

Examination of the Effect of the Covid-19 Pandemic Period on Private Tutoring Tendencies of High School Students: A Longitudinal Study

Azmi Türkanⁱ
Siirt University

Abstract

Getting insufficient efficiency from the educational system can lead individuals to supplementary tutoring such as private tutoring. Due to the fact that private tutoring is taking more part in our lives day by day and that the Covid-19 pandemic can lead individuals to private tutoring, the purpose of this study is to; longitudinally identify how the Covid-19 period affects private tutoring tendencies of high school students. In order to identify how the Covid-19 pandemic period affected high school students' private tutoring tendencies, data concerning private tutoring tendencies of the students before the Covid-19 period and during the Covid-19 pandemic period were collected for the study. The longitudinal screening model, a quantitative design, was used in the study. The participant group consists of 133 students who took part in the first and second implementation. The "Private Tutoring Tendency Scale" was used in collecting data. According to the study, it was identified that the Covid-19 pandemic period in general increases the private tutoring tendencies of students.

Keywords: Private Tutoring, Supplementary Tutoring, Covid-19, Pandemic, Longitudinal Study

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ⁱ **Azmi Türkan**, Assist. Prof. Dr., Educational Science, Siirt University, ORCID: 0000-0003-2546-5122

Email: azmiturkan@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

A competitive atmosphere is a natural outcome in countries where passing to upper educational grades takes place through exams. In this competitive atmosphere, students put more effort so as to get into a better institution and have to spare more time to study. Today's educational programs focus on the personal characteristics of individuals. In our era where competition, exam systems and individual abilities are underlined in choosing professions, educational systems provide the opportunity to discover individual abilities. Thus, efforts that individuals put for exams have surpassed their school performances (Turkish Education Association, TED, 2010). In addition, providing remedial learning supports for students has emerged as a natural result of competitive atmospheres. Private educational institutions, which provide individual ability and characteristic oriented education and where less number of students are present, have become widespread. Along with courses conducted with less number of students, one-to-one private tutoring is also in the foreground of these private educational institutions. The term private tutoring is frequently used today and is also a term which we may frequently encounter in the future.

History and Definition of Private Tutoring

Gündüz (2003) states that one-to-one private tutoring dates back to before the Roman and Greek scripts. It was observed that private tutoring was prominent in the middle ages via the church and during the 1200's in the United Kingdom noble families provided private tutoring to their children (Gordon & Gordon, 1990). A similar case was observed in the Seljuk and Ottoman empires. It is stated that members of the dynasty were declared qualified by being provided private tutoring (Akyüz, 2015).

Private tutoring is defined differently by different researchers. Private tutoring is defined as courses parallel with school lessons that are taken out of school (Bray et al., 2015). Another definition of private tutoring is, lessons that are individually paid for (Demirer, 2011; Ireson, 2004). Hong and Park (2012) define private tutoring as a, service given to family or students for individuals or private entrepreneurs to earn money. Based on the definitions, Türkan (2019) defines private tutoring as; tutoring provided by teachers, university students or people from professions such as engineering in return of money for students to make up for their lessons, increase their academic achievements and give psychological support.

Dimensions of Private Tutoring

With respect to the definitions, it is possible to examine private tutoring under four dimensions named as the academic, affective, socioeconomic and intentional dimension (Türkan & Çeliköz, 2016).

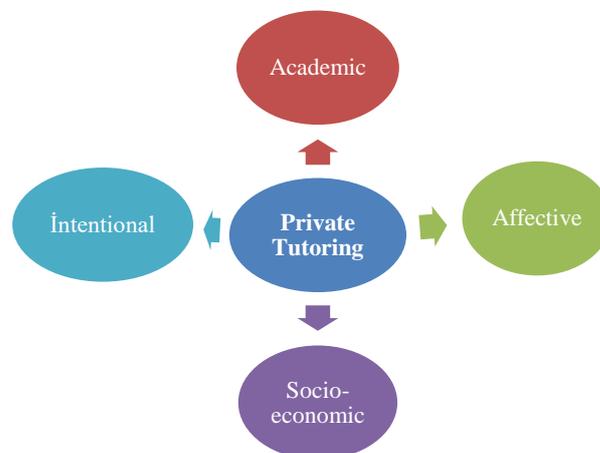


Figure 1. Dimensions of Private Tutoring

When examined academically, it is evident that private tutoring is a crucial factor in making up for deficiencies in school lessons (Bray, 2007; Mischo & Haag, 2002) and increasing success in tests or large scale exams (Silova, 2009). Private tutoring aims at supporting mental processes of the students by assisting them with their homework (Bray & Lykins, 2012). On the other hand, it is underlined that private tutoring has no benefits for academic developments of the individuals (Guill & Bos, 2014; Smyth, 2008) and limits the students by giving them a limited perspective (Bray, 2009; Bray & Lykins, 2012). With respect to the affective dimension of private tutoring, it is underlined that private tutoring positively affects students concerning motivation, interest (Bray et al., 2013), will (Türkan, 2019) as well as psychologically affecting the families of the students (Davies, 2004; Davis, 2013; Guill & Bos, 2014). It is stated that private tutoring can have negative effects such as students' being unwilling for school lessons (Bray, 2007) or encountering stress in lessons (Suante, 2017).

One other dimension of private tutoring is the socioeconomic dimension. When the fact that passing to upper educational grades takes place through competition based exams is considered, remedial lessons like private tutoring can lead to differentiation among students (Yıldızhan, 2015). This leads to socioeconomic inequality in favor of children from families with high financial potentials (Bray & Kwo, 2014; Ireson, 2011). Private tutoring can sometimes negatively affect school systems (Suante, 2017), in fact cause teachers to avoid school courses (Ireson, 2011) by urging them to resort to private tutoring due to insufficient salary (Özder, 2013). The fourth dimension of private tutoring is titled as the imperative dimension. Tendencies of the students for private tutoring are determined in the imperative dimension. Competition is considered the most important factor in the tendencies of students (Saracaloğlu et al., 2014; TED, 2010). Differences among schools (Yıldızhan, 2015), excessive classroom size (Bray & Lykins, 2012) and the pressure caused by the family or relatives (Rutz & Balkan, 2016) are among the factors that urge students to private tutoring.

Types of Private Tutoring

It is observed that there can be different types of private tutoring and the classifications in the literature differ (Zhang & Liu, 2016). Türkan (2019) categorizes private tutoring under three titles as one-to-one private tutoring between the teacher and students, desk-based (small group) private tutoring between the teacher and a few students and private tutoring through education coaching which deals with students comprehensively by motivating them. One-to-one private lessons come to mind initially when private tutoring is mentioned.

Importance and Purpose of the Study

Today, it is evident that private tutoring is rapidly taking position in the educational system. TED (2010) expresses that private tutoring is experienced in the first year of primary school stage. Private tutoring is also commonly preferred in Far Eastern countries such as South Korea and Japan (Bray, 2009; Lee, 2013; Türkan, 2019). In addition, it is observed that private tutoring is expanding more in the lives of students day by day in America and European countries (Demirer, 2011; Ireson, 2011; Kassotakis & Verdis, 2013). The Covid-19 pandemic observed worldwide led to a change in many ways in educational systems. Many countries verged towards distance education for a while. Students and parents that tended towards distance education failed to get enough efficiency from the education they received (Genç & Gümrükçüoğlu, 2020). Similarly, it is stated in the study conducted by Bakioğlu and Çevik (2020) that students failed to get sufficient output from the online education during the Covid-19 period. The students being passive in distance education resulted in getting insufficient efficiency (Fourie, 2001; Odabaş, 2003; Cheng, 2020; Türkan et al., 2020). It is believed that lack of educational efficiency lead students to supplementary education such as private tutoring. Private tutoring is taking more part in our lives day by day and individuals are urging to private tutoring more due to the Covid-19 pandemic. With this respect, the purpose of this study is to; longitudinally identify how the Covid-19 period affects private tutoring tendencies of students. Thus, answers for the following questions were sought:

1. What's the level of the students' state of taking private tutoring before the Covid-19 period?
2. What's the level of the students' state of taking private tutoring during the Covid-19 period?
3. Does the Covid-19 period significantly affect private tutoring tendencies of the students?

METHOD

Research Design

How the Covid-19 pandemic period affected high school students' private tutoring tendencies was examined in this study. With this respect, the difference between private tutoring tendency levels of the students before the Covid-19 pandemic period and during the pandemic was identified in this study. The repeated longitudinal screening model, one of the quantitative research designs, was preferred in the study as the data are collected from the same sample group from different periods of time. Differentiation in the specific states of participants of a group during different periods is usually identified in the repeated longitudinal screening model (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009; Harrison & Hefner, 2006; Marczky et al., 2005). Data of the study were collected at different times from the same sample group.

Group of Participants

The participant group of the study consists of students studying in a public school in the Southeastern Anatolia Region of Turkey. Having a medium level success throughout the province was taken as a basis in selecting the school. The reason why this type of school is preferred is the coexistence of individuals with different socioeconomic and academic achievements. The participant group of before the Covid-19 pandemic period consists of 185 students studying in year 9. during the fall semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. The participant group of during the Covid-19 pandemic period consists of 143 students studying in year 10. during the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. Some students who participated in the first implementation were not reached due to the pandemic period. It was observed that 10 students who participated in the second implementation didn't participate in the first implementation. The final participant group of the study consists of 133 students who took part in the first and second implementation. Distribution of the participants concerning gender and state of taking private tutoring is given on Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Gender and State of Taking Private Tutoring

	Variable	N	%
Gender	Female	57	42.9
	Male	52	39.1
	Empty	24	18
	Total	133	100
State of Taking Private Tutoring	Yes	28	21.1
	No	87	65.4
	Empty	18	13.5
	Total	133	100

It is evident on Table 1 that 43% of the participants are female, 39% are male and 18% of the participants didn't specify their gender. One other point examined in Table 1 is whether or not the students have taken private tutoring. It is evident that 21% of the participants took private tutoring, 65% didn't take private tutoring and 14% didn't give any statements about taking private tutoring.

Data Collection Tool

The “Private Tutoring Tendency Scale” developed by Türkan and Çeliköz (2016) was used as the data collection instrument of the study. The scale developed aims at detecting private tutoring tendencies of high school students. The scale consists of 33 items gathered under 4 factors. The scale consists of the; “Cognitive Dimension” (11 items), “Affective Dimension” (9 items), “Imperative Dimension” (6) and “Socioeconomic Dimension” (7) factors. Items of the study account for 44.53% of the total variance and the item total value ranges between 0.51 and 0.82. The reliability values of the scale were observed as 0.84 for the Cronbach’s Alpha and 0.71 for the “Test Re-Test” value. The scale is grouped into two sections consisting of descriptive information and tendency items. The 5 point Likert type was used in carrying out the scale. The data collection instrument was conducted twice in year 2019 and 2020.

Research Process

At the beginning of the research process, the purpose of the study was determined as identifying how private tutoring tendencies of students change in four years starting from year 9. With this respect, private tutoring tendency data of the students in year 9. were collected during the 2019-2020 fall semester. Face-to-face educational activities were interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic period that arose in 2019-2020 spring term. Due to the fact that out-of-school supplementary education tendencies of students may have changed during this period, the purpose of the study was revised as comparison of private tutoring tendencies of students before the Covid-19 and during the Covid-19 period. The data collection process during the first phase of the study was carried out by the researcher. It was observed that the participants answered the scale items in 9-17 minutes. The collected data were integrated to the computer. Interviews were conducted with school administrators when collecting the data for the second phase of the study. It was decided that data will be collected face-to-face in case of returning to face-to-face education. However, based on the explanations of the authorities during the period, it was assumed that year 10. students will not receive face-to-face education during the 2020-2021 fall term. As a result of the interviews with school administrators, it was decided to collect scale data online. Scale items were transmitted to online media and delivered to year 10. students through communication media. Teachers delivered the scales to the students via communication groups they set with their classroom and informed the students to fill them. The teachers informed the students that they had one week to fill in the scales. When data of the students are examined, it is evident that 10 of the 143 forms filled in online belonged to students who didn’t take part in the first implementation. It was observed that 133 data belonged to students who participated in the first and second implementation. It was crucial for students to participate voluntarily while collecting face-to-face and online data. Necessary permissions were obtained from the Provincial Directorate for National Education. Stages of the research process are given on Table 2.

Table 2. Research Process

Process	Implementation Time	Data Resources	Data collection instruments	Way of data collection	Data analysis
Before Covid-19 Pandemic	2019-2020 Fall Semester	Year 9. Students (Pre Implementation)	Private Tutoring Tendency Scale	Face-to-face (School Setting)	Paired (dependent) Samples
Covid-19 Pandemic Period	2020-2021 Fall Semester	Year 10. Students (Post Implementation)	Private Tutoring Tendency Scale	Distant (Online Setting)	t-test

Data Analysis

The SPSS 25 software was used in analyzing the study data. The paired (dependent) samples t-test was conducted in order to identify the differences between the pre implementation and post implementation. According to Pallant (2016) and Büyüköztürk, Çoklu and Köklü (2012) the *paired (dependent) samples t-test* is used in comparing two data sets related to each other. This type of test is

separated into two. Preferring different data collected from the same participants is defined as repeated measurement, using data sets collected from participants related to each other is defined as the paired samples design. Due to the fact that data collected from the same participant group in different periods of time was used in this study, the paired (dependent) samples t-test was preferred for data analysis. Kurtosis and skewness values were examined so as to identify normality of the data and it was observed that data had a normal distribution. Statements expressed in interpreting the tendency averages of the participants concerning before and during the Covid-19 period were; “Very Low” for the 1.00-1.80 score interval, “Low” for the 1.81-2.60 score interval, “Medium” for the 2.61-3.40 score interval, “High” for the 3.41-4.20 score interval and “Very High” for the 4.21-5.00 score interval.

FINDINGS

Findings gathered from the study are given in this section. Research questions were taken as a basis when presenting the findings. The finding concerning the extent of private tutoring tendencies of the students before the Covid-19 period and during the Covid-19 period is initially presented. The finding concerning to how the Covid-19 period affected private tutoring tendencies of students is given in the next section.

Private tutoring tendency levels of the participants

Tendency levels of the participants before the Covid-19 pandemic period were examined. Private tutoring tendency levels of the participants before Covid-19 is given on Table 3 according to the dimensions. Average scores, standard deviations and average based interpretation values are given on the table.

Table 3. Private Tutoring Tendency Levels of Students before Covid-19

Factor	N	\bar{x}	S.D.	S.E.	Interpretation
Cognitive Tendency Dimension	133	2.95	.57	.05	Medium
Affective Tendency Dimension	133	3.07	.67	.06	Medium
Imperative Tendency Dimension	133	2.98	.57	.05	Medium
Socioeconomic Tendency Dimension	133	3.23	.71	.06	Medium
Total	133	3.05	.45	.04	Medium

According to Table 3, the *socioeconomic tendency dimension* is the dimension with the highest private tutoring tendency average with 3.23 value. The dimension with the lowest average is the *imperative tendency dimension* with 2.98 value. Private tutoring tendency total score average of the participants before Covid-19 was observed to be 3.05. It was observed that private tutoring tendencies of the participants before Covid-19 with respect to total scores and dimensions is at “Medium” level.

Private tutoring tendency levels of the participants during the Covid-19 period are given on Table 4 based on the dimensions. Average scores, standard deviations and average based interpretation values are given on the table.

Table 4. Private Tutoring Tendency Levels of Students During the Covid-19 Period

Factor	N	\bar{x}	S.D.	S.E.	Interpretation
Cognitive Tendency Dimension	133	3.22	.50	.04	Medium
Affective Tendency Dimension	133	3.06	.48	.04	Medium
Imperative Tendency Dimension	133	3.41	.49	.04	High
Socioeconomic Tendency Dimension	133	2.91	.45	.04	Medium
Total	133	3.15	.39	.03	Medium

According to Table 4, the *imperative tendency dimension* is the dimension with the highest private tutoring tendency average with 3.41 value. The dimension with the lowest average is the

socioeconomic tendency dimension with 2.91 value. Private tutoring tendency total score average of the participants during Covid-19 was observed to be 3.15. It was observed that private tutoring tendencies of the participants during Covid-19 with respect to total scores and the *cognitive, affective* and *socioeconomic dimensions* are at “Medium” level and at “High” level for the *imperative dimension*.

Effects of the Covid-19 period on private tutoring tendency levels of the participants

Private tutoring tendency levels of the participants before and during the Covid-19 period were examined. The graphic concerning the change between the pre and post implementations of the participants is presented on Figure 2.

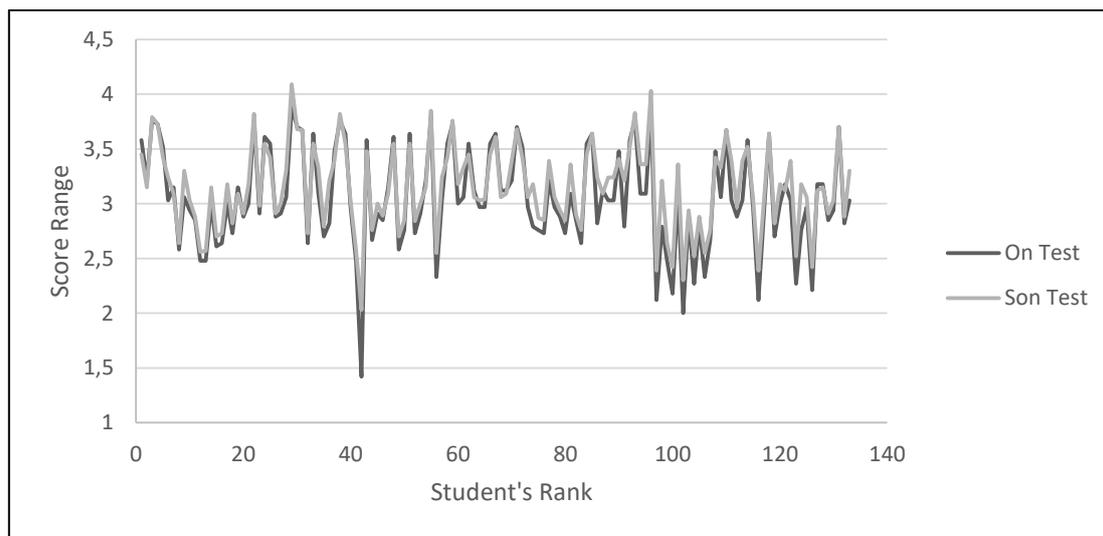


Figure 2. Pre-Post Implementation Change Graphic

The change in private tutoring tendency levels of the students before Covid-19 and during the pandemic period is presented on Figure 2. It is evident that private tutoring tendency scores of the pre implementation are generally lower.

Differentiation states of the participants’ tendency levels before the Covid-19 period and during the period are examined on Table 5. Average scores, standard deviations, t scores and significance levels (p) are given on the table.

Table 5. Differentiation state of private tutoring levels before and after Covid-19

Dimension	Evaluation	N	\bar{x}	s.s.	sd	t	p	Cohen’s d
Cognitive Dimension	Pre Test	133	2.95	0.57	132	-6.31	0.00	.55
	Post Test	133	3.22	0.50				
Affective Dimension	Pre Test	133	3.07	0.67	132	0.12	0.91	-
	Post Test	133	3.06	0.48				
Imperative Dimension	Pre Test	133	2.98	0.57	132	-8.80	0.00	.76
	Post Test	133	3.41	0.49				
Socioeconomic Dimension	Pre Test	133	3.23	0.71	132	5.69	0.00	.49
	Post Test	133	2.91	0.45				
Total	Pre Test	133	3.05	0.45	132	-7.98	0.00	.69
	Post Test	133	3.15	0.39				

It is evident on Table 5 that there is an increase in the private tutoring *cognitive tendency dimension*, *imperative tendency dimension* and *socioeconomic tendency dimension* and total scores of the participants in favor of the second implementation. According to the Table, there is a decrease in the *affective tendency dimension* of the participants. The increases in the *cognitive tendency dimension* ($t_{(132)}=-6.31$, $p<0.01$), *imperative tendency dimension* ($t_{(132)}=-8.80$, $p<0.01$), *socioeconomic tendency dimension* ($t_{(132)}=5.69$, $p<0.01$) and the total tendency score ($t_{(132)}=-7.98$, $p<0.01$) were observed to be statistically significant. Because the items of the *socioeconomic dimension* are reverse items, a decrease in the statistical value refers to an increase in socioeconomic difference. In other words, participants stated that the socioeconomic difference increased more with private tutoring during the pandemic period. It is evident that the decrease in the *affective tendency dimension* is not statistically significant. In other words, it can be expressed that private tutoring tendencies of the participants have increased in general during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of the study is to determine whether or not the Covid-19 pandemic period affects private tutoring tendencies of students. With this respect, tendency levels of the students before the pandemic and during the pandemic were identified. With respect to the dimensions and total scores, it is evident that private tutoring tendencies of the participants are at “Medium” level before the Covid-19 and during the Covid-19 period. However, it was observed that the imperative tendency dimension is at “High” level during the Covid-19 pandemic period. According to the findings, private tutoring tendencies of the participants increased in general during the pandemic period. It was observed that there was an increase not only at the affective dimension but also at the other dimensions. According to the study conducted by Cullinane and Montacute (2020), demands for private tutoring have increased during the pandemic period and private schools are offering one-to-one private tutoring so as to assist students. According to Major, Andrew and Stephen (2020), families provide private tutoring to their children during the pandemic when the schools are closed so as to make up for their learning deficiencies. Students are generally passive in courses that are carried out through distant education due to lack of communication and this results in carrying out courses in an unproductive manner (Cheng, 2020; Fourie, 2001; Odabaş, 2004). It is assumed that failing to get the desired level of efficiency from distant education courses has urged students to tutoring where they can get one-to-one efficiency. It is believed that the reason why private tutoring tendencies of students didn't increase affectively is because individuals are bored from being lonely during the pandemic period, thus, they prefer the crowded school settings where courses are conducted collectively. It is assumed that students don't affectively prefer one-to-one tutoring that individualizes them. The reason for this is because individualization can affectively disturb students during this period. Related studies indicate that psychologies of individuals negatively get affected when they stay at home alone (Brooks et al., 2020; Leung et al., 2020). Similarly, Karip (2020) states that staying at home during the pandemic causes individuals to feel themselves psychologically disturbed.

In conclusion, it was observed that private tutoring tendencies of high school students significantly increased in general during the Covid-19 pandemic period. On the other hand, it was observed that there are no affective differentiations in private tutoring tendencies.

It was evident that students have supplementary education needs like private tutoring due to the insufficiency they encounter in their courses. In order to prevent students from having supplementary education needs such as private tutoring, educational institutions should go over their services and develop recovery plans. In addition, it is suggested that new researches should examine the efficiency of private tutoring taken during this period. One other suggestion is that in-depth interviews can be conducted with students who took private tutoring and their parents so as to thoroughly identify the reasons of intending to private tutoring during the pandemic. One of the limitations of this research was to determine the two-year tutoring tendencies of the students. Another limitation is that in-depth information was not obtained by collecting quantitative data within the scope of the research.

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