

# Private Tutoring Expenditure at Different levels of Education: An Explorative Analysis Using Case Study Approach

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## **Abstract**

*Expenditure on education is considered as an important instrument in achieving sustainable development. Expenditure on education generally undertaken at institutional and household's level. Private tutoring expenditure is considered to be a sizeable part of the household's educational expenditure. According to Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2015 it is estimated that approximately one-fifth of rural Indian children in classes one to eight attend private tuition and spend on an average more than Rs. 2000 per annum to attend these tuition classes. It is important for policy-makers to consider tuition costs as a sizeable private cost of education which adversely can affect low-income house-holds' demand for education. However, the evidence regarding the private tutoring expenditure at ground level is very limited in India in general and Hailakandi district in particular. Realising this urgency, this paper makes an attempt to understand the variation of private tuition expenditure based on different socio-demographic characteristics of students in Hailakandi district of Assam. The study uses primary data collected through field survey of 383 households in Hailakandi district. The study clearly reveals that per capita private tuition expenditure is more than Rs. 600 per month in a household of a student.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Private Tutoring, ASER, Hailakandi.

## **I. Introduction**

Private tuition has been a burgeoning phenomenon in recent years and increased to a large extent over the last two decades and now pervades all the socio-economic strata of both developing and developed nations of the world (Bray, 2005). It is reported that the prevalence of shadow education is higher than 50% in a large number of countries from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Europe and is growing steadily in the United States and Canada (Buchmann et al., 2010). With the prevalence of large extent of shadow education all over the world it may be

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surprising to students, families and policy makers when the cost of shadow education is associated with it. It is estimated that for all levels of schooling the world will spend over 100 billion US dollars (USD) each year on shadow education by 2018 (Forbes 2012). And India is not an exception and outlier in this case. In most of the urban centres in India a large proportion of students at secondary and senior secondary levels attend private coaching, and there has been a tremendous growth in private coaching centers in the recent past (Azam, 2016). This is perhaps driven by a combination of factors. First, there is a pervasive belief in India that private tutoring provides a distinctive edge in exams. Second, the performances in public examinations at the end of secondary school (grade 10) and senior secondary school (grade 12) are important determinants of success, given the intense competition for entering into desired academic streams at the higher levels.

However, the phenomenon of private tutoring is not limited to urban areas and higher grades students only. In recent times, it also prevails in rural areas as well as lower grades students. According to Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2015 it is estimated that approximately one-fifth of rural Indian children in classes one to eight attend private tuition and spend on an average more than Rs. 2000 per annum to attend these tuition classes. The critics of private tutoring claim that this increasing phenomenon of tuition may adversely affect the existing gap of educational skill between the richer and poorer section of the community (Jung & Lee, 2010). This is because tuition service is an expensive commodity for the poor and even if poor parents are willing to provide additional resources, they might not be able to afford to send their children to personalized tutoring. On the other hand, children from economically well-to-do families are more likely to be able to afford better-quality tutoring (Kenayathulla, 2013). This implies that they are more likely to acquire exam-taking skills and to achieve higher scores, which in turn lead to better careers and higher future incomes. Thus, it is important for policy-makers to consider tuition costs as a sizeable private cost of education which adversely can affect low-income households' demand for education. However, the evidence regarding the determinant of private tutoring expenditure is limited in India. Realising this urgency, this paper makes an attempt to understand the nature of private tuition expenditure across different socio-demographic characteristics of the students. Given this background, the rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 details the conceptual framework regarding the linkage between education and sustainable development followed the factors that affect household's tutoring expenditure, section 3 deals with methodology which covers data source and methods, section 4 provides results and findings of the data analysis. And finally, section 5 concludes the results with certain policy recommendations with future research gap.

## **II. Review of Literature: A Theoretical Overview**

Education is the most important and basic need for human and its development. Through education human learn to change their lifestyle and attitude to meet certain goals. It teaches human to live for its sustainability. It is only through education that one acquires the knowledge about the subjects like science, economics, politics agriculture and environment. According to the World Commission Environment and Development Report 1987, "Sustainable development is the development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet there own needs. The basic need for attaining the sustainable development is the education. Through education students learn to cultivate their knowledge and utilize their innovative mind to meet

SD i.e. to create a better world for present generation and future generation. The process of education should be such that, students learn to relate the subject taught in classroom to their real life environment and utilize their knowledge to change the behavior and adopt sustainable lifestyle. Therefore, Quality education is the most important for students for their overall development. It is only through quality education that students develop their knowledge, and skill. Utilizing their knowledge and skill students can make the world a better and easy to live in. Therefore Students are the future of world, investment on students for their education is the investment on human capital. Education builds and develops the knowledge, capability and skill of people, which in turn improves the human capital (Sen, 1997). These educated and skilled people transform to productive workers and produce the goods and services, and lead to increase the growth and development of the country.

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

### **III. Methodology**

The study is conducted in Hailakandi district by collecting primary data through field work. As per 2011 India census, Hailakandi had a population of 659,296. Males constitute 51.25 percent of the district's population and females 48.75 percent. Average literacy rate of Hailakandi in 2011 were 74.33 percent compared to 59.64 percent of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 80.74 and 67.60 respectively. As per 2011 India census density of Hailakandi district for 2011 is 497 people per sq. km compared to 427 in 2001. The study uses multi-stage stratified random sampling to collect data from households. The sample size covers 383

households from the study unit. To understand the nature of private tutoring expenditure across different socio-demographic characteristics we have used different forms of diagrams like box-plot, bar diagram etc.

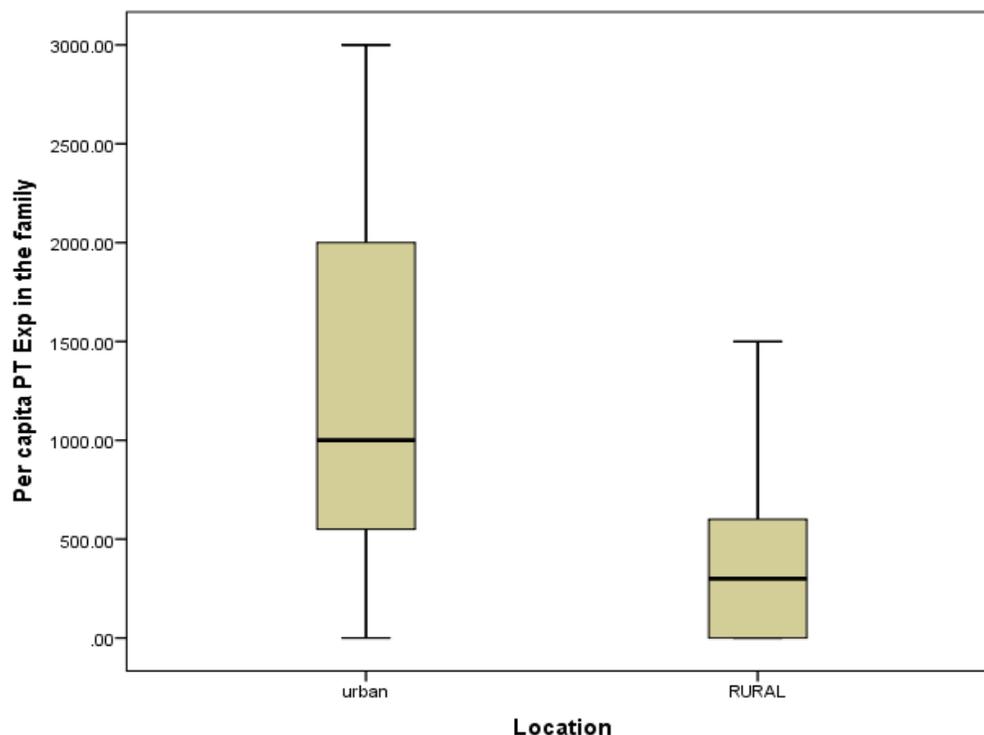
#### IV. Results and Analysis

This section discusses the result and analysis of the present study. It covers four different sub-sections. Firstly, it portrays the disparity of tuition expenditure based on place of residence. Secondly, it focuses on the expenditure pattern of the households in terms of socio-demographic characteristics. Thirdly, it analyses the disparity of tuition expenditure based on school type. And finally, it demonstrates the tuition expenditure across streams at different levels of education.

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

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

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



Source: Authors' calculation based on field survey

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

Table 2 outlines the mean and standard deviation of monthly per capita private tuition expenditure (PCPTE) of the family on the basis of different socio-demographic characteristics. Regarding guardians' occupation it is depicted that those families whose guardians are government employees, their monthly expenditure on private tuition is highest (Rs. 888.61) with a high SD followed by non-farming (Rs. 504.07), others (Rs. 323.86) and farm sector (Rs. 252.40). In terms of religion it is demonstrated that monthly per capita private tuition expenditure of the Muslim family is higher by Rs. 73.05 than Hindu family. Similarly, in regard to caste it is observed that PCPTE of the family is higher in general category households (Rs. 645.81) than backward category (Rs. 542.42).

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

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

<b>Occupation of the Guardian</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Government Sector	888.61	766.55
Non-Farming	504.07	604.90
Farming	252.40	333.05
Others	323.86	436.45
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	567.67	604.09
Muslim	640.72	725.46
<b>Caste</b>		
General	645.81	716.51
Backward	542.42	604.57
<b>House Type</b>		
Pucca	774.45	748.70

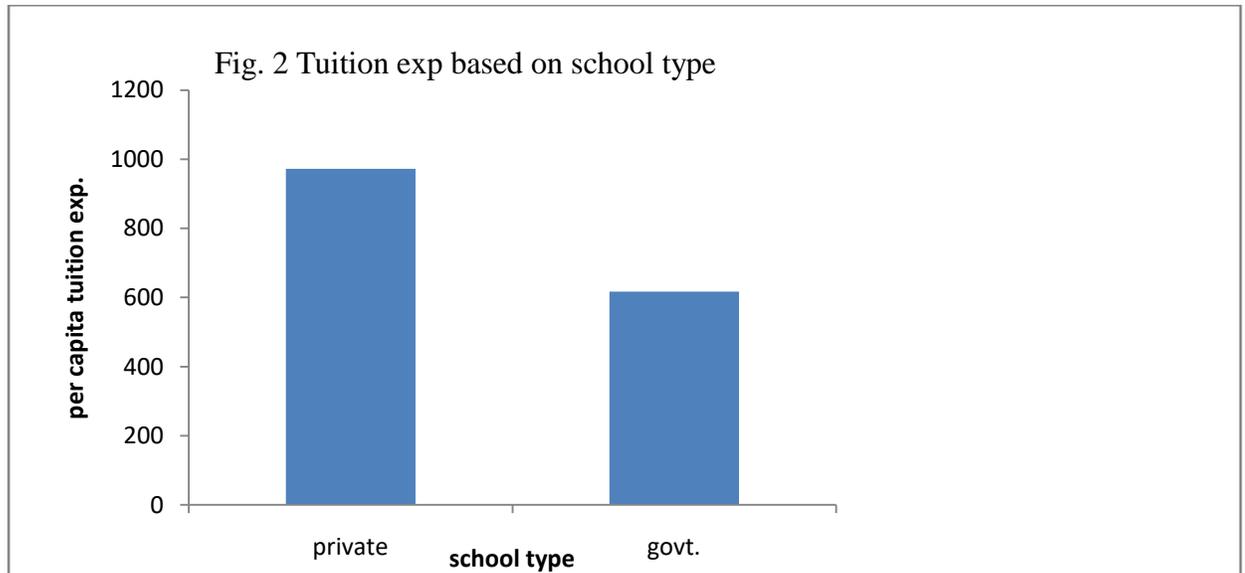
Semi-pucca	433.06	497.96
Kucha	385.92	573.78
<b>Newspapers</b>		
Yes	1039.31	788.85
No	482.33	593.08
<b>Asset Holding</b>		
Quartile 1	431.97	581.61
Quartile 2	437.55	529.61
Quartile 3	721.61	754.50
Quartile 4	876.05	755.43
<b>Per Capita Consumption Expenditure</b>		
Quartile 1	246.72	299.44
Quartile 2	432.75	478.55
Quartile 3	747.79	717.47
Quartile 4	1081.28	836.29

*Source: Authors' calculation based on field survey*

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

#### **4.3 Disparity of Tuition Expenditure between Govt. and Private School**

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



#### 4.4 Disparity of Tuition Expenditure at Different Levels of Education

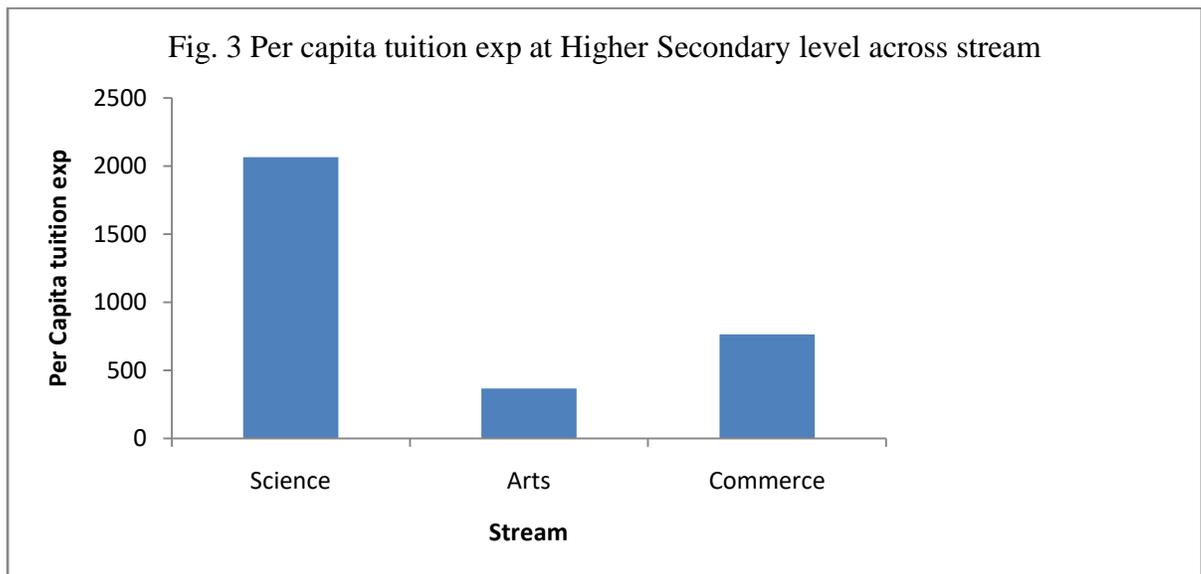
This phenomenon will lead to social inequality in the form educational attainment via inaccessibility of the private tuition by the poorer sections of the society. More specifically, it is reported in the study (see table 2) that on an average a student spends about Rs. 616 per month on private tuition in which a secondary level student spends around Rs. 477 and a higher secondary level student incurs Rs. 953 per month, and this figure is slightly low at under graduate level (Rs. 424 per month). However, when we disintegrate it into different streams then it is observed that a science student spends Rs. 2066 per month followed by commerce (Rs. 763) and arts (Rs. 367) at higher secondary level as depicted in the figure 2. This expenditure pattern clearly demonstrates that it will be very difficult task for the poor sections of the society to spend more on private tutoring. In fact, this private tuition phobia makes the attitude of the poorer guardians not to admit their children in science stream as a poor family could not spent more than Rs. 2000 per month on tuition. This will adversely affect the existing gap of educational skill between the richer and poorer section of the community not only in terms of educational attainment, but also in diversity in educational choices.

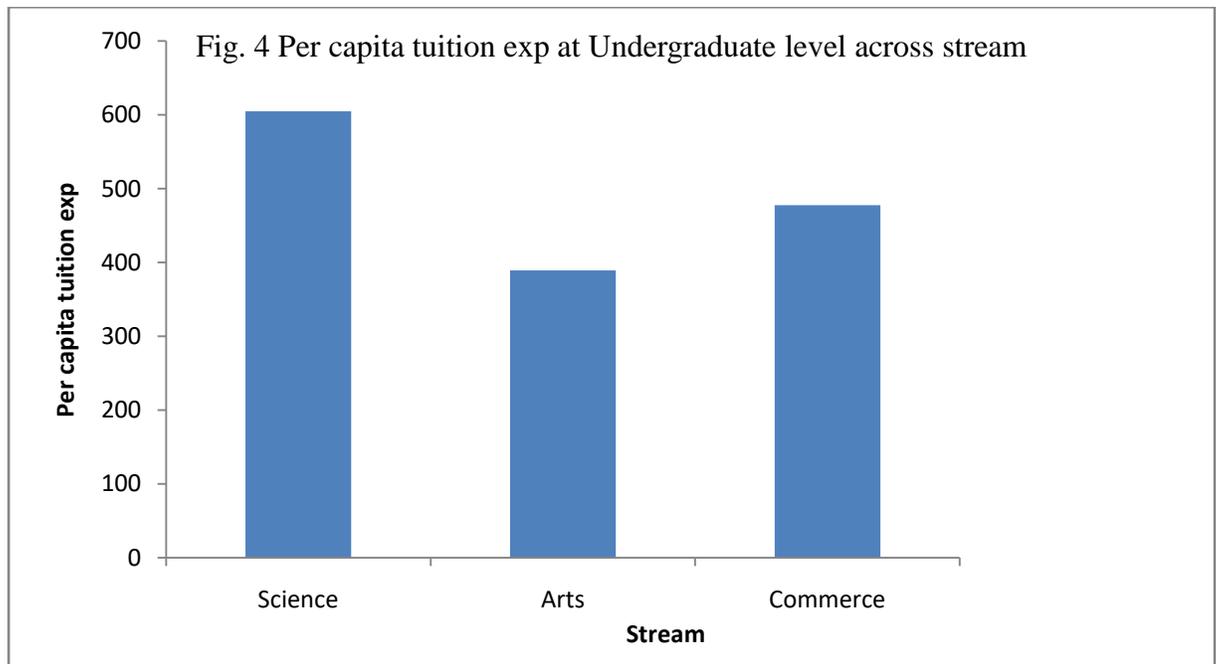
*Table 2 Per capita expenditure on hiring private tuition across streams at different levels of education*

Standards	Tuition expenditure (Per Capita in Rs.)	Total
Secondary	476.58	476.58
Science	2065.87	

High er secondary	Arts	366.90	952.27
	Commerc e	763.46	
Unde r Graduate	Science	604.55	424.72
	Arts	389.13	
	Commerc e	477.78	
Total			616.04

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





## V. Conclusion

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

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

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