

The Attitudes of Chinese Teachers of English and Mathematics Towards Their Students Receiving Private Tutoring

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Abstract: *Private tutoring continues to grow and expand around the world. However, in 2021 the Chinese government suddenly enacted a double reduction policy. This policy has been described as the strictest policy on private tutoring. This is because it requires all private tutoring in academic subjects to be banned. This policy has revived enthusiasm for private tutoring research. However, the majority of current research on China is from the perspective of students and parents. Few studies have been conducted from the perspective of teachers in mainland China. Therefore, this qualitative study aims to understand the attitudes of Chinese female primary school teachers towards private tutoring and the reasons. The research used semi-structured online interviews to investigate the views of 10 teachers on private tutoring. The final results of the study show that the attitude of teachers towards private tutoring varies according to the situation. Factors influencing teachers' attitudes were categorised into three themes: students, families and teachers themselves.*

Keywords: Shadow education; Private tutoring; Double reduction policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction of the Topic

Influenced by Confucianism, education has always been highly valued in China and is regarded as the only way to succeed (Sun et al., 2013). Private tutoring is also known as shadow education, which means a shadow of mainstream education (Bray, 1999). Bray and Lykins (2012 p. 1) refer to private tutoring as 'tutoring in academic subjects that are provided for a fee and that take place outside standard school hours. Therefore, private tutoring can be seen as a private service that can supplement students' knowledge of academic subjects for a fee.

Over the past period of time, private tutoring has grown rapidly like an invasive species (Bray and Kobakhidze, 2015) within East Asia (Zhang and Bray, 2020). In terms of economic reasons. Because of the development of the market economy, private tutoring has been able to gradually become accepted by the market and develop and expand in China (Wei and Bray, 2015). From a cultural perspective, Chinese people have always placed a high value on education due to the influence of Confucianism culture. (Feng, 2021).

In addition to the reasons for the development of private tutoring, the impact of private tutoring has also been the focus of some research. The most popular impact is that private tutoring can help students improve their academic performance (Guo et al., 2020). However, private tutoring also has some bad impacts, such as increasing social inequality (Verdis, 2002); increasing the financial burden on families (Adhikari, 2022); and perhaps causing teacher corruption (Heyneman, 2011). Perhaps because of these negative effects, the Chinese government's policy on private tutoring has been gradually tightened since 2010 (Wang, 2022). It was only recently that the new policy on further reducing the burden of homework and out-of-school training on students was introduced, as the policy emphasised the banning of all tutoring in academic subjects. Therefore pushing the discussion of private tutoring to the forefront (Eryong, Xue and Li, 2022).

The authors of this dissertation found that the majority of these research studies on private tutoring have been conducted through the lens of students and parents. However, there seems to be very little research on private tutoring from the perspective of teachers. Although few studies have looked at mainstream school teachers' perspectives on private tutoring in mainland China (Khaydarov, 2020; Kobakhidze, 2014). Nevertheless, private tutoring can also influence mainstream teachers (Luo and Forbes, 2019). Furthermore, it is through the perspective of mainstream teachers that one can gain an additional perspective on private tutoring.

1.2 Research Question

English and mathematics are two popular subjects in private tutoring (Pan, 2015). Chinese parents consider these two subjects to require a strong foundation, which is why many students start learning them in primary school, and because many mainstream primary schools start teaching English in grade 3 (Ruan & Leung, 2012). Therefore, the research question in this research is:

The attitudes of Chinese primary school teachers of English and mathematics in grades 3 to 6 (around 8 to 11 years of age) towards their students receiving private tutoring and the why.

1.3 The Structure of the Dissertation

The first chapter introduces the background sources of my topic and the reasons why I chose it.

The second chapter is a literature review. In this chapter will find literature that fits the topic being critically compared and analysed.

The third chapter section is the methodology of the research. I have chosen a qualitative research approach. Firstly I will introduce the concepts and the relevant paradigm regarding qualitative research methods, after which I will present my research sample. Additionally, the data collection methods will be presented as well as the data analysis methods. Finally, the ethical considerations in my research and how my research meets reliability and validity will be presented.

The fourth section will show the results of the study and discussion. The results of the data analysis and the previous literature will be critically discussed.

The fifth chapter section is the final chapter. In this section will summarise the results of my study. And Limitations and reflect on my research will be presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

I have split the literature review into four key sections.

The first part is: what is shadow education and private tutoring. This section will show the definition of shadow education and private tutoring and how this definition has developed.

The second part is: the development of private tutoring in China. This section will critically analyse the reasons for the development of private tutoring in China in the Chinese context. There is also the role of mathematics and English in China.

The third part is: the attitudes of Chinese students and parents towards private tutoring. As there are relatively few papers related to the attitudes of students and teachers towards private tutoring. Therefore, this will be started with the attitudes of students and parents. This section will be divided into two parts: the reasons why Chinese students receive private tutoring and the impact of private tutoring.

The fourth section is: Attitudes of teachers towards private tutoring. Since there is a paucity of literature on the attitude of teachers towards private tutoring in mainland China, some references are drawn from Hong Kong, China and other countries. Therefore, some studies from Hong Kong, China and other countries have been drawn upon. I hope to find some lessons from these studies for my research.

2.1 What are Shadow Education and Private Tutoring?

The concept of shadow education first arose in the 1990s, and Marimuthu et al. (1991) conducted a qualitative ethnographic study of the impact of exam-driven education on students' values in Malaysia and found that a large proportion of students receive private tutoring in order to sit national exams. They report that private tutoring is a rapidly growing phenomenon in Malaysia. They refer to private tutoring as a 'shadow educational system' (p. 6) due to the overwhelming number of students receiving private tutoring. This concept is continued by Stevenson and Baker (1992) in a study of Japanese high school students. Furthermore, George's (1992) research in Singapore also uses the concept of shadow education.

Although they all utilise the phrase shadow education, Marimuthu et al. (1991) do not define the concept of shadow education but rather liken private education to shadow education. George (1992) broadly defines shadow education as any education external to the mainstream school that helps students to learn in the mainstream school that can be considered shadow education. Stevenson and Baker (1992, p. 1639) indicate that shadow education is "a set of educational activities that occur outside formal schooling and are designed to enhance the student's formal school career". It is similar to George's (1992) definition, but Stevenson and Baker (1992) place more emphasis on the private sector. Bray (1999, p.20) has narrowed the concept of shadow education. Bray attributes three characteristics to shadow education: "supplementation", "privateness", and "academic subjects taught in mainstream schools". Firstly, supplementation means that the subjects being tutored can cover the subjects in mainstream schools. Secondly, privateness means enterprises or individuals tutor that shadow education for the purpose of earning profits. The third characteristic of academic subjects refers to the tutoring provided by shadow education in academic subjects that are used for examinations in mainstream schools, such as languages and mathematics. While previous studies on shadow education have been national or regional in scope, Bray's (1999) study is a global research project. Thus, this study further promotes the concept of shadow education (Zhang & Bray, 2020). This definition of shadow education is consequently widely used (Khaydarov, 2020)

However, as shadow education has rapidly grown, the expression of shadow education seems to have shown some limitations. Shadow education has been described as a shadow of mainstream schools, which implies that the content and format of shadow education are similar to that of mainstream education (Gordon, 2020). Nevertheless, several studies suggest that as shadow education develops, some tutoring companies are gradually differentiating the teaching content, focus and methods from mainstream schools, although academic subjects are somewhat similar to those of mainstream schools (Bray, 2021).

Because shadow education is limited by its name, this dissertation will use private tutoring instead of shadow education for this research. Private tutoring is widely referred to as shadow education, and shadow education is also regarded as a synonym for private tutoring (Hu, 2020). The three characteristics of shadow education are also shared by private tutoring. Private tutoring is defined as an activity that provides supplementary tutoring in academic subjects for a charge, yet private tutoring may provide tuition that exceeds what is taught in mainstream schools. It is also delivered on a one-to-one or small group scale (Bray, 2022). With the expansion of private tutoring, the format of private tutoring has appeared in the form of large-scale courses, live courses on the internet and video playback courses have also become forms of private tutoring (Kwo & Bray, 2011). Since the concept of private tutoring is not controversial, private tutoring will be used instead of shadow education in the rest of this dissertation.

Private tutoring is spreading worldwide (Mazawi & Sultana, 2013) and is becoming a part of daily life for many families (Zhang and Bray, 2020). In Byun et al.'s (2018) survey of 15-year-old students in sixty-four countries and territories worldwide, 33% of students have participated or are currently participating in private tutoring. 40% of US students choose to receive private tutoring before grade 12 to prepare for entrance exams (Ho, Park and Kao, 2019), and 81% of secondary school students in Egypt choose to receive private tutoring (Sobhy, 2012). From 2007 to 2013, private tutoring agencies in Thailand jumped by 117% (Akaraphanth, 2015), and a survey by Xue and Ding (2009) of 4,772 households in mainland China showed that the proportion of primary, middle and high school students receiving private tutoring was 73.8%, 65.6% and 53.5%. In Cambodia, a study by Dawson (2011) of eight primary schools indicates that half of the students receive private tutoring. These figures indicate that more and more students are receiving private tutoring and that private tutoring is available to a wide range of students, from primary to high school.

There are numerous studies on private tutoring in Asia (Bray, 1999; 2015; Jheng, 2015; Wei and Guan, 2021; Yung, 2021). As private tutoring is a common and fast-growing phenomenon in Asia (Mori and Baker, 2010), Manzon and Areepattamannil (2014, p. 389) refer to Asia as "a cradle of private tutoring". In related research in Asia, shadow education in China has been the focus of study (Zhang, 2021). Students in Shanghai, China, spend an average of 2.08 extra hours per week on private tutoring, ranking ninth out of 65 countries and regions (Wang and Guo, 2018.) Wang's (2012) data for three large cities in China reveals that Grade 7 students receive an average of 1.72 hours of private tutoring in mathematics per week, and Peng's (2008) study of Wuhan, China, found that 39.6% of Grade 4-9 students receive private tutoring in mathematics. The above data are from several large and well-known cities in China, but there are few studies on small cities in China. This dissertation will thus be conducted in a small city in Hebei Province, China. Although the city is small and has a low level of economic development, access to private tutoring is still widespread. The next section will describe the development of private tutoring in China and the evolution of related policies.

2.2 The Context: The Development of Private Tutoring in China

Summarising several literatures and studies, this dissertation proposes that the basis for the development of private tutoring in China should be analysed from three perspectives: economic, cultural and policy. From an economic perspective, since the 1980s China's neoliberal market economy has developed (Coase and Wang, 2012) and this shift in economic conditions has supported the growth and development of the private tutoring industry in China (Zhang and Bray, 2017). Culturally, Confucianism is the foundation of China's culture where education is the basis for development (Feng, 2021). In addition China is the birthplace of the examination system (Zhang and Bray

,2017), in which talent selection in China from ancient times to the present day has been conducted through examinations (Wu, 2015). Due to such cultural reasons, Chinese people attach great significance to education. Therefore this is one of the foundations on which private tutoring has been able to develop in China (Wang, 2013). In terms of policy, after China resumed the college entrance examination in 1977, the Chinese government began to choose to focus its educational development on pursuing the quality education, thus the financial resources are concentrated on some key schools (You, 2007). This has resulted in increased competition among students, who wish to improve their competitiveness by receiving private tutoring so that they can enter priority schools (Zhang and Bray, 2015). This dissertation considers that this is one of the reasons why private tutoring has been able to grow and expand in China. In an analysis of private tutoring policies in China and the US, Wang (2022) indicates that China's policies on private tutoring have been tightening since 2010. The first formal regulation of the private tutoring market was proposed in 2010 due to the rapid growth and expansion of private tutoring in the early 21st century, which became a heavy burden for students. In 2015, the Ministry of Education issued the strictest policy against private tutoring, which prohibits serving primary and secondary school teachers from working as private tutors. This ban comes as the government at all scales believes that the involvement of teachers from mainstream schools in private tutoring is a challenge to educational equity. Therefore, such a ban was implemented (Feng, 2021). In order to reduce the burden on students, the Ministry of Education continues to further restrict private tutoring in 2018. In 2021, the Ministry of Education issued "Opinions on Further Alleviating the Burden of Homework and After-School Tutoring for Students in Compulsory Education", and as this policy is based on cutting two This policy is often referred to as the 'double reduction policy' because it aims to reduce two aspects. The policy exceeds all previous policies in that it requires a strict ban on tutoring for students in academic subjects during any holiday period and no new private tutoring providers are allowed (Wu, 2021).

Most of China has a six-year primary school, three-year junior high school, three-year senior high school and four-year university education model. After nine years of compulsory education students are required to pass a high school entrance examination for selection into high school. After finishing high school, students need to pass the national college entrance examination to enter university (Liu and Bray, 2017). The academic subjects that will certainly be tested in these two very important entrance exams are mathematics, English and language (Zhang, 2011). Mathematics and English are highly valued in families' investment in education (Pan, 2015).

Chinese families invest a lot of money in their students' mathematics learning, such as buying a lot of materials and engaging in private tutoring (Wang et al., 2014). In China, mathematics is divided into general mathematics and Olympic mathematics, which is far more difficult, so in order to maintain a coherent teaching schedule, mainstream schools do not support teachers to teach content related to Olympic mathematics, thus making private tutoring the only way to learn it (Zhou, 2010). Liu (2018) mentions the role of Olympic mathematics in his study Liu (2018), through his analysis of Chinese junior high school admissions policies analysis and interviews with stakeholders such as private tutoring schools, local officials and public school headmasters concluded that while the government determines the attendance of public school students during the nine years of compulsory education through the household registration In addition to this admissions channel, public primary schools A number of schools state in their admissions process that students with winning certificates from Olympic mathematics competitions can be admitted directly, and thus participation in Olympic mathematics competitions has become an option for many families to access good quality schools. And with many Olympiads being run by private tutors, it appears that Olympiads have become an educational industry in China (Wang and Guo, 2018).

English is one of the crucial fields of investment for Chinese families, similar to Olympic mathematics, and the government of China has been investing in English language education since the 1980s. In the context of China's market economy, English is associated with social status, career prospects and competitiveness (Guo et al., 2013). English has been taught in the third grade of primary school since 2001 (Ruan and Leung, 2012). English language education in mainstream schools still focuses on developing students' test-taking skills in English, but students' English application skills are poor (Fan, 2010). There is also a widespread belief that the earlier the language is

learned, and Liu and Bray's (2018) survey of 4,259 Chinese parents has found that parents want to expose their students to English earlier in order to develop their interest in learning English.

2.3 Attitudes of Chinese Students and Parents Towards Private Tutoring

Research on how Chinese parents and students perceive private tutoring has been the focus of a number of studies (Bray, 2006; Kwo and Bray, 2014; Zhang and Bray, 2017). In summarising several pieces of literature, this dissertation finds that many studies examining students' and parents' attitudes have used the reasons for receiving private tutoring and the impact of receiving private tutoring as entry points (Kai, 2012; Kwok, 2010; Zhang and Bray, 2016; 2017). The following section will provide some insights into the reasons why Chinese students receive private tutoring and what impact it has on Chinese students

2.3.1 Reasons for Chinese students to receive private tutoring

When analysing the reasons why students receive private tutoring, some studies are used to analyse both micro and macro perspectives (Dang, 2007; Joshi, 2020; Liu and Bray, 2017; Zhang and Bray, 2017; Zhang, 2020).

The macro reasons for Chinese students' acceptance of private tutoring are the same as the previously analysed basis for the development of private tutoring in China, which are analysed from three perspectives: economic, cultural and policy. Zhang and Bray (2015) investigate the reasons for Chongqing students' acceptance of private tutoring from both macro and micro perspectives. Economically, the development of China's market economy has turned private tutoring into a commonly available service. It has changed people's perceptions of education. In terms of education policy, China's education system is highly competitive as students need to achieve a good score in high school entrance exams and university entrance exams in order to get into a good school. Culturally, the Confucian culture has a strong influence on China, and the Chinese believe that the only way to have a good future is to achieve good results in educational competition. Zhang and Bray (2017) also concluded the same result when it comes to macro factors in their study on Shanghai, China. Although Zhang and Bray's (2017) study is about Shanghai, China, which is a very developed city in China (Gu and Tang, 2002; Yao and Whalley, 2016), the majority of Chinese cities are small to medium-sized cities and not the size of Shanghai's city and economic development rate (Yang, Huang and Liu, 2014). Zhang and Bray's (2015) study is on Chongqing, China, a city with a similar level of development to most Chinese cities, so their study on macro factors can be supported.

In the aspect of micro reasons, several of the studies are conducted through parental factors as well as individual student factors and attitudes towards mainstream schools.

In terms of the influence of parental factors on students' access to private tutoring, some studies have shown a positive correlation between parents' income level and educational attainment and students' likelihood of accessing private tutoring (Liu and Bray, 2017). Liu and Bray's (2017) study was conducted with Grade 1 to Grade 12 students from 25 provinces, as the study sample for this research was large and comprehensive enough to make the findings of this study potentially generalisable. The study showed that family income and parental education level had a significant effect on whether students received private tutoring, as parents were more likely to consider investing more in their children when they had more income, so the higher the family income, the more likely students were to receive private tutoring. Also, the more educated the parents are, the more likely the parents are to have the student attend private tutoring. These findings above are similar to many studies (Kwo and Bray, 2014; Zhang, 2020). However, there appear to be other perspectives on parental educational attainment, as when parents are not highly educated, parents may believe that they are not in a position to give their children a better education academically and, therefore, choose to send their students to private tutoring (Kwok, 2010). In analysing these articles, this paper found that when parents are highly educated, they choose to have their students tutored in content that they cannot tutor themselves. When students' parents are less educated, they may choose tutoring based on their own child's level of learning. So parental education may not affect whether a student receives private tutoring but rather the type of private tutoring a student receives.

In addition to parental income and education, Liu and Bray (2017) mention that since most families in China have had only one child for a long time, this one child carries the hopes of the whole family, so parents want to invest more in this child, increasing the likelihood of students participating in private tutoring. (2022) for the whole Asia-Pacific region. In addition, Kwok (2010) adds that parents also want students to attend private tutoring because they are concerned that they may not be able to spend enough time with their children due to their parents' work commitments, which may result in their children being left unattended, so parents choose to send their

children to private tutoring.

In addition to the parental factor, the individual student is also a factor that cannot be ignored. In their study, Liu and Bray (2017) not only analysed the influence of parental factors on students' access to private tutoring but also analysed individual student factors. The study mentioned that students were less likely to receive private tutoring when their academic performance met their goals because students believed that their goal in participating in private tutoring was to improve their academic performance, so when their grades were improved, there was no need for them to continue receiving private tutoring. This is similar to the findings of a study by Kwok (2010) on 12 cities in China.

In addition, Liu and Bray's (2017) study mentions that when students have an expectation of their years of education, it also affects their attitudes towards private tutoring; if students wish they could stretch their years of education, then they are likely to receive private tutoring to help them achieve their goals (Chu, 2009).

Dissatisfaction with mainstream education also influences attitudes towards private tutoring (Kazimzade and Joki, 2013), and in a quantitative and qualitative study of secondary school students in Hong Kong, Kwo and Bray (2014) showed that students who did not receive attention from teachers in mainstream school classes or who felt that they were not able to learn details in mainstream school chose to seek private tutoring because private tutoring was not available to them. Private tutoring. Because private tutoring is generally small, private tutors can pay more attention to students and even tailor lessons to suit them better. In mainstream schools, teachers often have to deal with a lot of students, so they sometimes overlook individual feelings.

There is some debate about the impact of academic stress on whether students receive private tuition. In many studies, students are likely to seek private tutoring when they are stressed (Kowk; 2010; Zhang and Bray, 2015). However, in Liu and Bray's (2017) study, the effect of student stress on receiving private tutoring was almost non-existent. In comparing these studies, this paper found that Liu and Bray's (2017) findings showed that academic stress was not completely unrelated to private tutoring, just that the two were not strongly associated. The results of Kwok (2010) and Zhang and Bray (2015) are more biased toward students with higher academic performance and higher academic expectations seeking private tutoring when facing academic stress but do not explain much about other students' circumstances. Therefore, it is possible that academic stress may not be the only variable that influences whether or not students seek private tutoring, and that students may choose to receive private tutoring when faced with academic stress, depending on their individual learning situation.

2.3.2 The impact of Chinese students receiving private tutoring

The reasons why students choose private tutoring above show that most students receive private tutoring with the aim of improving their grades or supplementing the content of mainstream schools, and students and parents hope that they will get a positive impact from private tutoring. However, private tutoring seems to have both positive and negative effects on students and has been the focus of numerous studies (Dang, 2007; Jheng, 2015; Luo and Chan, 2022; Popa and Acedo, 2006)

First, on the positive side, Guo et al. (2020) found in their study of Chinese students that students' grades indeed improve significantly after receiving private tutoring. This has also been noted in Bray's (2013) survey of secondary school students in Hong Kong, and Bray (2022) further notes that private tutoring increases students' self-esteem and confidence as it helps slow learners catch up and helps fast learners expand their learning. The same argument is made for research in Taiwan (Jheng, 2015), where students sometimes progress through private tutoring institutions at a faster pace than mainstream learning, a situation that makes students believe they have more knowledge than their peers, and so their self-confidence in learning increases.

However, the positive effects suggested by these studies seem to lack attention to control variables; for instance, Guo et al. (2020) refer to private tutoring as helping students to improve their performance without mentioning factors such as the subjects' own academic foundation or learning ability that can also influence academic performance. Similarly, Bray's (2013) study also seems to have this problem. Therefore, there might be a need for a premise when referring to the impact of private tutoring on students. For example, in Kuan's (2011) study of Taiwanese students, it is stated that the more purposeful a student's learning is, the more he or she gains from private tutoring, and Liu (2012), using the same database as Kuan (2011), suggests that time is also a prerequisite for the impact of private tutoring. While private tutoring does help students to improve their analytical skills, the positive impact of private tutoring is diminished when the time spent in private tutoring exceeds the student's range

of acceptability, and Wang and Guo's (2018) study of students in three Chinese cities also suggests that increased time spent in private tutoring does not mean that academic performance increases.

In parallel to the individual student, the quality of private tutoring is also seen as a prerequisite for a positive impact (Luo and Chan, 2022). Therefore, private tutoring can have a positive impact on students, but for this to happen, it is dependent on the individual student and the length and quality of private tutoring received.

The negative effects of private tutoring are also of concern. The negative effects have been studied in terms of increased social inequality, teacher corruption, impact on the mainstream school process and damage to students' physical and mental health (Adhikari, 2022; Bray, 2013; Heyneman, 2011; Wei, 2014).

Primarily, because private tutoring is an activity that is purchased with money, some studies have argued that private tutoring increases social inequalities (Verdis, 2002; Smyth, 2009). For example, in a survey by Bray (2013) on secondary school students in Hong Kong, the students interviewed state that the cost of private tutoring is a burden for them. While some families can afford private tutoring for their students, for some financially well-off families, these extra costs are just a normal expense, but for students from average families, private tutoring is a burden that they have to continue (Adhikari, 2022). Therefore, the emergence of private tutoring might put students from disadvantaged economic backgrounds at a competitive disadvantage, thus increasing social inequality.

Furthermore, teacher corruption is the focus of the negative effects of private tutoring, with Heyneman (2011) arguing that teachers encouraging students to attend private tutoring is a form of educational corruption. Because teachers have direct control over everything related to students' grades in mainstream schools, students may not refuse when they are asked to participate in their private tutoring (Biswal, 1999). For instance, in a study of teachers in mainstream schools in Chongqing, Wei (2014) found that some teachers suggested that students go for private tutoring in the hope that they would receive help in private tutoring. However, if not done properly, two negative outcomes can occur.

For one thing, teachers create a need for students that they may not need. This is because some students may not want private tutoring, but in China the unassailable position of the teacher in the minds of students and parents leads them to believe that they must have private tutoring. Alternatively, some teachers may act as both mainstream school teachers and private tutors, and they may ask students to attend their tutoring sessions for extra income. Alternatively, the mainstream school teacher may contact the private tutor, who is expected to pay the teacher if the teacher is successful in recommending private tutoring to the student. In a study of Vietnamese teachers, Dawson (2009) mentioned that when teachers have dual status as private tutors and mainstream school teachers, some teachers may reduce the content in mainstream school classes because they want to attract more students to enrol in Private tutoring. This is also the case in Turkey, where Gok (2010) mentions that some teachers say that they refuse to communicate with students if they do not enrol in their private tutoring. The corruption of teachers mentioned above seriously undermines students' right to education, as they should be receiving the same education in mainstream schools, but are forced to consider private tutoring because of the teachers' desire to earn extra income.

In addition to the impact on individual students, the impact of private tutoring providers on mainstream schools cannot be underestimated. Bray and Kobakhidze (2015) see private tutoring as an intruder in the education system, as in their study of private tutoring in Hong Kong they found that the emergence of private tutoring disrupts the current educational process of mainstream education, as students seem to prefer private tutoring and therefore they have lost interest in mainstream schooling. This is certainly a shock to mainstream schools. Moreover, private tutoring may worsen the relationship between parents and mainstream school teachers (Kobakhidze 2014), for example, Luo and Forbes (2019) found in their interviews with Chinese mainstream school teachers that parents always compared private tutors to mainstream school teachers and were sceptical about the professional competence of mainstream school teachers. Therefore, private tutoring may to some extent undermine the function of mainstream schools.

For the individual student, private tutoring is a potential risk to physical health. The increased time spent in private tutoring sometimes takes away from students' rest time, which can also be damaging to their immune systems (Hu, 2020). Private tutoring may also be more stressful for students, as the workload of students receiving private tutoring is higher than that of the average student (Bray and Kobakhidze, 2015). For example, a study by Bray (2013) on secondary school students in Hong Kong reveals that students who participate in private tutoring have

much less time for recreation than those who do not receive private tutoring. noh et al. (2020) studied the relationship between private tutoring and sleep time among adolescent students in Korea, and they found that students who received private tutoring were stressed out due to less rest time They found that students who received private tutoring were more likely to have psychological problems due to less rest. However, in a study by Zheng et al. (2020) on Chinese students, there did not appear to be a direct relationship between private tutoring and depression. However, the research by Zheng et al. (2020) seems to place more emphasis on whether it becomes a psychological disorder, whereas other studies seem to emphasise a depressive and anxious mood. Therefore, this dissertation argues that private tutoring may cause students to become stressed and consequently anxious, but may not directly lead to the development of disease.

2.4 Attitudes of Teachers in Mainstream Schools Towards Private Tutoring

The majority of the aforementioned studies on the reasons for and impacts of private tutoring have been conducted with students and parents. However, there is less research from the perspective of teachers in mainstream schools, especially for Chinese teachers. Therefore, in this dissertation, in reviewing research on Chinese teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring, several studies on teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring in other countries will also be drawn upon. It is hoped that this will provide some additional insights.

Regarding Chinese teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring, Wang and Bray (2016) conducted interviews with teachers from 12 middle schools with high participation rates in private tutoring. The results demonstrate that teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring in Hong Kong seem to be ambivalent. The majority of teachers actually support private tutoring because they consider it to be a shortcut for students to learn, as it can help students to supplement their learning and consolidate their knowledge, while at the same time they are concerned about students' over-reliance on private tutoring, which may lead to students losing motivation to study in mainstream schools. However, the study makes no mention of whether the teachers who are interviewed have been private tutors. In contrast, Kobakhidze (2014) investigated the attitudes of Georgian secondary school teachers who have been private tutors towards private tutoring and their attitudes towards private tutoring are positive. Because private tutoring offers them additional opportunities to attend classes, it can help teachers to improve their professional competence. Nevertheless, the study only looked at teachers who taught in mainstream schools as well as private tutoring, and did not examine the views of teachers who only taught in mainstream schools.

Another study that also showed positive attitudes towards private tutoring was Khaydarov's (2020) study of teachers in Uzbekistan. The results showed that almost all teachers interviewed had positive attitudes towards private tutoring. Both teachers and students in Uzbekistan rely on private tutoring because it does help students to win in a competitive environment. It can even help teachers in the classroom because it helps students to understand the subject matter better. However, the authors interviewed 28 teachers in this study, of which only two were selected as teachers who did not participate in private tutoring. Therefore, the results of this study may be somewhat implausible. However, what can be concluded is that teachers who have double status are generally positive about private tutoring.

The answer to the question of why teachers choose to take on a dual role in China is provided by Zhang and Bray's (2017) study. Because teaching is not a high-paying job in China, some teachers take up private tutoring to gain extra income because of the pressure of life. This is the same reason why teachers in many developing countries work as private tutors (Pumasaran, 2010; Suryadarma, 2006).

2.5 Summary

To sum up, this literature review critically discusses some definitions of private tutoring, the development of private tutoring in China, as well as the causes and effects of private tutoring, and finally discusses teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring.

Due to the controversial name of shadow education, this dissertation has decided to use private tutoring to represent the paid, individual or corporate-organised academic tutoring that students receive outside of the mainstream school curriculum, which can take the form of one-to-one, small group instruction and large-scale instruction such as Lecture. Private tutoring has developed in China for economic, cultural and policy reasons. However, after 2010, the government's attitude towards private tutoring became negative and a series of regulations were enacted to restrict the development of private tutoring and require that teachers in mainstream schools are not allowed to participate in private tutoring. In 2021, a double reduction policy was enacted, which

explicitly prohibits private tutoring in academic subjects.

Many studies have examined the reasons why Chinese students engage in private tutoring from the perspective of both students and parents. As most Chinese families have only one child, parents want to be able to provide as many resources as possible for their children. Also, when family income levels are high, parents are more likely to allow their children to attend private tutoring. But the factor of parental education seems to be a controversial influence. In this study, it was found that parents' level of education does not appear to influence whether or not a student attends tutoring, but rather the type of private tutoring in which the student participates. Students' personal pursuit of achievement and their dissatisfaction with mainstream schools also contributed to their choice to participate in private tutoring.

Private tutoring, as an alien species, has gained popularity with students and parents and even teachers though. It is true that private tutoring can lead to an increase in student performance. However, such an impact is contingent on the student's own motivation and the quality of private tuition. As private tuition becomes more popular with some students, it can lead to a loss of interest in mainstream schooling, which may have a knock-on effect on the development of mainstream schools. Parents and students may look to mainstream school teachers to recommend teachers and institutions, but there is a risk of teacher corruption in the process. Teachers may threaten students with private tutoring in order to gain extra income. Or deliberately lower the quality of teaching in mainstream school classrooms. Such behaviour can undermine students' rights. And private tutoring, as a service that needs to be purchased, seems unfair to students from poor family backgrounds. And because private tuition takes up so much of the student's time off work, private tuition may be detrimental to the student's mental and physical health.

The literature review also critically analysed the attitudes of mainstream school teachers towards private tutoring. Studies worldwide show that mainstream school teachers who are also private tutors are generally supportive of private tutoring because they believe that it helps students to understand the subject matter better and also helps teachers to improve classroom effectiveness. However, there appears to be a gap in the research on mainstream school teachers in China who have not worked as private tutors.

2.6 Research Gap

A review of the literature reveals that the majority of studies on private tutoring in China have been conducted with students and parents. The literature on teachers' attitudes is also almost exclusively from other countries in the world where private tutoring is prevalent. The few Chinese studies are also from Hong Kong, China, but the education system in Hong Kong is not exactly the same as in mainland China (Wang and Bray, 2016). So it is also not entirely representative of the attitudes of teachers towards private tutoring in mainland China. Perhaps this is because the policy in mainland China does not allow mainstream school teachers to be associated with private tutoring. Therefore, private tutoring may be a sensitive topic for mainstream school teachers. This may explain why there is relatively little research on the attitudes of mainstream school teachers towards private tutoring in China.

However, this dissertation argues that there are implications for research on teachers in mainland China. Firstly, the literature review shows that private tutoring can have an impact on mainstream schools, especially in terms of student performance in the classroom. This impact is directly felt by teachers in mainstream schools. This is because teachers in mainstream schools have a greater say in how their students learn and can see the impact of private tuition through their students' performance in school. It is therefore of interest to this writer to find out what attitudes teachers have towards private tutoring that may have an impact on them. Therefore, the author will use qualitative research to examine the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards private tutoring in China.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Aim and Question

The purpose of this research paper is to examine the attitudes of mainstream school teachers in China towards private tutoring and the reasons behind them. Through the study, this thesis hopes to answer the following research questions:

The attitudes of Chinese primary school teachers of English and mathematics in grades 3 to 6 (around 8 to 11 years of age) towards their students receiving private tutoring and the why.

Through this study, the dissertation intends to narrow this gap in the attitudes of mainstream school teachers towards private tutoring in mainland China. It will help students, parents and the government to consider and understand private tutoring from a new perspective. Parents and students might reconsider whether private tutoring is really a necessity. The government could consider whether the policy on private tutoring should be liberalised or tightened up. Since previous literature has neglected the perspective of teachers in mainland China, this research will close this gap through the following research.

Basic concepts and rationale of qualitative research

In educational research, qualitative research arises from a critique of quantitative research (Hara, 1995). "Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem " (Creswell, 2009 p. 4). Therefore, the qualitative research is the suitable method in education related research that would like to explore teachers' or students' perspectives (Nguyen, 2015). Therefore, in this dissertation, the qualitative research method is chosen to study the attitudes of Chinese teachers towards private tutoring. However, at the beginning of the study, the author of this dissertation considered using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods for the study. This is because this would have resulted in data of two natures, one objective in the form of numbers and one subjective in the form of speech and text. However, in designing the questionnaire and interview questions for the quantitative study, the authors of this paper realised that the focus of this study was on the reasons behind teachers' attitudes, rather than on the number of teachers who expressed them. Hence, this dissertation decided to only use qualitative method.

People's understanding of reality is based on each individual's social interactions as well as the individual's unique understanding of the phenomenon, which is seen as a premise of interpretivism (Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). Therefore, in examining why teachers have developed positive or negative attitudes towards private tutoring, this paper chose to use interpretivism as the research paradigm. This is because firstly the positivist paradigm is often associated with quantitative methods (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). Positivism assumes that everything in the natural world is measurable (Suter, 2012), but positivism is unable to measure data about people's thoughts and attitudes (Hammersley, 2013) and positivism sometimes ignores some individual differences (Hara, 1995). Therefore, the positivist paradigm seems not to be applicable to the research in this research.

The interpretivist paradigm relies on qualitative methods (Wills, 2007). This is because interpretivist researchers want to gain insight into the relationship between humans themselves and the environment in which they live (McQueen, 2002). But interpretivists should try to avoid looking at a phenomenon with their own bias (Hammersley, 2013). This is because the findings of interpretivists are sometimes influenced by their own mindset or cultural environment, making the results subjective (Mack, 2010). Therefore, the author of this dissertation will try to avoid substituting the views of the author during the semi-structured interviews and subsequent data analysis, and all discussions will be based on the views of the research participants.

3.2 Research Design

1) In preparing essay for other modules, I found that there seems to be a lack of research on teacher attitudes in the study of private tutoring in China. And from my own experience, private tutoring is an important presence in China, and I have received private tutoring since I was a child. Therefore, I organised my research background, research objectives, research questions and possible research methods into a proposal and submitted it.

2) After my proposal was approved, I submitted an ethics form which outlined my research questions, the background to the study, how I would communicate with the participants and how the data would be safely stored and analysed. This form was also approved. Along with this form, the participant consent form and information sheet were also approved. The purpose of these was to give participants a better understanding of my research. The ethics form, the informed consent form and the information sheet can be found in the appendix.

3) I subsequently completed a draft of the literature review, in which I mentioned what private tutoring is and the effects and causes of private tutoring that influence people's attitudes towards it. The interview questions were also designed based on the findings of the literature review. (The basic interview questions can be found in the appendix.) Eventually the research aims and research questions were identified

4) I used email to contact all the teachers in grades 3 to 6 at this school. They were asked about their willingness to participate and their years of teaching experience. Finally, four maths teachers, four English teachers and the

headmaster and vice-principal of the school were selected using a purposive sampling method. Details of this section can be found in the Sampling and Context section.

5) I conducted semi-structured interviews. There were 10 semi-structured interviews, each lasting around 26 to 38 minutes. Details of how the interviews were conducted and how to prepare for them can be found in the section Data Collecting and Ethical Consideration

6) After the interviews, I transcribed and translated the recordings from the research. The data was then coded and the results were finalised with the help of the software Nvivo. Details of this section can be found in Data Analysis.

3.3 Sampling and Context

A primary school in Hebei province was chosen as the research site for this dissertation. Hebei is known for its education in China due to its large population and uneven development of educational resources (Peng et al., 2020). Hebei province has one of the highest populations in China, hence the competition among students for university entrance exams is fierce (Muthanna and Sang, 2016). There are 31 provinces in mainland China, and Hebei's economic development is average for China and similar to that of most provinces (Yang, Huang and Liu, 2014). Therefore, the school in Hebei province was chosen.

In addition, because of the fierce competition for education in China, private tutoring is occurring at a younger age, with many children already choosing to receive private tutoring when they are just starting primary school (Luo and Forbes, 2021). Mathematics and English are the most popular subjects for private tutoring as they are the main compulsory subjects in China (Pan, 2015), which students need to study and pass in primary, middle and high school. Chinese parents believe that these two subjects need to be studied with a good foundation (Liu and Bray, 2018). This is why a large number of students begin to receive private tutoring in mathematics and English during their primary school years. In China many schools start teaching the subject of English in the third grade of primary school (Ruan and Leung, 2012). Therefore, this paper decided to target English and mathematics teachers in grades 3 to 6 in a primary school in Hebei Province.

This dissertation adopts a purposive sampling approach. Because the purposive sampling method selects subjects that may be more relevant to the content of this study, they may be able to provide a more valuable perspective (Given, 2008). At the beginning of the study, I asked all maths and English teachers in grades 3-6 by email about their willingness to participate and their teaching schedules. A total of 10 participants were eventually recruited for this study. Among all the teachers who were willing to participate in the study, the two teachers with the longest teaching experience in each subject and the two teachers with the shortest teaching experience were selected for this research paper. In order to gain multiple perspectives, the author of this dissertation contacted the headmaster and vice-principal of the school. In total, therefore, four mathematics teachers, four English teachers and the school's headmaster and vice-principal participated in the study.

Table 1: The information of Participants

	Teaching Subject	Teaching experience	Gender	Private Tutoring
Participant 1	Math	About 40 years	Male	No
Participant 2	Math	32 years	Female	No
Participant 3	Math	8 years	Female	Yes
Participant 4	Math	7 years	Female	Yes
Participant 5	English	About 15 years	Female	Yes
Participant 6	English	10 years	Female	No
Participant 7	English	7 years	Female	No
Participant 8	English	2 years	Female	Yes
Participant 9	Principal	20 years	Female	No
Participant 10	Deputy Principal	15 years	Male	No

3.4 Data Collection

The semi-structured interview guarantees flexibility in the data collection process (Datko, 2015). This is because semi-structured interviews allow for questions to be adapted based on the responses and answers of the participants. The semi-structured interview is a good way to observe participants' real responses and allow participants to provide more in-depth data (Creswell, 2013).

This is why semi-structured interviews were chosen as the method of data collection for this research, as this allowed the questions to be adapted appropriately based on the teachers' responses. For example when teachers were responding that they supported private tutoring for a certain reason, I could continue to ask more in-depth questions about that reason, which would allow for in-depth data.

3.5 Data Analysis

This paper presents an analysis of the data based on the five-step method developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) and incorporating Nvivo, a coding software.

- 1) After completing all interviews, I converted the content of each recording into a manuscript and gave it to the participants to peruse. After they had confirmed that nothing was wrong, I translated all the content.
- 2) I started importing all the translated manuscripts into Nvivo and began coding them at the basic level based on the data.
- 3) After coding all the content, the basic coding began to be grouped into a number of sub-themes as well as themes based on the meaning of the codes.
- 4) After completing the categorisation and organisation, I rechecked all the themes to check that the logic between each theme was appropriate. And for the sub-themes a second check was made and a second merge continued for themes with similar meanings.
- 5) Finally, the data in each topic is collated and organised so that the data in each topic can be turned into a coherent paragraph.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

The reliability of qualitative research can be affected by the accuracy of the participants' representations (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2008). Therefore, in order to ensure that the views expressed by the participants were consistent with the participants' own thoughts, I audio- and video-recorded the entire interview and provided the audio-recorded and transcribed textual content to the participants for a second check. I would only continue with the analysis of the data after the participants were sure that there were no problems with the presentation.

Hollway and Jefferson (2000) suggest that the reliability of interview-related research lies in the structure of the interview, the wording and the method of coding, thus in preparing the interview questions, all interview questions were presented based on the literature review and closely linked to the research questions. All questions were phrased as clearly as possible during the interview. In addition, I explain to participants at the beginning of the interview all the concepts that will appear in the interview. This prevents them from being unclear about the meaning of the terminology. Also, according to Bell and water (2014), I did not select any leading questions and did not use any emotional language during the interview. I invited my friend to conduct an interview trial before the formal interview. The friend I invited had previously worked as a teacher in a mainstream school but did not have any connection to the study site. At the end of the pilot interview, I revised a few questions because of the similarities. And to make the interview more fluid, I practised the expression of these questions with the help of the pilot interview. The test consisted of the length of the interview, the questions asked and the pace of the interview. As far as possible, it was important to avoid dragging out the formal interview, not being able to keep up with the pace or having obscure questions.

3.7 Ethical Considerions

- 1) Anonymity.

Participants may be concerned that their private information might appear in the dissertation. Therefore, I clearly informed participants that I would not share any data with anyone other than my supervisors, that interview transcripts would be kept by myself only, and that I used codes rather than names when referring to participants' interviews in order to report data in the study. In addition, any information relating to the school will not appear in this article. And I informed participants that the content they shared would be used only for my academic paper and not for other purposes.

2) Time issues

As the teachers needed to work, I scheduled the interviews at a time when they were not scheduled for classes. and try to keep the interviews to no longer than 30 minutes. Avoid participants being too tired to participate in the interviews

3) Participant anxiety

Participants were provided with information sheets and informed consent forms prior to conducting the interviews in order to make the researcher more aware of my study. I did not conduct any research until the informed consent form had been signed. Some participants may feel nervous and anxious when faced with a one-to-one interaction with a stranger. Therefore, I used one to two minutes at the beginning of the interview as an icebreaker. Before conducting the formal interview, I waited until the teacher was in the right mood before conducting the interview. I informed participants that they can withdraw from the study at any time. They have the right to refuse to answer any questions they do not wish to answer.

4. FINDINGS AND DISSCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The results of the data analysis answer the research question: the attitudes of Chinese primary school teachers of Mathematics and English in Years 3 to 6 towards private tutoring and the reasons for these attitudes. This will be followed by a discussion of teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring, which will be critically analysed in four broad directions: students, families teachers and the policy. This is because teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring change according to these three perspectives. In most of the interviews, the educators mentioned that the students' own attitudes to learning and their learning foundation would make teachers choose to have a negative or positive attitude towards private tutoring. This is because if the student is refusing to learn, then private tutoring is useless. The financial situation of the family also made the participants consider whether to support private tutoring since the private tutoring is a service that needs to be purchased (Bray, 1999). The availability of parental tutoring for their children was also a perspective considered by the participants. Because parents are unable to tutor their students' homework and the students are not well qualified to study, there is no one to address the students' problems out of class. Also the impact that private tutoring has on teachers is something that affects the participants' attitudes towards private tutoring. This is simply because private tutoring makes the student more aware of the subject. This may make the teacher's classroom effective. Finally, China's latest policy to abolish all academic private tutoring seems to be one of the factors influencing teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring. This is because the policy not only mentions the abolition of private tutoring, but also adds a service for mainstream schools, where students are expected to finish their homework at school during the extended period and teachers are responsible for tutoring them (Eryong, Xue and Li, 2022). However, after-school services do not seem to be a substitute for private tutoring. This policy affects teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring.

4.2 The Attitude of Teacher to Private Tutoring

Teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring were ambivalent and the same participants may have different attitudes towards private tutoring. This seems to be the same as the findings of Wang and Bray's (2016) study.

When asked in the interviews whether they supported private tutoring, eight out of ten participants indicated that they supported their students' participation in private tutoring. However, they also indicated that they did not support private tutoring for all students.

For example, Participant 2 had this to state.

"I support private tutoring for such students if the students themselves are motivated to learn, if the students themselves are eager to go for private tutoring, and if the family conditions allow for it, and if it is more difficult for the parents to tutor themselves. But if the student himself has no desire to study, it might have worse consequences if the parents forcefully send him to private tutoring"

Participant 3 mentioned.

"If there is no way for the student's foundation to catch up with the school, then I support the student to go for private tutoring, but if the student can keep up with the school, I do not think it is necessary for him to spend money on extra participation in tutoring."

Therefore, it can be seen that the participants who support their students to receive private tutoring have preconditions. The prerequisites proposed is similar to the previous literature review that summarised the micro reasons why students receive private tutoring and the impact it has on them, namely parents' income level and parents' level of education (Liu and Bray, 2017), students' personal pursuit of achievement and motivation to learn (Kwok, 2010; Kuan, 2011), and the student's own foundation (Guo et al., 2020).

The reasons why participants totally do not support students' participation in private tutoring are also related to the students. Participant 1 and Participant 5, who raised objections to private tutoring, suggested that:

"There is no need for students to engage in private tutoring; if students are motivated to learn, students will take their studies seriously at school. If the student is unable to take it seriously at school, then he will get nowhere in private tutoring classes." (Participant 1)

"The school classroom is where students should learn the most, private tutoring is just a psychological effect of the students themselves and will not make any real difference." (Participant 5)

In summary, teachers' attitudes towards students receiving private tutoring seem to be predicated and can be described as ambivalent. There are differences in this result although it is similar to Wang and Bray's (2016) results. For example, in Wang and Bray's (2016) research, teachers' ambivalence is reflected in the positive attitudes that teachers hold when assessing the impact of private tutoring on their students. However, when asking about the impact of private tutoring on society, the teachers considered that private tutoring should not exist. However, in the current study, although the majority of participants are ambivalent about private tutoring, the ambivalence is reflected in the different attitudes towards private tutoring for different students.

5. CONCLUSION

This next section will present the findings of my study and critically compare the findings of the study with the literature summarised in the literature review.

As I was reading the material I found that most of the current research on private tutoring has been conducted from the perspective of the student or parent. However, there is not a great deal of research on how teachers perceive their students to receive private tutoring, especially for Chinese teachers. Therefore, I identified my research question:

The attitudes of Chinese primary school teachers of English and mathematics in grades 3 to 6 (around 8 to 11 years of age) towards their students receiving private tutoring and the why.

Subsequently, because I wanted to focus my research on the causes of this attitude. I dropped the mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods and opted for a qualitative research method. My findings may provide insight into how Chinese primary school teachers perceive private tutoring and the reasons behind it. I will then begin to present my findings and a comparison with the previous literature.

5.1 Main Findings

Teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring are ambivalent. They are both supportive of private tutoring but also ambivalent about it. This is because the participants consider that teachers support private tutoring if the student meets certain prerequisites. However, if the conditions are not met, participants perceive private tutoring to be a waste of time and money. This condition is what leads to teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring. The findings of Wang and Bray's (2016) study on Hong Kong teachers are similar. This is because teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring are not even constant, but variable. However, in Wang and Bray's (2016) study, the teachers' ambivalent attitudes arise because the teachers perceive private tutoring to have a positive impact on students, whereas the impression on society is negative. This is why the ambivalent attitudes are generated. The reasons for the ambivalent attitudes of Chinese teachers can be divided into three main categories: students, families and teachers. This is similar to the perspective of the impact of private tutoring and the reasons why students choose to

attend private tutoring as summarised in the literature review.

Firstly, from the student's perspective, the student's own academic foundation, willingness to learn and the impact of private tutoring on the student were factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring. Participants consistently emphasize that they support students' participation in private tutoring if their academic foundation is poor because it reinforces their knowledge. However, if the student's academic foundation is sufficient for the student to keep up with school, then there is no need for private tutoring as the student may feel arrogant because of their repetitive learning, which may lead to the student's inattention during school lessons. This seems to be similar to the findings of Jheng (2015) for Taiwanese students. When students receive private tutoring, they choose to 'steal' time from the mainstream school classroom. Students who believe that the content of the lesson has been previously studied in private tutoring will study other lesson content in that lesson.

Furthermore, participants highlight that private tutoring only works if the students themselves want to learn. Therefore, teachers will only support those students who have the willingness to learn to receive private tutoring. This is similar to the findings of Guo et al. (2020). This is because if one wants to reap the good effects of private tutoring, one needs some prerequisites, and among these prerequisites is the students' own willingness to learn. Regarding the impact of private tutoring on students, teachers felt that although there were some benefits of private tutoring, there was no denying the disadvantages of private tutoring. This is the reason why teachers are ambivalent about private tuition. This is because teachers believe that the advantages and disadvantages of private tuition cannot be ignored. For example, students may become dependent on private tuition because of the increased attention they receive in private tuition. Students choose to ignore their studies in mainstream schools. This is in line with Bray and Kobakhidze's (2015) findings.

Furthermore, the financial situation of the student's family and the availability of the parents to tutor the student are factors that the teacher will consider. If the family is financially able to pay for private tutoring. Teachers are supportive of private tuition. However, this is based on the student's own foundation and willingness to learn as mentioned at the previous section. The family's financial situation is also one of the reasons why students choose whether or not to receive private tutoring (Liu and Bray, 2017). As teachers in Wang and Bray's (2016) study chose to hold negative attitudes towards private tutoring due to the perception that it would increase social inequity. Hence this question is also asked of the participants. Half of the teachers believed that private tutoring is something that exacerbates social inequity. This is because private tutoring is a service that needs to be purchased (Bray, 1999). The other half of the teachers argue that private tutoring does not exacerbate social inequality because the examination system in China is fair (Li and Dai, 2009).

In addition, participants emphasised that if the student's parents could tutor the student, then there would be no support for the student to participate in private tutoring. However, if parents cannot, and if the previously mentioned premises are met. The participants support students receiving private tutoring. This is based on the fact that parents not being able to tutor their students means that the student's problems cannot be solved in a timely manner and that parents also feel a strong sense of guilt. This is similar to the findings of Kwok's (2010) study. Parents become very anxious when they are unable to solve their students' problems.

From the teacher's perspective, participants perceive that if a large proportion of students in the class are involved in private tutoring, the teacher's lessons are more effective and more knowledge is taught in a limited amount of time. Therefore, if considered from this perspective, teachers are in favour of private tutoring. This result is the same reason why teachers in Uzbekistan supported students' participation in private tutoring in Khaydarov's (2020) study. Private tutoring can be helpful for teachers' teaching. In conducting the research for the literature review, after summarising the studies by Khaydarov (2020), Kobakhidze (2014) and Wang and Bray (2016), I hypothesised that teachers who have a dual role as private tutors and mainstream learning teachers would actively support their students to receive private tutoring. However, the results of the study proved that teachers with dual identities have ambivalent attitudes towards private tutoring. Drawing from their own experiences as private tutors, they emphasise that private tutors can be helpful to students. However, it is possible that the private tutor is not a regular teacher and that such an irregular teacher does not understand the teaching priorities of the school. After analysing the previous studies and this one, I identify that the participants in the previous studies analysed private tutoring based on its benefits to themselves. The participants in this article looked more at the impact of private tutoring on their students. The double reduction policy issued in 2021 is also influencing teachers' attitudes towards private tutoring. Because of the sensitivity of the topic of private tutoring as a result of the double reduction policy, private tutoring is no longer recommended after the double reduction policy is enacted, even if participants believe it to be more recommended than after-school services. However, teachers are no longer likely to recommend private

tutoring to their students. Because the double reduction policy is relatively new, there is not much research on the double reduction policy. Therefore, this section is based on the analysis of the participants' responses.

5.2 Limitation

Although this research meets some reliability and validity. However, there are still some issues with this research.

Firstly, it is undeniable that the sample size of this research was relatively small, with only 10 participants. However, this meets the requirements of a qualitative study. This is because in qualitative research the focus is on the outcome of the interaction with the participants rather than the number (Creswell, 2017). To increase the generalisability of the results of this study, I chose to locate the study in Hebei province, which is at the average level of development across China. In order to control for variables, a purposive sampling method was chosen. Unfortunately, gender was not controlled for in the purposive sampling. The situation in this school is that the number of female teachers is relatively high. Therefore, there is no way to avoid this problem.

In addition, the pace of the interviews was not well managed, with each interview lasting longer than 30 minutes almost all the time. This also led to a rather exhausting situation for the interviewees. This may have led to the interviewees losing the mood to answer the final questions. Consequently, this may have led to inaccurate data. The second interview was not scheduled due to the heavy workload of the teachers as the school summer holidays approached. To compensate for this, I handed the text and recording of the interview to the participants for a second check after the interview.

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