

## Privatisation Of Education: Static Challenge In New Trends

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### Abstract

Within the Asian and Pacific region, as in other parts of the world, shifts in the ownership, management and control of education institutions may be observed. In some cases this involves an increased role for governments; but in other cases it involves a reduced role. The latter is more common than the former. This is partly because the balance has shifted so markedly toward public ownership, management, and control during the last few decades, and the pendulum has begun to swing back. The few places where the government is playing an increased role include settings where the private sector has been dominant and is considered to need regulation and/or support. Macau, China is one such place, though it is idiosyncratic in its long legacy of government neglect and laissez faire attitudes toward the private sector role for the Government throughout the 20th century, but has also witnessed increased government support for and schools and through subsidies and training for private kindergartens. More common, however, have been shifts toward privatization of education.

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**KEYWORDS:** Privatisation , Globalization

### INTRODUCTION:

Privatization, by definition, is a process rather than a state and, as indicated above, the countries of the Asian and Pacific region display a wide range of starting points. The term may also encompass a wide array of models. In some systems, privatization has arisen as a result of deliberate policy; but in others, it is the result of unplanned change. Four major models may be identified as follows:

- **Transfer of ownership of public schools –**

Deliberate transfer of ownership (and, by implication, control) of existing public schools to private hands is perhaps the most striking form of privatization. Such a move is especially radical when it involves a shift from not-for-profit to commercial operation, though this type of change is rare.

- **Shifting sectoral balance without redesigning existing institutions –**

This form of privatization occurs through a more evolutionary shift in the balance of types of institution. Thus, the number and size of government schools might be held constant, but the number and size of parallel private schools might be permitted or encouraged to increase. Alternatively, the government sector might expand, but the

private sector might expand more. Or the government sector might contract, but the private sector might not contract so much, might remain constant, or might expand.

- **Increased government funding and support for private schools –**

Governments may strengthen the private sector by giving financial and other support to private schools. Some governments are experimenting with systems of vouchers, in which families can choose to send children to private schools but meet some or all the costs from a financial allocation earmarked by the government.

- **Increased private financing and/or control of government schools –**

In this form of privatization, schools remain nominally under government ownership but the proportion of finance and/or control by nongovernmental sources is increased. Governments in some countries have experienced a severe fiscal crisis, and parents and communities have had to increase financial contributions to their schools in order to bridge gaps. In other countries, governments' financial health has remained strong but for ideological and other reasons the authorities have required school principals to be more responsive to the market place. These are forms of privatization within the government system.

### **Effects of Privatization -**

Privatization economic, social, and political as well as of course has many effects educational. The full range of effects cannot be addressed here, though they are examined in other parts of the literature. From an economic perspective, a question of major interest is whether privatization is able to increase the efficiency of education systems. Most of the evidence on this matter appears positive, but more research is needed before statements can be completely firm. However, one study in India seemed to contradict these findings indicated that fully private schools were the least cost effective. Government aided schools were the most cost effective, and fully government schools were intermediate. In contrast, another Indian study on both primary and secondary schools in Uttar Pradesh, produced findings more in line with those of Jimenez and colleagues. The magnitude of findings diverged considerably for junior and senior secondary schools; but in both types of institution private unaided schools were shown to be considerably more cost effective than aided and government schools. To explain the differences in effectiveness, most authors highlight the importance of management practices.

To identify cost factors, Lockheed and Jimenez conducted a small follow-up survey to their main research, in which they paired elite and nonelite private and public schools in each of the countries. This survey did not show dramatic differences in the resources and physical facilities in the pairs of schools, but the private schools appeared to use these inputs more cost effectively. In India, for example, many private schools hire teachers with lower qualifications who are less costly but not necessarily less effective than their counterparts in the public schools. Cost-saving patterns are also evident many private schools employ -

- (i) **Teachers who have retired from the public sector.**
- (ii) **Women who have been unable to secure career-track positions in large companies or the civil service.**
- (iii) **Part-time staff.**

However, while the research seems on balance to show that private schools are more cost effective than public ones, most researchers still underline the need for caution. The fact that particular samples of private schools might appear more efficient than comparable samples of public schools is not necessarily in itself a strong argument for privatization. First, full-scale privatization would by definition remove some of the advantages which the private schools currently exploit: for example, there would not be enough retired teachers and people seeking part time jobs for every school to gain efficiencies to the extent that were previously demonstrated when only a few institutions were seeking such personnel. Second, some management practices can be improved within the public sector: head teachers can be given greater freedom to manage resources and adapt curricula, without their schools necessarily being privatized. It is also important to address the argument that the existence of private schools helps to improve the efficiency of public institutions. Presenting this argument in one country has stated that: A mixed system of government and private schools will not only reduce the financial burden on public resources, thereby freeing up the education budget to address teacher salary shortfalls, maintenance needs, and other operational improvements, but it will also improve the productivity and quality of public education, as government schools compete with private schools. Such an outcome is far from generalizable or certain. Much depends on whether private Many models for voucher schemes have been proposed reform in Chile, where families have been given the opportunity to use public resources to pay for places in private schools, is among the best-known examples of the practice. The Chilean reform increased choice and permitted reduction of unit costs in the education system. However, information on the characteristics of different schools did not flow easily to parents, and urban families had greater choice than rural ones. Key factors in the Chilean reform were a setting which did not permit political opposition, and a capacity at both central and municipal levels to make accurate counts of students and to impose effective penalties for inaccurate reporting. In some countries such tutoring is a massive enterprise. For example:

- A Sri Lankan survey found that in Colombo, 60% of Ordinary Level students and 84 percent of Advanced Level students received private tutoring.
- In the Republic of Korea, private tutoring consumed 37.4% of out-of-school education expenditures in far exceeding the proportions devoted to stationery transportation or uniforms, boarding, and other expenses.
- Private tutoring is growing. In societies such as Hong Kong, China and Singapore where it has long roots, it is expanding, while in countries where it was not previously evident, such as the PRC and Viet Nam, it has emerged.
- Private tutoring is found at all levels, but is especially common in the years in which students take public examinations, both primary (where relevant) and secondary .

It is far from certain that the unfettered growth of private tutoring, which has become a feature of many societies, is desirable. Governments should at least monitor the scale and nature of private tutoring, so that they are aware not only of its impact on household budgets but also of its implications for the quality and effectiveness of mainstream schooling. Private tutoring is an instrument for maintaining or increasing

social and geographic inequalities. While it presumably gives good private rates of return to the individual clients, it is not self-evidently an activity deserving encouragement.

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