

The Journey of a Middle School Student: Explorations of Mathematics Private Tutoring in School Life

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Abstract

Many developing countries have experienced a growth in private supplementary tutoring over the last 20 years. In most countries, participation to private tutoring is more prominent around the transition points in educational system. Students who attend private mathematics tutoring have an opportunity to learn practical test taking technique about algebra and geometry questions as well as having an opportunity to learn how to use time efficiently. However, students who do not take any private math tutoring use only the materials, guidance, or knowledge that their school provides for them. Thus, students who do not take the private preparatory math courses are disadvantaged. Unfortunately, there are many students whose parents' income level is not high enough to afford private mathematics tutoring expenses. Students from this group may give up at an early level, and decide they are not going further in the educational system (Mehrotra & Delamonica, 1998). Thus, I would like to explore how students' experience of being unsuccessful on the high school entrance examination is due to not participating in any private mathematics tutoring. I conducted an open-ended interview with the student and took notes about my observations. The interview was semi-structured. As a result, the participants' experience with this failure is associated with the four main themes; success expectation from the entrance examination, the disparities between the mainstream school's curriculum and the entrance examination's content, the private tutoring necessity, and SES background differences of students.

Keywords: Private tutoring, Taking private course in mathematics

Orta Öğretim Öğrencisinin Deneyimleri: Okul Hayatında Özel Matematik Dersininin Araştırması

Özet

Gelişmekte olan bazı ülkelerde, temel eğitime destek amaçlı olarak özel ders alma eğiliminin, 20 yıl içerisinde hızlı bir şekilde arttığı görülmüştür. Özel ders alma eğilimi artan bir ivmeyle ilerlemesine rağmen, eğitimciler ve devlet yöneticileri tarafından gerekli şekilde incelenmemiştir. Bazı ülkelerde (Güney Kore, Yunanistan, Japonya, Tayvan ve Türkiye) özel ders alma eğilimi, ilköğretimden liseye veya liseden üniversiteye geçiş dönemlerinde diğer dönemlere göre daha yaygın haldedir. Bu ülkelerin bazılarında, özel ders alma eğiliminin geçiş dönemlerinde artmasının başlıca nedeni okul ve giriş sınavları arasındaki müfredat farklılığıdır. Özel ders alan öğrenciler, cebir ve geometri sorularına yönelik pratik test tekniklerini ve sınav süresini daha verimli nasıl kullanacaklarına dair test becerilerini kazanma fırsatlarına sahiptirler. Fakat özel ders alamayan devlet okullarındaki öğrencilerin, ağırlıklı olarak klasik sınav tekniğine göre yetiştirilmesinden dolayı çok seçmeli sınavlarda dezavantajlı duruma düştüğü görülmektedir. Ne yazık ki birçok

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veli, çocuklarına özel ders aldırabilme imkân sunabilecek ekonomik güce sahip değildir. Bu yüzden, düşük gelirli ailelerin çocukları, sadece gelir düzeyi yüksek olan ailelerin çocuklarının başarılı olabileceğini düşünmeye başlayıp, kendi eğitimlerine yönelik umutlarını erken yasta kaybedebilirler (Mahruta & Dalaman'ca, 1998). Bu perspektiften yola çıkarak, düşük gelirli bir öğrencinin lise giriş sınavlarında özel ders alamadığı için başarıllık deneyimi yaşamış olması incelemeye başlandı. Öğrenciyle acık uçlu yarı sistematik mülakat yapılarak, bazı gözlem notları alındı. Sonuç olarak, öğrencinin başarısızlık deneyimini basılıca dört tema altında topladı. Bu dört tema şöyledir: öğrenciden lise giriş sınavlarında başarı beklentisi, okul müfredatı ve giriş sınavlarının konu farklılıkları, özel eğitiminin gerekliliği ve farklı sosyo-ekonomik düzeye sahiplik.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Özel ders, Matematikte özel ders alımı.

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

Many developing countries have experienced a growth in private supplementary tutoring over the last 20 years; however, policymakers and educators have not paid enough attention to private tutoring thus far (Bray, 2010). The amount of private tutoring is highest in mainly East Asian countries, Greece, and Turkey (Baker, Akiba, LeTendre, & Wiseman, 2001), and private tutoring has also shown to be in increasing demand in a number of Eastern European and North American countries (Davies, 2004; Silova & Bray, 2005). There are many names and types of private tutoring such as, one-to-one tutoring, group or class tutoring, telephone tutoring, and online tutoring (Bray, 2007). Private tutoring is also known as a shadow education or a secret curriculum in which participants pay private tuition in an academic school subject including but not limited to mathematics, science and history as a supplement to mainstream schooling (Safarzynska, 2011; Tansel & Bircan, 2005; Unal et al., 2010). Tansel and Bircan (2005) defined private tutoring in three main parts: 1) private tutoring is an independent education from formal schooling system that provides certain students extracurricular activities, 2) tutors teach specific knowledge mostly for a financial gain, and 3) students and parents' expectations are higher for the tutor than a normal school teacher. Student who were involved in any private tutoring

believe that there is a chance of being successful at transition points (e.g. just before middle, and high school) at which students are selected for the next stage of education is higher by participating private tutoring (Bray, 2005; Tansel & Bircan, 2005). If students are satisfied with mainstream schooling, they do not believe in the importance of private tutoring to be successful at the entrance examination (Tansel & Bircan, 2005).

Bray (2005) noted that participation in private tutoring is more prominent around the transition points in educational system (e.g. the transition to high school entrance, or the transition to college). Private tutoring is most prevalent in South Korea, Greece, Japan, Taiwan, and Turkey, and the common feature of these countries is that each requires students to pass competitive entrance examinations for the next stage of education (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). On the other hand, in some countries, there are some disparities between the requirement for the entrance examination and the content which mainstream schooling provides (Safarzynska, 2011). Unquestionably, the difference between requirements for the entrance examination and the content of public schools increases the demand for private tutoring (Putkiewicz, 2005). For instance, students who are enrolled in private mathematics tutoring have an opportunity to learn practical test taking techniques, some techniques for answering algebra and geometry

questions, as well as having an opportunity to learn how to use time efficiently. On the other hand, students who are not enrolled in private math tutoring use only the materials, guidance, or knowledge that their school provides. Thus, students who do not take the private preparatory math courses are at a disadvantage. Bray (2007) noted that some countries including Australia, France, and Singapore have banned teachers from offering private tutoring for students for whom they already teach in the mainstream setting. This prohibition may overcome part of the problem that teachers cover only the part of the particular content, and require students to participate in private tutoring to learn the remaining part of the content. As opposed to these countries, teachers are free to deliver private tutoring to their mainstream school's students in countries such as India, Lebanon, and Nigeria (Bray, 2007). In these countries, a teacher who needs additional income makes private tutoring not compulsory, but necessary. "Some governments feel powerless to do anything about the existence of tutoring" (Bray, 2007, p. 9) because of the complexity of private tutoring. Poisson (2007). Safarzynska (2011) noted that private tutoring as a multifactorial phenomenon has an impact on teaching and learning matters such as teachers' performance, textbooks production, and students' and parents' goals.

Bray and Slova (2006) noted that the demand for private tutoring can be categorized into three essential factors; a) cultural, b) economical, and c) educational. Private tutoring is prevalent in cultures which emphasize the importance of education (Bray, 2007). For example, if parents believe in education or more specifically that mathematics is important for their children's future lives, they will encourage their children to enroll in private mathematics tutoring. In turn, their children will be eager to enroll in mathematics private tutoring

to achieve the goals their parents set. Dang and Rogers (2008) showed that the economic background of parents, such as income, parents' education level, and urban location are also vital parameters of the demand for private tutoring.

Cross, Woods and Schweingruber, (2009) demonstrated that there was a huge mathematics achievement gap between low-and high- SES students even before they attended primary schools. Although there has been much research about parental involvement effects on students' mathematics achievement, little attention has been placed on the reasons for the mathematics achievement gap between low-and middle-income students, and how to reduce this gap associated with students' SES. However, Edgerton et al. (2008) noted that schooling systems contribute to the existence of this gap by reproducing class differences by transmission of economic, social and cultural advantages from one generation to another one. Later, Safarzynska (2011) added that private tutoring extends this transmission trend if parents spend an important part of their investment for their children's private tutoring. Participating in private tutoring is closely linked to the SES background of students' parents, and as might be anticipated, private tutoring is higher among students who come from higher SES backgrounds (Bray & Kwok, 2003; Psacharopoulos & Papakonstantinou, 2005; Tansel & Bircan, 2005). In this regard, private tutoring could increase the educational opportunities gap between wealthy and poor families (Sfarzynska, 2011; Tansel & Bircan, 2005), thus leading to social segregation of the latter (Sweetwman, 2002).

Private tutoring is not a luxury item anymore in the consumer budget (Tansel & Bircan, 2005) because parents who come from low-SES group are consumed by inescapable demands on their

children by the mainstream schooling system (Bray, 2007). The education system may emphasize that taking private tutoring is not compulsory, instead it is only a supplementary to education. However, parents know that if their children do not participate in private tutoring, they will not have an opportunity to learn particular content knowledge. In turn, they will be unsuccessful to pass from one grade to the next one. Because parents know private tutoring is less expensive than the cost of repeating a year, they make a rough calculation to support their children's private tutoring costs (Bray, 2007). Regardless of parents' SES background, they want their children to move from one educational stage to next successfully, thus they force themselves to invest in additional costs for their children's private math tutoring in an otherwise "free" educational systems (Bray & Kwok, 2003; Kang, 2006; Psacharopoulos & Papakonstantinou, 2005; Tansel & Bircan, 2005). On the other hand, there are many students whose parents' income level is not prosperous enough to afford expenses of private mathematics tutoring. Students who come from this group may give up their hope at an early stage, and they decide not go further because of the idea that they will never get far enough in the educational system (Mehrotra & Delamonica, 1998). Thus, I would like to explore how students' experiences of being unsuccessful on the high school entrance examination might possibly be due to not participating in any private mathematics tutoring.

Mathematics Private Tutoring for High School Entrance Examination in Turkey

In Turkey, formal and private education from pre-school to college is provided by the government, and all type of education from pre-K to 12 is under the control of the Ministry of Turkish Education (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). The Turkish Ministry of National Education has

made an effort to raise the quality of the Turkish education system with reforms (Erbaş & Ulubay, 2008). In 1997, compulsory education increased from five to eight years, and recently, in 2012, the duration of compulsory education increased from eight to twelve years. Although the participation demand for formal education at the primary and the middle school level are met (Tansel & Bircan, 2005), the demand for more quality education at the primary and middle school level cannot be fully satisfied for all students and parents.

Parents have realized that their children will be successful only if they participate in particular high schools such as Science high schools, Anatolian high schools, and private high schools. However, participation in these prestigious high schools is highly competitive, and requires students being successful on the high school entrance examination. This is the first entrance examination (SBS) in Turkey that places students into selective Turkish high schools (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). Tansel and Bircan (2005) noted that students who participate in private tutoring outperformed on the entrance examination than those who did not participate in private tutoring. However, private tutoring in Turkey is expensive and generally beyond the reach of average parents income. Because students whose parents are wealthier, older, and better educated are more likely to participate private tutoring in Turkey (Tansel & Bircan, 2005), private tutoring leads to ongoing educational disparities among students who come from different SES background.

Purpose of Statement

The purpose of this narrative study is to describe the lived experiences of a middle school student, who came from a lower-SES background, and she was not successful in the high school entrance examination possibly because of not taking any private math tutoring. At this

stage the lived experiences will be generally defined as students' processes before the high school entrance examination, experiences during the examination, and feelings after the examination.

Research Problem

The most common subject in Turkey that students receive private tutoring in is mathematics. Students are involved in some kind of mathematics preparatory courses or tutoring to increase their chances of solving mathematical questions on the high school entrance examination correctly. The aim of the mathematics preparatory tutoring is to prepare students for the high school entrance examination. Because formal school mathematics courses do not satisfy students' needs to be able to be successful on the high school entrance examination, they and their parents feel that they must participate in some kind of private tutoring even if the educational system stresses that private tutoring is not compulsory (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). For instance, the structure of mathematical questions that appear at the Turkish high school entrance examination are multiple choice question types, but the school does not provide any knowledge or guidance about strategies for the multiple choice questions. Thus, students who do not participate in any private math tutoring preparations are going to be unfamiliar with the type of mathematical questions on the high school entrance examination. Additionally, the mathematical concepts on the examination include a range of mathematical topics and students are expected to answer the questions in a limited time. Students who attend or take some preparatory mathematics courses have an opportunity to learn practical test taking techniques or some strategies for answering algebra and geometry questions as well as having an opportunity to learn how to use time efficiently. However,

students who do not participate in any private math tutoring use only the guidance or knowledge their school provides. Thus, students who do not take the private preparatory mathematics courses are at a disadvantaged because they have to exert more individual effort to be successful on the high school entrance examination, and their hope about being successful on the exams are lessened. From this perspective, the research must explore the individual stories about gaining the essence of the students' experiences about how they have a hard time to achieve their educational goals.

Central Question: What experiences does a middle school student, who did not participate in any private math tutoring during the middle school years and might not be successful on the high school entrance examination, have to tell?

Sub-questions:

- 1) What did you experience while you are preparing for the high school entrance examination?
- 2) What were the experiences that you had during the mathematics portion of the high school entrance examination?
- 3) How did you feel when you were not successful on the high school entrance examination?
- 4) How did you feel when you did not receive an admission from the high school in which you wanted to attend?

METHODS

Research Design

The design of the present study is a narrative research that investigates the lived experiences of an individual. Creswell (2007) stated that a narrative study might be the method used in this study, "As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told

stories of individuals" (p. 70). To define; "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17). Thus, I gathered the personal reflections of the Turkish high school entrance examination from a middle school student to write an oral history.

Participants

This narrative study focuses on one individual who did not participate in any private tutoring because of her parents low income level, and was not successful on the Turkish high school entrance examination, known as Seviye Belirleme Sinavi (SBS). The name of the participant is Gulsum. She is a Turkish female who is a 9th grade middle school student. Her response to this failed is situated within non- participation in a mathematics private tutoring context. I examined her experiences and the epiphanies. Then, I selected from the stories that she told me. I composed this report with a harmony of my own situated beliefs and her experiences. The journey of Gulsum is written in chronological order (Creswell, 2007; Czarniawska, 2004).

Participant Selection Strategy: I used a convenience-sampling strategy (Creswell, 2007) and I purposefully selected the student who spent considerably more individual efforts to be successful on the high school entrance examination, yet could not receive a high enough score to attain admission from the high school she wanted to attain admission from. Because the student's parents are my close friend, I thought it would be benefit for me to collect data about her personal-family-social artifacts.

Study Instruments:

I had an open-ended interview with the student and wrote down my observations. The interview was a semi-structured type. Below

are some of the questions that I asked during the interview:

1) Tell me about your past experiences with mathematics and mathematics' exams.

2) What did you think about the high school entrance examination, specifically the mathematics part?

-What did you think about the private math tutoring?

-How did you feel when you did not attend any private math tutoring for the high school entrance exam preparation?

-Did you think you had a chance to be successful on the mathematical part of the high school entrance examination?

3) What your parents think about the mathematics and private tutoring?

4) What did your family think about the high school entrance examination?

- Tell me about your preparation process for the high school entrance examination?

- How long did it take?

- Did you get any support from your school, teachers?

- If yes, what kind of support did you get from your school?

- Tell me about the high school examination day!

- How did you feel in the morning?

- What was your expectation from the exam?

- Were the questions similar to what you learned in your school?

- How did you feel when you were not able to solve mathematical questions?

5) What was your feeling after you learned you were not successful from the exams, and were not able to attend the high school you desired?

6) What was the reaction of your parents and other family members after you learned you were not successful on the exams?

7) What was the reaction of your teachers?

8) How were you influenced by this failure?

-Did this situation change your attitude about your parents, teachers, and friends?

-How did the high school examination's failures affect your later general, and specifically mathematics achievement?

Data Collection and Management Plans

I am going to invite the child and her parents to volunteer in my study. I will interview the child one-on-one and record the conversation on a digital recording device. I will store the data in a password protected folder on my laptop. Triangulation method was used to examine trustworthiness of the present study (Cresswell, 2007). Gulsum's prior transcripts, my observation notes, and transcribed interview were used as the elements of triangulation.

Analysis: I interviewed Gulsum regarding her feelings, thoughts, and the mathematics portion of the high school entrance examination in general. The data analysis was done by following the three-dimensional approach of Clandinin and Connelly (2000) that consisted of three elements: interaction (the personal and social), continuity (the past, present, and future), and situation (the place). I first transcribed the interviews and then crafted a portrayal of the participant's narration. I as a researcher took an active role by restorying the data, and I rewrote the individual's stories to place them within a sequential order. When I was restorying, I also provided a causal link among ideas (Crewell,

2007) to analyze the stories for how they are shaped interactively between the researcher and the participant or completed by the participants to deliver a particular message (Cresswell, 2007; Riessman, 1993).

Study Limitations

One of the limitations of the present study can be the participant's reluctance of sharing his/her parents' feelings or attitudes because I know them. I will show how I respect his/her personal experiences. To overcome this limitation, I will prefer the interview take place not in her home, but I am planning to meet at a public place like a cafeteria.

FINDINGS

Gulsum was a ninth grade student when I talked to her about her experiences on the high school entrance examination. She comes from a large family including her mother (Hatice), her father (Mustafa), her elder brother (Salih), and her younger brother (Ziya). Hatice is a housewife and Mustafa is a high school social science teacher. All members of the family live together in a small house. Gulsum has been attending the high school for approximately one year after her graduation from middle school. According to Gulsum's teachers at her school and her middle school reports, she is generally silent, respectful, and a very successful student. Unfortunately, Gulsum was not successful enough to attend the high school which she would desire to attend. Gulsum's experience with this failure is associated with the four main themes: success expectation from the entrance examination, the disparities between the mainstream school's curriculum and the entrance examination's content, the private tutoring necessity, and SES background differences of students.

Success Expectation from School

Much research has shown the relationship between parental beliefs and attitudes, including the expectations of parents, target orientations, and ability beliefs' children espouse (Friedel, Cortina, Turner, & Midgley, 2007). Hyde et al. (2006) showed that while parental attitudes have been found to be positively related with students' achievement, parental reinforcement has been found to be not significantly related with students' achievement. When I asked Gulsum about how she felt while preparing for the high school entrance examination, Gulsum told me, "I did not care what I would think about my result, but I cared a lot what others would think about my exam's result. I was afraid of being unsuccessful on the high school entrance examination because of my parents' high academic reinforcement and expectation" Because Gulsum was one of the best students throughout her educational life, her parents expected an outstanding score on the entrance examination. One of the important reasons why Gulsum has been best students in school is because she believes in her parents' high expectation. For instance, Gulsum told me, "Once my father did not allow me to go outside unless I was able to count fives at a time. Then, I realized that I did not have an option to not like math. I felt I had to be good at mathematics; otherwise, my father would think I was not smart enough. Cross et al. (2009) has already showed that parents can increase the potential development of their children's mathematical knowledge and skills by setting high expectations and providing a stimulating environment. Gulsum and her parents are a good example of how parents' expectations play an important role in shaping their children's future interests and motivation. Gulsum was studying her school courses as much as she could, and she tried to keep her position as the best student in her school, and she did. However, once she was in 8th grade,

she realized that most of her classmates were involving in private tutoring to help them prepare for the high school entrance examination. At first, she felt that she did not need to take any supplementary courses because of her school success. One time, she attended a practice examination at the private tutoring center, and she realized that she was not going to be successful enough to go to the particular high school, which, she desired to go. The reason why she was not successful at the practice examination is because she found some disparities between the school's curriculum and the practice examination. After this experience, she anticipated that she would not be as successful on the high school entrance examination as she and her parents anticipated. However, she did not know how to say this to her parents because she believed that her parents would not understand her feelings, but she also knew that the only way she could make them happy was being as successful as they had expected. Hence, Gulsum did not share her feelings with her parents, her anxiety and fear of being unsuccessful on the high school entrance examination increased. Gulsum tried to hide her anxiety about the examination from her parents, and tried to be seen as confident in herself because she felt oppressed by her parents' high academic reinforcement.

The Disparities Between the Mainstream School's Curriculum And The High School Entrance Examination

Participation in private tutoring is more common around the transition points in the education system such as transition from middle school to high school (Bray, 2005). South Korea, Greece, Japan, Taiwan, and Turkey are countries where private tutoring is highly prevalent. Each of these countries has a requirement that students need to pass competitive entrance examinations to proceed to the next stage in

education (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). However, the entrance examination can cause some problems for certain groups of students. For instance, the structure of the Turkish high school entrance examinations contains multiple choice questions; however, mainstream school examinations are mostly open-ended, and most students do not receive any knowledge or guidance about multiple choice tests. Gulsum said, "Because the first couple of questions in the exam were easy, I solved them quickly, and thought that the remaining mathematics' questions would be easy too. However, when I came to the eleventh mathematics question, I had a hard time solving the question. My mathematics teacher taught me some superficial knowledge about mathematics, but the high school examination required me to have a deeper knowledge to be able to solve certain mathematical questions", Gulsum said. The disparity between the school curriculum and the entrance examination's content was one reason Gulsum believed why she did not pass the examination. Gulsum thought that the only way to be successful on the Turkish high school examination was to get extra support, thus learning some content which main stream schools do not provide them, but the entrance examination requires students to have a mastery of knowledge of the content. However, receiving private tutoring is only possible for high and upper middle SES background students. Hence, private tutoring plays an important role in existing social structure and transitional advantages from one generation to the next.

Private Tutoring

Turkey is among the countries in which private tutoring is highly prevalent. Parents in Turkey spend a substantial amount of their household income to enable their children to participate in private tutoring. Tansel and Bircan (2005) noted

that students who do attend private tutoring are unsatisfied with the mainstream schooling; otherwise, they would not need additional tutoring. Private tutoring in Turkey is one of the significant indicators of student academic achievement, and students who participate in private tutoring performed better on the entrance examination (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). Gulsum said, "Private tutoring is necessary for students to be successful on the high school entrance examination, and I think it is impossible to get a high score on the examination without it." However, students like Gulsum whose parents come from low-SES background have no opportunities to receive private tutoring due to their parents' low income. These opportunities can include but are not limited to learning additional content, which, mainstream schools do not provide, learning multiple choice test techniques and skills, and understanding how to use time efficiently. Gulsum believed the reasons for her failure was because of not having these opportunities.

SES Background Differences

Although there has been much research about the effects on parental involvement on students' academic achievement, little attention has been placed on the reasons for the academic achievement gap between low-and middle-income students, and how to reduce this gap associated with students' SES. Further research needs to be conducted to show the reasons including private tutoring will eliminate this academic achievement gap in certain countries. "There is no way of being successful at the high school entrance examination without private tutoring. I think everyone needs to participate if their parental income is high enough." Gulsum had no hope at all because she knew that her parents could not afford the expenses of private tutoring. On the other hand, she knew that the disparities between the mainstream

school curriculum and the entrance examination made private tutoring not only supplementary but also compulsory. Gulsum was also struggling with her parents' high success expectation for the entrance examination because she realized that with an only her individual effort and without participating in any private tutoring, she could only show a modest success, but not an outstanding one as her parents expected. "I had no hope at all to be as successful as my parents expected. I would like achieve their expectation, but, since I could not change my parents' income, it was not possible for me to achieve up to their high expectation." Gulsum conflicted with the educational system requirements and her parents' high expectation. Gulsum did not want to make her SES background explicit. "Sometimes, teachers in the classroom were asking who received private tutoring raise your hand. I felt uncomfortable because I did not want my friends and my teachers to learn that I come from a low-SES background." From this, I realized that Gulsum believed whoever participate in private tutoring came from higher-SES background because there was no reasons for non-participating in private tutoring other than coming from a low-SES background. Hence, Gulsum tried to hide this from her friends about not enrolling in any private tutoring in order not to make her SES background explicit. Interestingly, Gulsum was not affected adversely from this failure because of her motivation about the school success. "I was not affected negatively from this failure, and I always wanted to be a good student. I was consoled because I would be with most of my middle school friends in my new high school."

DISCUSSION

Gulsum's experiences on the high school entrance examination and my interaction with her were a result of my own teaching experiences

in one of the private tutoring centers. The idea of being a voice of low-SES background students about their disadvantages occurred while I was working as a mathematics teacher in one of the private tutoring centers. In the early stage of this research, I realized that students whom I saw in the private tutoring center mostly came from higher-SES background. From my personal observation, these students did not possess some mathematical content knowledge which appeared on the entrance examination as part of the test. However, this was not problem for these students because I have already taught them about what their mainstream schooling did not provide. However, this is the problem for students who cannot enroll in private tutoring due to their parents' low-SES background. Having an opportunity talk with Gulsum about her feelings extended my perspectives about private tutoring, and I gained a different perspective of private tutoring rather than the one my previous students shaped in my understanding of the private tutoring phenomenon. Gulsum was a good model for me because she came from a low-SES background and never had an opportunity to enroll in private tutoring. Gulsum is conflicted with her SES background, the educational system, and her parents' high expectation. She understands that the purpose of education is only to keep the existing social positions of people by transmitting one generation's benefit to the next one. In order to provide educational opportunities to all students, policy-makers, educators, and parents should implement the followings.

Implementations

For Policy Makers

As stated above, there have been disparities between the main stream curriculum and the entrance examination. For instance, students have difficulty solving mathematical questions

which require intensive knowledge and practice, but the mainstream school provides only superficial knowledge with limited application opportunities. Questions on the entrance examination were prepared by taking into account what the mainstream schooling provides to students rather than what private tutoring centers provide. Thus, it can reduce the disadvantages for students who do not participate in private tutoring because they are required to answer no more than what their mainstream schooling provide. Policy makers should also provide some opportunities for low-SES background students. For example, instead of paying tax, private tutoring centers can provide a free education for a number of low-SES background students. Also, policy makers can build a community private tutoring center by getting help from retired teachers and pre-service teachers. The reasons these types of teachers may be willing to be volunteers is because retired teachers may want to take an active role in the society, and pre-service teachers may need experiences before they become official teacher.

For Teachers

It seems that teacher in this system cannot do anything. However, teachers can play an active role in providing some guidance and motivation to students who do not participate in private tutoring. For instance, Gulsum's teacher

asked those who were involved in private tutoring to raise their hands. However, Gulsum felt uncomfortable answering this question in front of her classmates. Hence, teachers should interact with their students more individually about private issues. Besides, teachers never encourage students to obtain additional private tutoring during the class time because it may negatively affect students, and discourage students who have no opportunity to participate in private tutoring because of their parents' low-SES. For instance, "If you were participating private tutoring, you would have been successful" Gulsum's teacher said. Teachers should encourage students about overcoming disadvantages by providing them as much encouragement as possible.

For Parents

Parents should not reinforce their children without considering the ability of their children, and the requirement of the educational system. For instance, "My parents thought I did not need private tutoring because I was a good student at school" Gulsum said. However, her parents did not know the entrance examination was partially different from the school's curriculum. Parents should communicate with their child's teachers in order to help them in most efficient manner rather than only setting a high success expectation for their school life.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Giriş

Gelişmekte olan bazı ülkelerde, temel eğitime destek amaçlı olarak özel ders alma eğiliminin, 20 yıl içerisinde hızlı bir şekilde arttığı görülmüştür. Özel ders alma eğilimi artan bir ivmeyle ilerlemesine rağmen, eğitimciler ve devlet yöneticileri tarafından gerekli ve yeterli bir şekilde incelenmemiştir (Bray, 2010). Bazı ülkelerde (Güney Kore, Yunanistan, Japonya, Tayvan ve Türkiye) özel ders alma eğilimi, ilköğretimden liseye veya liseden üniversiteye geçiş dönemlerinde diğer dönemlere göre daha yaygın haldedir (Tansel & Bircan, 2005). Bu ülkelerin bazılarında, özel ders alma eğiliminin geçiş dönemlerinde daha yaygın olmasının en önemli nedenlerinden biri okul ve giriş sınavları arasındaki müfredat farklılığıdır (Putkiewicz, 2005; Safarzynska, 2011). Özel ders alan öğrenciler cebir ve geometri sorularına yönelik pratik test tekniklerini ve sınav suresini daha verimli nasıl kullanacaklarına dair test becerilerini kazanma fırsatlarına sahiptirler. Fakat özel ders alamayan devlet okullarındaki öğrencilerin, ağırlıklı olarak klasik sınav tekniğine göre yetiştirilmesinden dolayı çok seçmeli sınavlarda dezavantajlı duruma düştüğü görülmektedir (Sfarzynska, 2011; Sweetwman, 2002).

Ne yazık ki birçok veli, çocuklarına özel ders aldirabilme imkânı sunabilecek ekonomik güce sahip değildir. Bu yüzden, düşük gelirli ailelerin çocukları, sadece gelir düzeyi yüksek olan ailelerin çocuklarının başarılı olabileceğini düşünmeye başlayıp, kendi eğitimlerine yönelik umutlarını erken yasta kaybedebilirler (Mehrotra & Delamonica, 1998).

Yöntem

Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma çeşitlerinden olan narrative yöntem kullanıldı. Önceki çalışmaların tavsiyelerine paralel olarak, düşük gelirli bir öğrencinin lise giriş sınavında özel ders alamadığı için başarı ilik deneyimi yaşamış olması incelenmeye başlandı. Öğrenciyle açık uçlu yarı sistematik mülakat yapılarak, bazı gözlem notları alındı. Öğrencinin başarısını gösteren belgeler örneğin karne veya önceki sınav

sonuçları, öğrenciyle yapılan mülakat ve gözlem notları alınarak, üçgen (triangulation) metodu kullanılıp çalışmanın güvenilir sonuçlar verdiğine ulaşıldı (Cresswell, 2007).

Bulgular, Tartışma ve Sonuç

Sonuç olarak, öğrencinin başarısızlık deneyimi başlıca dört tema altında toplandı. Bu dört tema: öğrenciden giriş sınavlarında başarı beklentisi, okul müfredatı ve giriş sınavlarının konu farklılıkları, özel ders almanın gerekliliği ve farklı sosyo-ekonomik düzeye sahiplik. Bu çalışma, ekonomik gelir düzeyi düşük ailelerden gelen öğrencilerin, dershaneye gidemediklerinden dolayı, giriş sınavlarındaki mağduriyetlerinin giderilmesi için politikacılara, öğretmenlere, eğitimciler ve ebeveynlere bazı öneriler vermektedir. Öncelikle devlet yöneticilerinin yapması gerekenler: 1) maddi durumu düşük olan öğrenciler için özel dershanelerde belirli sayıda kontenjan bulundurma taslağını oluşturma, 2) maddi durumu düşük olan öğrenciler için özel dershanelerle aynı kaliteye sahip devlet il veya ilçe belediyelerince desteklenen kurslar açtırma ve 3) lise veya üniversite giriş sınavlarının gerektirdiği bilgi ve becerilerin devlet okulları tarafından öğrencilere kazandırılmasını sağlama. Devlet yöneticilerinin takip edebileceği bu üç öneri eğitimde fırsat eşitliğini sağlamanın temel adımlarını oluşturabilir. Öğretmenler için öneriler ise: 1) öğrencilerini kendilerinden veya dışarıdan özel ders almaya yöneltmemeleri ve 2) okul tarafından verilen eğitimin yeterli olup, öğrencilerin özel ders almadan da giriş sınavlarında başarıya ulaşabilecekleri fikrini önce kendilerine sonrada öğrencilerine benimsetmelilerdir. Öğretmenler için verilen bu iki öneri düşük gelirli öğrencilerin ileriye yönelik eğitim umutlarını arttırabilecektir. Ebeveynler için de: 1) çocuklarına koydukları akademik hedeflerde, onların bireysel beceri ve kapasitelerini göz önünde bulundurmaları ve 2) çocuklarıyla iletişim kurup onların başarısızlık nedenlerini öğrenmeleridir. Örneğin, ebeveynler çocuklarıyla iletişime geçerek, giriş sınavlarının okul müfredatından farklı olduğu için, okul derslerinde çok başarılı olan bir öğrencinin giriş sınavlarında başarısız olabileceği ihtimalini bilmesi hem aile hemze çocuk üzerindeki bakiyi bir nebze olsun hafifletecektir.