3.7 billion (UNESCO 2007, pp.154-155). At the same time, IIEP is aware that availability of financial resources is only part of the problem, and that a further issue concerns absorptive capacity (Bray 2002, p.52; Roodman 2006; Rose 2007). As observed by Fredriksen (2005, p.9) with particular reference to Africa, both financial and technical aid are needed:

unless increased financing is accompanied with high-quality technical support, the impact on EFA is unlikely to meet expectations. Low impact would, in turn, affect future aid volume as funds are increasingly linked to performance and implementation.

Thus, a major focus of IIEP work lies in resolving some of the financial tensions through capacity development. NUEPA is also engaged in such work.

In turn, when conceptualising its research IIEP is mindful that it may have a different definition of “cutting edge” from that which dominates in the university world. In the latter, research is generally considered to be at the cutting edge if it generates new knowledge. IIEP also seeks new knowledge; but in IIEP's case the question is not so much whether it is new in a fundamental sense (i.e. not previously known by anybody in the world) as whether it is new to the people who are receiving and working with the knowledge. Many countries have considerable turnover of Ministers of Education, which commonly means that the individuals at the apex of the system are not well acquainted with the research and other knowledge that is well known by professionals in their ministries or universities. Even educational planners who have been in the system for

some decades may not be well acquainted with research findings since they have previously played different roles in the system, e.g. as classroom teachers and school principals. IIEP efforts to get research findings to these people are facilitated if they have themselves been involved in the direction, design and/or conduct of the research. And IIEP is aware that research which carries a recent date and a label which is specific to the country or locality of the decision-maker is more likely to be heeded than findings which are old and from distant locations.

This implies that IIEP's future work will focus both on themes which are new in the sense of not having received significant attention anywhere and on themes which are not so new in that sense but which may nevertheless be new to the target audience. The three broad domains for the period of IIEP's eighth medium-term plan (2008-13) will be household costs, public-private partnerships, and fee-free primary education.

Conclusion

In this lecture I have covered a huge amount of ground in a short time. My topic has necessitated an overview of themes which in turn has precluded commentary in depth. I shall be glad to elaborate on any of this, not only during the discussion session immediately after this lecture but also through subsequent follow-up.

It has been a particular pleasure to make these remarks in NUEPA, which has been a close associate of IIEP throughout the history of both institutions. The mandate of NUEPA is in many ways similar to that of IIEP, providing training not only for planners in India but also, through the International Diploma Programme, for other countries of the world. Like IIEP, NUEPA focuses on training, research and technical assistance. NUEPA's university status has brought a PhD programme which will in turn bring a stronger academic orientation than will be found in IIEP. Nevertheless, the two bodies retain great complementarities in roles, and I much look forward to discussions on ways in which our institutions can extend the long history of collaboration.

In the domain of educational financing there will always be tensions, and there will always be a need to review policies. The tensions to some extent arise from the total magnitude of available resources, but even more strongly arise from issues of resource distribution. They reflect political considerations, e.g. on the balances between primary, secondary and higher education, and on the balances between provision by households, governments and external aid agencies. The appropriateness of policies will vary according to location, and patterns will need to be significantly different in, say, Malta,

Mexico, Mongolia and Mozambique. One major role for a body such as IIEP is to act as a resource in a comparative context, encouraging planners to learn from the experiences of others both in their own geographic regions and more distantly. A related role for IIEP is to help to analyse changes over time. IIEP seeks to map emerging themes and to identify challenges before they reach mainstream agendas. As it happens, parts of my own career have converged with this role, as is evidenced by my work on community and household financing of education, on student loans, and on supplementary private tutoring.

Since most of the work that I have charted in this lecture was conducted from a university base, before joining IIEP, it can again be taken as an illustration of the converging roles of academic institutions and international agencies. In turn, this implies that IIEP can continue to benefit from partnerships with the university sector, and this certainly includes NUEPA.

Again I thank you sincerely for the honour of the invitation to deliver this lecture. I look forward to the discussion which may now follow, and to the exchange of views which will enhance our mutual understanding of policies and tensions in the financing of education in different settings and at different points in time.

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