The Growing Phenomena of Tuition Classes: The Perceived Reasons and Some Latent Social Factors

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Tuition classes have been growing fast in Sri Lanka in recent years and have attracted much attention and concern. Among the concerns had been the nature of the tuition classes or workshops that skillfully perform storage of knowledge among their students. It is alleged that much of this stored knowledge is undigested, but thatt he form, content and system of storage permits and facilitates a kind of reproduction at examinations. This can be described as a kind of system of "banking" knowledge and not real education. Some relate this to the poor performance of these students at University and specially at post University levels. Obviously this necessity to perform well at examinations is linked to the acute competition at the examinations, particularly the G. C. E. 'A' Level, which is the qualifying examination for admission to the Universities (Vide Table 1A)[1]. The concern is that this total process, the acutely competitive examinations, and the tuition classes as a responding mechanism, all contribute to a growing qualitative change in education where the end product has become a mere store-house of knowledge with little criticism, initiative or vision. While these are legitimate concerns, they have become less important than tuition classes. This study though concerned with the manifest objective of the perceived needs of the students in seeking tuition class attendance, attempts to uncover and explore at the same time some of the latent social factors. The study was confined to the Colombo City, with data from the Kegalle District as comparative and complementary.

Methodology

The methodology was basically quantitative, though in the analysis of such data an interplay with qualitative factors was allowed. The quantitative data was collected by administering a questionnaire to a sample of students from a category recognized to be the most prone to tuition class attendance. Thus all students in Grade 10 and 12 of a selected sample of schools in the Colombo City and the Kegalle District, were administered the questionnaire.[2]

The questionnaire consisted of a set of twenty questions (Vide the appendix). Some had predetermined multiple choice answers while a few were open ended. It was administered to all students in Grade 12 in the

1. In addition to the data presented in Table 1, the number of students admitted as a percentage of students who are eligible to be admitted is also supportive of increasing competition; this percentage has dropped from 33.7% in 1970 to 16.4% by 1981. (Eligible candidates are those who had reached the minimum requirements at the G.C.E. 'A' Levels. However due to the limited facilities etc. at the Universities, vacancies exist for less number of students. The actual number admitted is on a selection criteria which includes merit and other considerations of the District quota system.

2. These were administered in mid 1981 and the author wishes to acknowledge with thanks the co-operation and assistance of the principals and teachers of the various schools where these questionnaires were administered. The author is also indebted to Mr Rex Casinader of the People's Bank, Research Department for discussions and encouragement at various stages of this study.

TABLE 1A

Students Seeking Admission and Percentage Admitted to the Universities

Stream	Number Sat			Number Admitted			Percentage Admitted		
	1951	1961	1979	1951	1961	1979	1951	1961	1979
Arts	923	3,748	42,225	259	686	2,900	28.1	18.3	6.9
Science	881	2,047	28,560	249	551	1,910	28.3	26.9	6.7
Total ..	1,804	5,795	70,786	508	1,237	4,810	28.2	21.4	6 8

Sources: University of Ceylon, Tenth Annual Report of the Council, 1951.
University of Ceylon, Twentieth Annual Report of the Council, 1961.
University Grants Commission.

Note : Though an attempt was made to present this data at the beginning of each decade after independence, in the absence of the University Council Annual Reports, this data is not readily available for 1971 and 1981. The University Grants Commission however, had this data for 1979 and so 1979's data has been included here.

selected sample of schools. However only 25 of these perfected questionnaires selected at random per group or stream were tabulated for purposes of this study. The streams or groups were arts, commerce, engineering and medical. The last two were students in the science stream classified according to the faculties in the universities to which they were seeking admission. In some schools where the total number in such groups was less than 25, this entire number was tabulated.

At grade 10 there were no streams that could be identified. Most schools had however divided the students at Grade 10, as they were often too large, into a number of "classes" for the convenience of teaching. The questionnaire was administered only to one such class, selected at random and the tabulation was restricted to 25.

Typewritten questionnaires with spaces provided for answers were handed over by the author to the students in their classrooms. They were given half an hour to perfect the questionnaire, at the end of which the author collected the perfected questionnaire. The students were not allowed to consult each other. In most instances a teacher of the school was present along with the author when the questionnaire was administered. They did not have the opportunity or for that matter attempt to influence the students' answers.

There were two sets of purposive samples of schools whose students were administered this questionnaire. One was in Colombo City and the other was in the Kegalle District. The Colombo City with its concentration of upper and middle classes as well as the urban working class and the urban poor was an obvious choice to explore the dynamics of social class and education as manifested in tuition classes. By social class one here refers to the overall effects of the economic structure on the field of social relations and on the social division of labour. Occupation, income and life styles that these lead to thus become relevant among them for social class positions. Kegalle District is a district with average educational services or opportunities with reasonable access to all sections of its population. (Vide Table 1 B and 1 C). It was selected to be a complementary and comparative data base to the Colombo City.

TABLE 1 B

Cut Off Point of the Raw Marks for Selection of Students to the University Classified by Stream in 1979

District	Medical and Dental Surgery	Engineering and Applied Science	Phy. Science/ Agriculture	Vet. Science and Bio Science	Commerce Management	Arts and Law
Jaffna	229	248	218	214	227	213
Colombo	229	238	214	213	227	204
Kegalle	203	215	192	194	218	207
Monaragala ..	171	158	141	—	189	196
Anuradhapura ..	166	213	155	144	192	186
Amparai	166	195	155	148	202	182

Source : University Grants Commission.

TABLE I C

Percentage of Students in Grade 12 in 1979 Classified by Stream

District	Grade 12 Science	Grade 12 Commerce	Grade 12 Arts	Grade 12 Total
Jaffna	71	13	16	100
Colombo South ..	61	23	16	100
Kegalle	36	26	38	100
Monaragala ..	26	13	61	100
Anuradhapura ..	25	29	46	100
Amparai	24	44	32	100

Source : Education Ministry.

Tables 1B and 1C demonstrate that as a continuum based either as raw marks or percentage of students in the Science stream, Kegalle District is placed in the middle. Only the data relevant for the top two and lowest three districts are presented along with Kegalle for lack of space.

This survey was confined only to students in the Sinhala stream. The inclusion of students in the Tamil stream would not have served any useful purpose unless compared with students in a peripheral Tamil district. It was also doubted whether Colombo City would be appropriate to understand the social factors involved, particularly the dynamics of social class and tuition classes for the Tamil population of Sri Lanka. It may have been more pertinent for such an exploration to be attempted in the Jaffna District along with a Tamil District with less educational services etc. As there were numerous practical problems involved in carrying out this survey in two such Tamil districts this survey necessarily became confined to students of the Sinhala stream in the sample of schools in Colombo City and Kegalle District.

In Colombo City the sample consisted of schools selected on a hierarchy of schools on the criteria of prestige and status. This presumably reflected a concomitant hierarchy of students on social class differentiation.[3] The first category designated 'A' consists of students from two old and prestigious schools one a boys' school and the other a girls' school. Both these schools are under state management at present, though they were formerly run by a religious body. These two schools also have an outstanding reputation for the large number of their students gaining admission to the medical, engineering and science faculties of the universities. Again the category 'B' consists of two schools, one a boys' school and the other a girls' school. Both are Madya Maha Vidyalayas, which enjoy a reputation for sports, social education etc. and are situated in the plush residential areas of the city. They had been set up in the early 1950s and largely cater to the middle class of the city and suburbs. These two schools also have a reasonably good reputation for getting their students admitted to the medical, engineering and science faculties of the universities. Category 'C' consists of one school, a mixed Madhya Maha Vidyalaya located in an area of residential mix in terms of social

3. Initially, the hierarchy of schools on the criteria of prestige and status was determined on an impressionistic basis viz. on what was generally regarded as prestigious schools etc. However, the data on parents' occupation and income confirmed to a very significant degree the correctness of this hierarchy on social class differentiation based on such indices. Vide Tables 17 and 18.

TABLE 2

Total Number of Students in Grade and Stream in the Selected Schools and the Number of Such Students who Perfected Questionnaires Used for this Study

Area	Colombo City Schools										Kegalle District Schools									
Category of Schools	A		B		C		D		Total		E		F		G		H		Total	
Grade/Stream	1*	2**	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Grade 12 — Arts	9	9	14	14	2	2	—	—	25	25	6	6	23	23	—	—	18	18	47	47
Commerce	41	41	18	18	32	25	—	—	91	84	11	11	11	11	46	25	—	—	68	47
Medicine	88	50	51	49	9	9	—	—	148	108	10	10	28	25	31	25	—	—	69	60
Engineering	56	33	33	33	8	8	—	—	97	74	5	5	8	8	14	14	—	—	27	27
Total	194	133	116	114	51	44	—	—	361	291	32	32	70	67	91	64	18	18	211	181
Grade 10		50		50		21		61		182		25		25	—	—		25		75
Total		183		164		65		61		473		57		92		64		43		256

Notes : A. 1* — Total number of Students.
2** — Number of perfected questionnaires tabulated for this study.

B. Total number of students in Grade 10 was not accurately identified, but the sample was generally not below 20% of such students.

class namely the middle class, working class and the urban poor. All schools of category 'A', 'B' and 'C' are located in the Colombo South region which as indicated by urban studies is the better residential area of the city. Category 'D' consists of three Maha Vidyalayas located in Colombo North, a residential area, largely housing the working classes and the urban poor. Though these three schools have classes upto Grade 12 university admission level, the number of students entered into the universities from these schools of the category 'D' is minimal if not nil.

In Kegalle District, the schools were not selected on a hierarchy that would represent a social class hierarchy of the students attending the schools. Here the purposive sample was on the urban rural dimension within Kegalle District. In the selection of the rural schools, precautions were taken to include one Madhya Maha Vidyalaya (Category G) with a strong reputation in the science faculties of the universities. Along with the two urban schools (Category E and F) which also have science education upto Grade 12, the schools selected in Kegalle District have a bias of greater access to science education than may be generally the case in Kegalle District taken as a whole. This was done intentionally to match the Colombo Schools and at the same time bring out social class characteristics of students seeking science education in a peripheral district. The number of students to whom the quantitative survey was administered, classified by the categories are presented in Table 2. The findings of this survey will now be discussed under some relevant heads drawing out at the same time social underpinnings of any significance.

Numbers Attending Tuition Classes

A greater percentage of students in Colombo City attend tuition classes than in the Kegalle District and in both areas the percentage attending tuition classes was higher among Grade 12 students than among Grade 10. (Vide Table 3).

TABLE 3

Tuition Attendance and Non - Attendance in Grade 10 & Grade 12

Particulars	Colombo City			Kegalle District			Total		
	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Total %	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Total %	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Ttoal %
Attending Tuition Classes..	60	84	75	47	61	57	56	75	68
Not attending Tuition Classes..	40	16	25	53	39	43	44	25	32
Total ..100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The highest percentage is among the Grade 12 students in Colombo City. Two factors may be contributing to this. Firstly, due to the district quota system, the students in Colombo have to get very high marks if they are togain admission to the university. Secondly, due to greater facilities for science education in Colombo together with increasing upward social mobility aspirations, a greater number of students in Colombo City pursue science education;

a field of studies where the competition and need to get very high marks is even more acute than is generally the case. These two factors may be inducing more students in Colombo City to seek tuition.

This argument is supported by the numbers attending tuition classes classified by the stream or group of subjects (Vide Table 4). It is clear that a

TABLE 4

Tuition Attendance and Non-Attendance in Grade 12 Classified by Stream

Particulars	Colombo City					Kegalle District				
	Arts. %	Comm. %	Med. %	Eng. %	Total %	Arts %	Comm. %	Med. %	Eng. %	Total %
Attending Tuition Classes ..	32	69	96	99	84	53	45	68	85	61
Not Attending Tuition Classes ..	68	31	4	1	16	47	55	32	15	39
Total ..	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

larger percentage of students seeking admission to the engineering and medical faculties of the universities attend tuition classes than other students. In the Kegalle District the same trend is noticed, though the rates are lower. In Colombo City this obviously is then linked to the acute competition among students to gain admission to these two faculties at the universities. It will be seen that among the commerce and the arts students both in Colombo City and Kegalle District the rate of attendance at tuition classes is much lower. While in Colombo Commerce students had the third highest rate of attendance, in Kegalle Arts students had a higher rate of attendance than the Commerce students.

It is also observed that in the case of arts students the percentage of students seeking tuition in the Kegalle District is higher than that in Colombo City. This is the only "stream" where this is so. It reflects the disparities in the strain towards the type of education in the metropolis and peripheral areas. In Colombo City, the greater opportunity for science education combined with social mobility aspirations generated by the social class fears of "falling down" in the social class position work towards more students seekings science education while in Kegalle District the lack of opportunity and diffused social mobility aspirations tend to reduce such strains towards science education. The residual float into the arts stream and the competition become greater among arts students to gain admission to the university. This perhaps leads to a greater percentage of tuition attendance in Kegalle District in the arts stream.

The converse of this feature interestingly was that the number of students in the arts stream in Colombo City was very low. As observed earlier, social class background and mobility aspirations had led most students in Colombo City to seek a science education and aspire for admission to the engineering

and medical faculties. The dropouts from this trend seem to seek commerce education as it appeared to be the next best as far as job opportunities were concerned. Only a few opted for an arts education.

However it may be noted that this may be a bias arising out of the sample of schools selected. One did notice that among Colombo schools selected for this survey some had earned a reputation and specialized for good teaching in science or commerce and this may have attracted such students and contributed to the lower proportion if not the absence of arts students. It is possible that there are similar schools with a reputation for good teaching in arts. Inquiries were made to identify such a school so that the survey may be extended to include such a school too. But unfortunately it was not possible to identify such a school and this is perhaps an indication of the low visibility if not the absence of such schools in the Colombo City. In a total view, the character of schools, number of students etc. strongly suggest a strain towards science education in Colombo with commerce as a far off second.

In Kegalle District this pattern did not emerge. There was an even distribution with the number of students seeking admission to the engineering faculty being even lower than to the arts faculty. (Vide Table 2) This was in spite of the purposive sample of two urban schools and a Madya Maha Vidyalaya in a rural area with a strong reputation for science education. If not for such a sample, the number of arts students may have been even greater. What is significant in the context of this study is that 53% of the arts students in Kegalle District sought tuition while in Colombo it was only 32%. This supports the argument that there is a strain and tendency for students in rural areas and even in towns of peripheral districts, to seek arts education due to the lack of opportunity to pursue any other. And having opted for arts education, with the ensuing competition for admission to the arts faculties of the universities, a greater need or urge to seek tuition occurs.

As would appear from the preceding discussion schools earn a reputation for good teaching and examination results for science, commerce or arts education and consequently attract students who pursue such studies. But it may be borne in mind that there are disparities in the social class background of the students of the different schools. Indeed the Colombo City sample was one on such a social hierarchy. Keeping these in mind, let us look at the different schools and the numbers attending tuition classes. This data is tabulated in Table 5.

Of striking significance is that, in Colombo City though schools 'A', 'B' and 'C' represented a hierarchy of schools on the criteria of social class and income of the parents, the number of students seeking tuition in the engineering and medical streams of all these three categories of schools were equally high. One does however observe that the number of students in school 'C' following science education is much less than in 'A' and 'B' schools. Obviously the schools in 'A' and 'B' groups which are prestigious for science education had attracted a greater number of students. The students who followed science education in school 'C' were the few who made the grade

TABLE 5

Percentage of Students Attending Tuition Classes Classified by Grade and Stream : Category of Schools, Sex and Area

Grade/Stream	Colombo City							Kegalle District						
	A	B	C	D	Total Boys	Total Girls	Total	E	F	G	H	Total Boys	Total Girls	Total
Grade 10	66	92	38	38	59	63	60	60	76	—	4	61	36	47
Grade 12	82	85	84	—	82	85	84	72	82	45	17	73	46	61
Grade 12 — Arts	00	57	00	—	11	86	32	50	83	—	17	77	24	53
Grade 12 — Commerce	68	56	80	—	76	59	69	82	82	12	—	55	37	45
Grade 12 — Medicine	96	96	100	—	96	96	96	70	80	56	—	76	57	68
Grade 12 — Engineering	100	97	100	—	98	100	99	80	88	86	—	81	91	85

after the selective processes at various stages in their student career at the same school. But once having made the grade they were subjected to the same pressures of social mobility aspiration anxieties, and acute competition at examinations, since they too had fallen into the general scramble of the rat race.

Possibly to most students of school "C" the aspirations were of a positive kind—to reach the top or higher social classes via the customary social mobility avenue of education. To many, particularly in category 'A' it may be of a significantly different kind, being propelled into the rat race not by a positive aspiration but by the fear of falling down in the social class position. The need to retain class position and status, sometimes induced due to anxiety states by the parents, is often a compelling force to join the rat race. In school 'D' which is at the bottom of the hierarchy the few students in grade 12 were not present in school most of the time for the questionnaire to be administered to them. The school authorities rationalized the absenteeism as being due to the exams being close; it is possible that the students found the facilities at school inadequate and prepared for the exam at home. It would have been useful to find out as to how many of them sought private tuition.

Of the arts students in one of the two schools in category 'B' which was a girls' school, six of the seven arts students on roll attended tuition classes because they were reading French as a subject and there was no competent teacher at the school to teach this subject. Otherwise, the rate of attendance of the arts students for the tuition classes may have dropped even further. It is interesting to observe that even the few students who opt for the arts stream in Colombo City studied subjects with social prestige and a greater degree of job opportunities. (e. g. Study of French as a subject has social prestige as well as job opportunities in the tourist industry).

Out of the schools selected from Kegalle District the two urban schools 'E' and 'F' have fairly high rates of tuition attendance, though lower than in the Colombo City. School 'F', an urban girls' school with students from an elite background has a very high rate of tuition attendance. School 'G', a Madhya Maha Vidyalaya in a rural area, but with a very good reputation and performance (if one is to judge by examination results) for science education has a much lower rate of tuition attendance.

During the time of this survey it was observed that the school administration and the staff of this particular school appeared determined to maintain the reputation and standards set, and imparted the type and quality of teaching required for such reputation and performance within the schools system. At the same time they discouraged tuition attendance. There were apparently efforts made to make the quality of teaching such that tuition classes became redundant. They were keen and proud to point out that their best students (by G. C. E. 'A' level results criteria) were often those who did not follow tuition classes. In spite of such efforts students in the context of competition obviously felt that they should follow tuition classes and this is particularly so, as the figures in Table 5 suggest. Among students seeking admission to the engineering faculty, the psychological need to be on par with students elsewhere who were caught up in the tuition system was apparenty too strong for this MMV school administration and staff to resist or counter.

Reasons for Attending Tuition Classes

Analysing the answers of the students who attend tuition classes it appears that the main reasons in the perception of the students as to why they attend tuition classes are:

i. Weak in some subjects and hence special coaching by way of tuition is necessary.
ii. Inadequate time during school hours to cover the syllabus.
iii. Unsatisfactory teaching.

These factors taken together were listed by 87% and 82% of the students in Grade 10 and 12 respectively, in Colombo City. The pattern in Kegalle District was more pronounced, 97% and 91% of the Grade 10 and 12 students listing the three factors. Other factors of marginal importance were lack of qualified teachers, parental compulsion; because their peers attend tuition etc. Among the other reasons about 1% or less stated that they attend tuition classes because it gave them an opportunity to meet the opposite sex. This analysis is presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6

Stated Reasons for Attending Tuition Classes Classified by Grade and Area

Particulars	Colombo City			Kegalle District			Total		
	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Total %	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Total %	Gr.10 %	Gr.12 %	Total %
Weak in some subjects	57	40	46	40	47	45	53	43	45
Inadequate time during school hours ..	17	16	17	43	19	25	24	17	19
Unsatisfactory teaching ..	13	26	21	14	25	22	13	25	22
	87	82	84	97	91	92	90	85	86
Lack of qualified teachers ..	4	5	5	3	5	5	4	5	5
Parental compulsion ..	3	1	2	0	3	2	2	2	2
Because peers attend ..	1	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Other reasons ..	5	10	8	0	1	1	3	7	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 7 A

Stated Reasons for Attending Tuition Classes as a Percentage Classified by Grade, Stream and Category of Schools in Colombo City

Particulars	Grade 10	Grade 12	Grade 12				Grade 10 & 12				
			Arts	Com-merce	Medi-cine	Engin-eering	Cate. A	Cate. B	Cate. C	Cate. D	Total
Weak in some subjects	57	40	25	28	46	45	47	48	42	35	46
Inadequate time during school hours	7	16	13	22	14	15	14	21	13	17	17
Unsatisfactory teaching	13	26	12	31	24	25	23	22	20	13	21
Lack of qualified teachers ..	4	5	50	7	2	3	2	5	9	17	5
Parental compulsion	3	1	0	0	3	0	1	1	2	9	2
Because peers attend	1	2	0	0	3	1	1	2	0	0	1
Other reasons	5	10	0	12	8	11	12	1	14	9	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 7 B

Stated Reasons for Attending Tuition Classes as a Percentage--Classified by Grade and Stream in Kegalle District

Particulars	Grade 10	Grade 12	Grade 12				Total
			Arts	Commerce	Medi-cine	Engi-neering	
Weak in some subjects	40	47	24	67	54	43	45
Inadequate time during school hours	43	19	24	9	20	22	25
Unsatisfactory teaching	14	25	32	14	24	26	22
Lack of qualified teachers	3	5	16	0	0	9	5
Parental compulsion	0	3	4	5	2	0	2
Because peers attend	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other reasons	0	1	0	5	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

The three main reasons which in a cluster, form the hard core of the factors motivating students to attend tuition classes are strongly suggestive of the anxiety of the students to score as much marks as possible at the examination. For along with the fourth reason (of low percentage) they centre around the problem of preparation for the examination, quality of teaching, school time alloted for teaching and the students' own rating of their capacity to face the exam (i.e. "weak in some subjects"). These account for more than 90% of the stated reasons for attending tuition classes.

It is interesting to note that a few students gave the need to meet the opposite sex as a reason. While there may be some flippancy in the answer, yet it surfaces the "boy meets girl" situation which prevails in the tuition classes. This is perhaps particularly attractive to students from non-mixed schools. In the total anxiety and tension of the rat race via education to which the students at this age are subjected and the psychological and mental stress that follows, it must be a welcome outlet and emotional release to have a mix of love affairs and tuition.

The reasons for attending tuition classes analysed by the "Streams" (Vide Table 7 A and 7B) reveal that among medicine and engineering students a greater percentage list "weak in some subjects" as a reason more than any other category of students. This is observed both at Colombo and Kegalle. In the latter schools, commerce students too tend to include the reason "weak in some subjects" as a major reason. That students in highly competitive streams such as medicine and engineering list "weak in some subjects" is significant. It reflects in their self evaluation an incapacity to measure up to extremely high competitive levels prevalent in their field of study.

Interestingly lack of teachers did not figure as a significant factor. The only exception recorded was the 50% among the arts stream of Colombo City students. But this was largely by the students who were reading French as a subject who did not have a teacher for French in the school. In type 'D' schools the least prestigious of the schools in Colombo recorded a relatively higher percentage (17%) of students indicating this factor as a reason.

Reasons for Not Attending Tuition Classes

We have noted earlier that there was a certain percentage of students in the sample who did not attend tuition classes. Not doing so in a context of social pressures to the contrary was significant and the reasons the students adduced for not attending tuition classes were gathered in the survey. While financial incapacity to attend tuition classes, as one may expect, figured prominently as a reason equally significant, and in some categories of students (e. g. by streams and types of schools) even more significant than the economic factors was the student opinion that either the school teaching was adequate to make tuition redundant, or they could manage to do extra work necessary on their own without recourse to tuition.

A few students stated that they did not attend tuition classes due to non-existence of such classes within a convenient commuting distance. This was significant in the context that among the students attending tuition classes, there were many who travelled highly inconvenient distances. Thus, to those

TABLE 8 A

Stated Reasons for Not Attending Tuition Classes as a Percentage Classified by Grade, Stream and Category of Schools in Colombo City

Particulars	Grade 10	Grade 12	Grade 12				Grade 10 & 12				Total
			Arts	Com-merce	Medi-cine	Engi-neering	Cate. A	Cate. B	Cate. C	Cate. D	
School teaching is adequate ..	32	32	29	32	25	100	47	14	50	16	32
Financial incapacity	35	11	12	10	0	0	3	19	15	58	25
Self-study sufficient	21	34	47	20	75	0	37	33	15	16	26
No tuition class at convenient place	9	11	0	20	0	0	10	24	5	5	10
Not allowed by parents	3	8	0	16	0	0	0	5	15	5	5
Others	0	4	12	0	0	0	3	5	0	0	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

who gave inconvenient commuting distance as a reason for not attending tuition classes, obviously the tuition classes did figure as important. Some students also indicated that their parents did not permit them to follow tuition classes. This was also interesting, because often the social class aspirations etc. that lead to high priority for education and studies, is conveyed to the children via the parents. The fact that there were a few parents who saw no importance in the tuition classes for the rat race in education was noteworthy. The tabulated responses of the students who did not attend tuition and why they did not do so is presented in Tables 8 A and 8 B.

TABLE 8B

Stated Reasons for not Attending Tuition Classes as a Percentage Classified by Grade and Stream in Kegalle District

Particulars	Grade 10	Grade 12	Grade 12				Total
			Arts	Comm.	Med.	Eng.	
School Teaching is Adequate	42	52	23	77	47	75	49
Financial Incapacity ..	28	34	55	15	42	0	32
Can self Study	17	11	18	4	11	25	13
No Tuition Class at Convenient Place	10	3	4	4	0	0	5
Not allowed by Parents ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	3	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

It may be observed from these tables that in Colombo City, while only 11% in Grade 12 gave financial incapacity as the reason for not attending tuition classes, in Grade 10 it was 35% while at Kegalle it was the reverse; 28% at Grade 10 and 34% at Grade 12 though obviously with a smaller disparity. The crucial grade for tuition classes is Grade 12 and at this grade it is important to note that while only 11% had not attended tuition due to financial incapacity in Colombo City, 34% had not done so at Kegalle. In the schools within the City it was very revealing that while only 3% in category A, the most prestigious type of schools, gave financial incapacity as a reason for not attending tuition classes, 58% did so in category 'D' the bottom grade urban schools. While this stark disparity within the City is of importance in any study of tuition classes and the total system of education itself, as we shall see later, it is equally important to note that the urban poor, as argued elsewhere,[4] are worse off than the students in rural areas as far as their education is concerned.

In recent years, particularly with the flow of international funds *via* the increasingly important phenomena of N. G. Os, shanty and slum dwellers as phenomena of visible poverty have attracted attention. These N.G.O.s are valiantly attempting to uplift the housing, educational, nutritional and health standards etc. of these shanty and slum dwellers. While one does not know what else of the shanty and slum deweller are in for upliftment, there

4. H. L. Hemachandra,—"The Nexus between Socio-Economic Factors and the New Brahmins : A Social Survey of University Students" *Economic Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, April 1980.

is an implied undertone of an Oscar Lewis type of argument that the shanty dwellers themselves have been resposible for their immiserated existence.[5]

What is of relevance for this study is that such perspectives ignore the wider urban or even social processes and structures that generate and sustain sub-standard housing and housing classes such as shanty and slum dewellers. It is a part of these processes to keep the educational system, as a process of social mobility and more importantly a process to prevent downward social mobility, for the economically privileged social classes only. It was apparent that the prestigious urban schools cater to these classes.

It is important to uncover here the underpinnings in the process of social class reproduction. The privileged social classes ensure the reproduction of their social classes, and in this their offspring are important. Thus they ensure that there is little or no downward social mobility. In the Sri Lankan context education is a crucial factor in the social class reproduction process and the above stated data suggest and support the argument that the educational system has and is being moulded to suit this purpose. Now the figures discussed earlier emphasized the disparities in the financial capacity of students in the prestigious urban schools vis-a-vis the non prestigious city school as well as schools in the peripheral areas of Kegalle.

It is important to note in Table 8A that in the Colombo City, school of category 'A' the prestigious urban school, 47% of students who did not attend tuition classes stated that they did not do so because the school's teaching was adequate. This school, as we have noted at the outset, was not only a prestigious urban school but a school with a reputation for good science teaching with a large number of admissions to the engineering and medical faculties of the universities, the entry point to the land of the new brahmins.[6] This state of affairs confirms what was argued, that the educational system, as a process of social mobility and social class reproduction, is geared to cater differentially to different social classes. The 47% indicates that while this school has the least number of students with financial incapacity to attend tuition classes, it is also the school with a level of teaching that is adequate, in the opinion of 47% of non-tuition going students, to make tuition classes redundant.

It is important to note here that this is the response of students who do not attend tuition classes. Earlier in Table 5 we observed that 82% of the students in these schools attend tuition classes. It may also be borne in mind that only 23% of such students were of the opinion that teaching was inadequate. What emerges is that the students of this school have the financial capacity to attend tuition classes, and in fact large numbers of them do so; and this in the opinion of some sections of the students, is despite the fact that the teaching is adequate or of good quality to make tuition classes redundant.

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5. Oscar Lewis in his book the "The Children of Sanchez" argued many years ago, that by virtue of their inhabiting the lowest reaches of the Urban Hierarchy, the urban poor developed their own distinctive cultural forms. Having done so this culture of poverty itself becomes a contributing factor in sustaining and reproducing their poverty. Not surprisingly this mode of analysis has been heavily contested, not least since it contains the suggestion that the poor are themselves responsible for their immiserated circumstances.

6. H. L. Hemachandra, Op. Cit.

The reputation of the school and the performance of the students at the examination supports this position. This suggests the concentration and disparity in educational opportunities. This is crucial to the central problem that this study confirms the relationship of education to social classes in Sri Lanka and the processes at work in this context. This we shall elaborate in the concluding sections of this study, drawing upon some of the data and arguments presented in this section.

It may be noted that 52% of Grade 12 students who do not attend tuition classes at Kegalle District felt that school teaching was adequate for them not to attend tuition classes, and 34% of Colombo City Grade 12 students were not attending tuition classes because they were confident that they could manage on their own. In Kegalle District only 11% were of this opinion.

Cost of Attending Tuition Classes

The data on the cost of attending tuition classes, which includes the tuition fees and the travelling expenses, are presented in Table 9. On a broad spectrum the average cost ranges from Rs. 10/- spent by a Grade 10 student in a Maha Vidyalaya in the rural area of Kegalle District to Rs. 171.08 that students seeking admission to the medical faculties in category A schools in Colombo City spend per month on tuition. Comparing more related categories, at Grade 10 it ranged from Rs. 85/30 to Rs. 10/- . Within Colombo at Grade 10 it dropped to Rs. 46.25. In the Kegalle Urban schools the average costs were comparable at Rs. 45.48 and Rs. 61.77. At grade 12 it ranged from Rs. 143.17 in Colombo City category 'A' school to Rs. 29/- in the Maha Vidyalaya in a rural area in Kegalle District. In category 'D' schools in Colombo City, none of the students at Grade 12 were available for the Survey. In the other three schools it ranged from Rs. 68.45 to Rs. 143.17. In Kegalle District at none of the schools did the students on the average spend more that Rs. 60.31. Disparities in costs also exist between the streams as well as within the same stream but among students of different schools. For instance while in category 'A' schools students in the medical stream spend on tuition classes on the average, as much as Rs. 171.08, in the commerce stream it was only Rs. 112.37. Within the medical stream, at category 'C', the average cost was only Rs. 92/-, while in the Kegalle District it fell to Rs. 55.55. Similar patterns exist in the other streams too.

The data suggest that disparities in cost do exist between streams too. Medical, being the most expensive in Colombo City while in the Kegalle District engineering was equally if not a little more expensive in certain situations. Equally significant, if not more, was that in Colombo schools, which was a purposive sample selected on graded hierarchy, the students at the category 'A' schools spend a larger sum on tuition or went to the more expensive tuition classes. It drops as we go down in the graded hierarchy of schools. The only variant was in commerce where category 'C' school students spent more on tuition than those at category 'B'. This is explained by the fact that this school had earned a reputation for commerce as discussed earlier and attracted students reading commerce. Hence, in commerce it was perhaps placed higher than category 'C' school hierarchically and thus the data is in keeping with the general pattern of Colombo school students' tuition costs. In the Kegalle District, it will be recalled, the schools were not hierarchically placed except that 'H' was only a Maha Vidyalaya, while the other three were Madhya Maha

TABLE 9

Cost Per Month of Attending Tuition Classes (1981) Classified by Grade, Stream and Category of Schools

(In Rupees)

Grade/ Stream	Particulars	Colombo City					Kegalle District				
		A	B	C	D	Total	E	F	G	H	Total
Grade 10	Tuition fees ..	46.72	46.19	32.50	25.86	41.11	19.33	17.24	—	10.00	17.92
	Travelling expenses	25.63	39.11	34.91	20.49	30.97	42.44	28.24	—	0.00	25.35
	Total	72.35	85.30	67.41	46.25	72.08	61.77	45.48	—	10.00	42.27
Grade 12	Tuition fees ..	104.69	66.17	40.24	—	79.50	25.67	29.04	31.89	13.33	28.66
	Travelling expenses	38.48	40.69	28.21	—	37.64	15.67	19.25	28.41	15.67	21.50
	Total	143.17	106.86	68.45	—	117.14	41.34	48.35	60.31	29.00	50.16
Grade 12 Arts	Tuition fees ..	**	90.75	**	—	90.75	16.67	21.45	—	13.33	19.90
	Travelling expenses		11.74		—	11.74	7.57	16.30	—	15.67	15.25
	Total		102.49		—	102.49	24.24	37.75	—	29.00	35.15
Grade 12 Commerce	Tuition fees ..	89.64	29.00	36.95	—	61.01	21.44	13.85	26.67	—	18.95
	Travelling expenses	22.73	24.82	26.75	—	24.51	7.84	20.52	21.84	—	10.40
	Total	112.37	53.82	63.70	—	85.52	29.28	34.72	48.51	—	29.35
Grade 12 Medicine	Tuition fees ..	130.79	77.65	53.89	—	100.12	29.64	40.38	32.14	—	35.73
	Travelling expenses	40.29	47.11	38.70	—	43.16	30.78	15.17	32.25	—	26.60
	Total	171.08	124.76	92.59	—	143.28	60.42	55.55	64.39	—	62.33
Grade 12 Engineering	Tuition fees ..	79.51	54.78	33.13	—	63.58	35.00	36.79	32.92	—	34.45
	Travelling expenses	49.20	43.46	20.06	—	43.06	12.00	37.29	25.58	—	29.35
	Total	128.71	98.24	53.19	—	106.64	47.90	74.08	58.50	—	63.80

* Costs are average costs for that particular category.

** All arts students of this category of schools did not follow tuition classes.

Vidyalayas; two in urban areas and the other the third in a rural location. This being so, the disparities in tuition costs were minimal. Disparties between tuition costs for medical and engineering students were also not present as in Colombo City, but commerce tuition costs as seen in Colombo City were much lower than for both medical and engineering.

The significance of data presented in this section is twofold. Firstly, it suggests that in medicine and to a lesser extent in engineering the tuition costs are higher than in the other two. While the "rush" for these studies and matters of supply and demand may have determined these costs, it is nonetheless significant that the data is supportive of the general thrust that emerges in this study, namely that the education system in its totality, which includes the new ubiquitious tuition classes and the school system, is a crucial part of the process which sections of the upper and middle classes use to reproduce themselves. Here, medicine and engineering the abode of the new brahmins are important and it is these very studies that are most expensive.

Secondly the repetitive thrust manifests itself when we compare the tuition costs of students in the hierarchy of schools in Colombo City. The students of the more prestigious schools go in for more expensive tuition, with obviously a better quality of teaching etc. The disparities between Colombo City and the Kegalle District take on a similar pattern.

Family Income and Tuition

From all that has been observed, it is obvious that the nexus between family income and tuition class attendance is bound to be strong. Here the data collected on family income from the children should not be taken as too reliable, but if this weakness is consistent with the entire sample then the data should have some meaning. This data is presented in Table 10, and is extremely supportive of the argument of a strong nexus between tuition classes and income groups and ultimately to the social underpinnings that this study uncovers viz. the linkage between tuition classes and social class. The data shows a significant curve up in the percentage attending tuition classes as one moves up the income groups and the reverse or a declining curve of students not attending tuition classes on the income group dimension.

TABLE 10

Tuition Attendance and Non Attendance in Grades 10 & 12 Classified by Family Income in Kegalle District

Monthly Income	Rs. 0–200 %	Rs. 201–400 %	Rs. 401–600 %	Rs. 601–1000 %	Rs. 1000 & over %
Attending Tuition Classes ..	18.2	40.8	46.9	58.6	77.6
Not Attending Tuition Classes ..	81.8	59.2	53.1	41.4	22.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The patterns of the prestigious urban schools, with students from higher income groups and a greater number attending tuition classes etc. reappear, and to discuss all this would be repetitive. It is sufficient to state here that there is a strong relationship between the incomes and tuition attendance.

Parental Occupation and Income

In third world countries like Sri Lanka occupation is as important as income for social class positioning. When the data on the students' parental occupation was analysed, the pattern that emerged once again, underlines the nexus between social class and tuition classes. This data is presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11

Percentage Attending and Not Attending Tuition Classes In Grades 10 & 12 Classified by Father's Occupation and Category of Schools in Colombo City

Category of Schools	Profes-sional and Executive		Trader & Prop-rietor		Teacher (Non-Univer-sity)		Clerical Worker		Skilled Worker		Paddy Farmer		Unskilled Worker	
	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %	Att. %	Not Att. %
A	84	16	67	33	86	14	69	31	71	29	—	—	—	—
B	90	10	91	9	100	0	89	11	67	33	100	0	100	0
C	60	40	82	18	50	50	73	27	68	32	50	50	50	50
D	—	—	40	60	—	—	18	82	44	66	0	100	29	71
All	85	15	78	22	87	13	71	29	61	39	71	29	34	66

The strong imperative among the middle class to retain their class position and ensure this by "education" is also reflected in the greater amount of money spent on tuition by parents of middle class occupational groups. (Vide Table 12) It is interesting to note that some professional and parallel occupational groups spend more money on tuition, than those in trade and proprietorship, even though they may be less affluent compared to the latter.

It is this group that has achieved a class position via education and the pressures are strong to maintain and reproduce the position in the second generation by education. The middle type of entrepreneurs or proprietors by occupation, in spite of their affluence, often because of a lack of social education, suffer setbacks in class positioning particularly in urban situations. This is often rectified in the second generation by education and this may explain the high expenditure on tuition, even though this is less than the professionals etc.

TABLE 12

Average Monthly Tuition Fees Paid by a Student Attending Tuition Classes in Grades 10 and 12 Classified According to Father's Occupation and Category of Schools in Colombo City

(*In Rupees*)

Category of Schools	Professional and Executive	Trader and Proprietor	Teacher (Non-University)	Clerical Worker	Skilled Worker	Paddy Farmer	Unskilled Worker
	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.
A	147.94	123.44	93.82	60.39	59.75	—	—
B	66.90	76.71	46.34	48.35	49.37	41.25	40.00
C	50.00	46.75	45.00	41.87	33.82	15.00	40.00
D	—	30.00	—	32.50	27.50	—	29.00
All	108.14	83.99	70.04	50.61	38.68	36.00	34.50

Tuition and Subjects

In the section on the numbers attending tuition classes, even if a student attended tuition classes for one subject, the student was included among those attending tuition classes. It is now proposed to examine the number of subjects and what specific subjects students tend to attend in this growing phenomena of tuition classes. These data are presented in Tables 13 and 14.

Some of the features that emerged in the data already presented are re-emphasized when one examines the data on the number and nature of subjects for which tuition is sought. For instance, a greater percentage of Grade 12 students than Grade 10 students attend tuition classes in a greater number of subjects in the Colombo City schools and vice versa in the Kegalle District. Within Grade 12, students in the medical and engineering streams attend tuition classes in more subjects than in other streams. This was particularly pronounced in the Colombo City schools, and rather thinly in the Kegalle District. Once again this suggested the extreme competition in Colombo City to gain admission to the medical and engineering faculties. The greater number of arts students in the Kegalle District, attending tuition in more than two subjects (41%) as against Colombo City (25%) supports the argument made in an earlier section of relative greater strain towards arts education in the peripheral districts than in Colombo City.

Time Spent on Tuition

In Colombo City, students appear to generally spend about 9 to 10 hours per week on tuition classes, while in Kegalle it ranged from about 6 hours to 9.5 hours per week. There was much significant variation between

TABLE 13

Percentage of Students Attending Tuition Classes Classified by Grade, Stream and the Number of Subjects in which Tuition is Sought

Number of Subjects	Colombo City						Kegalle District					
	Grade 10	Grade 12					Grade 10	Grade 12				
		Arts	Comm.	Eng.	Med.	Total		Arts	Comm.	Eng.	Med.	Total
One	11	12	19	15	2	10	9	27	52	9	10	21
Two	29	63	24	18	19	21	14	32	29	35	42	36
Three.. ..	31	25	17	23	34	27	46	27	5	30	2	14
Four	10	0	40	44	45	42	23	14	14	26	46	29
Five	19	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	—
Total ..	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 14

Percentage of Students Attending and Not Attending Tuition Classes Classified by Subject, Streams and Area

Particulars		Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Commerce									Faculty of Engineering & Faculty of Medicine					
		Accounts %	Economics %	Com. %	Geogr. %	Logic %	Sinhala %	Pol. Sc,. %	English %	Music %	Pure Math %	App. Ma. %	Phys. %	Chem. %	Zoo. %	Bot. %
Colombo City	Attending Tuition Classes	88	59	48	14	42	11	00	12	—	71	78	81	82	81	64
	Not Attending Tuition Classes	12	41	52	86	58	89	100	88	—	29	22	19	18	19	36
Kegalle District	Attending Tuition Classes	39	39	14	61	—	20	62	5	4	83	78	77	78	51	49
	Not Attending Tuition Classes	71	71	86	39	—	80	28	95	96	17	22	23	22	49	51

TABLE 15
Average Time Spent by a Student Attending Tuition Per Week Classified by Grade, Stream and Category of Schools

(In Hours and Minutes)

Grade/ Stream	Particulars	Colombo City										Kegalle District									
		A		B		C		D		Total		E		F		G		H		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
Grade 10	In Tuition Class	8.48	72	9.46	63	13.53	81	11.23	77	10.06	69	10.42	64	8.54	63	—	—	6.00	80	9.32	64
	In Travelling	3.25	28	5.51	37	3.11	19	3.13	23	4.34	31	5.57	36	5.14	37	—	—	1.30	20	5.26	36
	Total	12.13	100	15.37	100	17.04	100	14.36	100	14.40	100	16.39	100	14.08	100	—	—	7.30	100	14.58	100
Grade 12	In Tuition Class	9.13	71	9.07	62	10.25	71	—	—	9.51	68	8.18	80	7.26	78	7.01	71	3.40	54	7.32	75
	In Travelling	3.44	29	5.34	38	4.20	29	—	—	4.39	32	2.06	20	2.04	22	2.56	29	3.06	46	2.34	25
	Total	12.57	100	14.41	100	14.45	100	—	—	14.30	100	10.24	100	9.30	100	9·57	100	6.46	100	10.06	100
Grade 12 Arts	In Tuition Class	*		4.30	61	*		—	—	4.30	61	5.10	79	6.23	77	—	—	3.40	54	6.10	75
	In Travelling			2.49	39			—	—	2.49	39	1.23	21	1.54	23	—	—	3.06	46	2·03	25
	Total			7.19	100			—	—	7.19	100	6.33	100	8.17	100	—	—	6.46	100	8.13	100
Grade 12 Commerce	In Tuition Class	8.28	77	7.48	69	11.23	74	—	—	9.20	75	6.43	78	2.40	69	12.40	81	—	—	5.49	79
	In Travelling	2.35	23	3.32	31	3.50	26	—	—	3.09	25	1.55	22	1.13	31	3.00	19	—	—	1.33	21
	Total	11.03	100	11.20	100	15.13	100	—	—	12.30	100	8.38	100	3.53	100	15.40	100	—	—	7.22	100
Grade 12 Medicine	In Tuition Class	9.24	69	10.38	62	11.53	66	—	—	10.10	65	11.00	78	10.29	79	5.59	62	—	—	9.03	73
	In Travelling	4.16	31	6.24	38	6.11	34	—	—	5.23	35	3.08	22	2.52	21	3.36	38	—	—	3.25	27
	Total	13.41	100	17.02	100	18.04	100	—	—	15.33	100	14.08	100	13.21	100	9.35	100	—	—	12.28	100
Grade 12 Engineering	In Tuition Class	10.00	69	9.00	59	7.15	60	—	—	9.21	66	10.23	81	9.04	72	7.34	74	—	—	8.31	73
	In Travelling	4.31	31	6.03	41	4.45	40	—	—	4.50	34	2.30	19	3.36	28	2.43	26	—	—	3.10	2
	Total	14.31	100	15.15	100	12.00	100	—	—	14.11	100	12.53	100	12.40	100	10.17	100	—	—	11.41	10

* *All Arts Students of this Category of Schools did not follow Tuition Classes.*

the streams or Grades or for that matter bewteen school types. Notably less time or below the average time spent on tuition classes were by the commerce students at Kegalle (2 hours and 40 minutes) and arts students in Colombo City. (4.5 hours.)

In Colombo City apart from the time spent at the tuition classes, students on the average spent about 3 to 5.5 hours and at times even 6 hours on travelling to and from tuition classes. In Kegalle this generally ranged from 1.5 hours to 5.5 hours, though there were a few students, notably those attending tuition in a number of subjects spending about 5 to 6 hours per week on travelling. This data is presented in Table 15.

In the context of the rat race in education and the gathering momentum of the tuition class phobia, the time spent on tuition classes is not alarming. The mental and physical strain on a student should not be acute in the light of the time spent on tuition classes. This is a reassuring feature for one's fears in the context of the examination anxiety syndrome, that any commitment along with the physical and mental strains could lead to the deterioration of the health of the students. While this reassuring feature exists one may bear in mind that the time spent on tuition classes and travelling to and from such classes is usually in addition to schooling hours. Tuition classes are invariably in the evening or week-ends. Obviously, then they eat considerably into the leisure and recreation hours of the students and inhibit their non-academic pursuits and interests. This affects the capacity of the students to make full use of a university education if they do get past the admission point in the rat race. In the deteriorating social education and confidence that graduates of the Sri Lankan Universities are alleged to exhibit, this is not a welcome feature.

Scholars and Tuition

This study also explored whether there was any significant difference between scholarship holders and non-scholarship holders in attending tuition classes. The quantitative findings are presented in Table 16. One may have

TABLE 16

Percentage Attending Tuition Classes Classified by Scholarship Holders and Non-Scholarship Holders

Grade/Stream	Colombo City		Kegalle District	
	Scholarship holders	Non-Scholarship holders	Scholarship holders	Non-Scholarship holders
Grade 10	74	51	83	43
Grade 12	94	79	82	59
Grade 12 — Arts ..	50	30	—	53
Grade 12 — Commerce	71	69	100	43
Grade 12 — Medicine ..	94	98	71	68
Grade 12 — Engineering	100	98	100	83
Total	85	69	82	55

anticipated scholarship holders who are presumably of a better mental fibre to have less need to attend tuition classes. The findings are to the contrary as Table 16 vividly illustrates. In Colombo City 74% at Grade 10 and 94% at Grade 12 of scholarship holders attend tuition classes though only 51% at Grade 10 and 79% at Grade 12 of non-scholarship holders attend tuition classes. The pattern at Kegalle is no different when the scholarship holders and non-scholarship holders are compared though the percentage of attendance in both these groups is different from Colombo. At Grade 10, 83% of scholarship holders attend tuition while only 43% of non-scholarship holders do so. At Grade 12 it is 82% and 59%. Streamwise patterns reiterate trends revealed earlier; greater strain among engineering and medicine but less so among medicine students at Kegalle etc.

Teachers and Tuition

Except for the response of the students who listed unsatisfactory teaching (included in the multiple choice answer to the question why they attend tuition classes) there were no quantitative data collected regarding the role of the teachers in the growing tuition system. However data of a qualitative kind emerged during the period the questionnaire was administered at the various schools. Contact and informal discussions with teachers and principals of schools was necessary as a prelude to the administration of questionnaires as well as to get their co-operation for this purpose. These discussions proved useful as an entry point to explore the tuition system and network and the teachers' role in it. What emerged as significant was the presence of two attitudinal types among the teachers. One viewed the tuition negatively, as a harmful or damaging one, while the other looked upon tuition as necessary and useful. Obviously this latter type, or at least most of them had strong ties to the tuition system, as teachers in the tuition classes. Indeed some of them were inclined to look at this study with suspicion if not hostility. They feared that this might uncover negative aspects of the tuition system.

What emerged as significant was that apart from the number of teachers in the secondary schools who ran or taught in tuition classes, a good many teachers, particularly those teaching science subjects in Grade 12, earned a substantial remuneration by their involvement in tuition classes. This was an economic reward as well as a mode of recognition of the role of the teachers, which the formal educational system appears to grossly underscore. In the growing competition to gain admission to the universities, the gathering, storing and reproduction of knowledge was increasingly important and so was the role of those who imparted this knowledge. As shall be drawn out in the conclusion, education in Sri Lanka was and continues to be crucial in upward social mobility, and in recent years equally important in preventing downward social mobility. If this was so then the services of the teacher is of economic significance. It enables the successful students to make their entry into the sausage machine at the University level.The significance lies in great economic and social rewards that students gain when they are processed out of this sausage machine. But the economic rewards available to those teachers who make the entry possible to the sausage machine is minimal. Obviously there is a contradiction here, and the tuition system, as a system outside the formal education system, attempts to resolve this. For here those teachers

who have proven skills in imparting knowledge and helping students to store it in such a manner as to make them good examinees are the recipients of economic rewards by way of high salaries etc. These are not only commensurate with the value of the skills in the total process and function of the education system as an access avenue of social mobility but also legitimize the important and crucial role of the teachers in the increasingly competitive educational system. It may be noted that teachers who receive a substantial income or salaries are those who have proven skills in the vigorous tests of students' acceptance; examination success of their students; open advertisement of such skills (hand bills, posters, banners, newspaper advertisements) etc. Those who cannot meet these vigorous tests and demands are not absorbed into the tuition class system or the network and remain poorly paid teachers of the formal system.

Conclusions

The close relationship between social class and education has been evident almost universally in modern times and perhaps this was so in pre-modern times as well. Sri Lanka is no exception and given the role of education in colonial society this has special significance. Thus it has been observed that since the mid 19th century education had been a significant avenue of upward social mobility. It has obviously contributed in some measure to social class formation in Sri Lanka. It was within this context that the importance of the free education system introduced in the 1940s' emerges, for prior to it, education was accessible only to those who could afford it. The system of free education removed the bottleneck. In addition, to make this free education more accessible to all sections of the population, the government opened schools in peripheral areas. This was to counter-balance the concentration of schools in urban areas and to prevent free education opening the gates of education and concomitant upward social mobility only to the urban population. While these policies corrected imbalances in the education system to a great degree, they did not eliminate all such imbalances. For instance, disparities in the access to science education between urban and rural areas as well as the concentration of science education in some districts, notably in Colombo and Jaffna continued to remain.

It is important to observe that this very process of free education set in motion in the 1940s, created by the 1960s, a large number of educated unemployed. The stagnant Sri Lankan economy could not absorb what the educational system produced. Among this educated unemployed the greatest number were arts graduates of the universities. There were better job opportunities for the science, medical and engineering graduates. Indeed this has made the science educated the new brahmins in Sri Lanka. Obviously, in this context disparities in the access to science education assumes greater significance. Once again government policy has attempted to correct this by the introduction of the District quota system. While such a system may be correcting disparities among the districts, it fails to take into account disparities prevalent within the districts on an urban rural dimension as well as on a social class dimension.

TABLE 17

Father's Occupation Classified by Category of Schools in Colombo City*

Category of Schools	Professional and Executive %	Trader & Proprietor %	Teacher & Clerical Worker %	Skilled Worker %	Paddy Farmer %	Unskilled Worker %	Total %
A	43.20	15.98	33.73	4.14	0.59	2.37	100.0
B	34.19	21.29	32.90	7.10	3.23	1.29	100.0
C	8.77	19.30	14.03	43.86	3.51	10.53	100.0
D	1.89	9.43	22.64	33.96	—	32.08	100.0
All	30.41	17.51	29.49	14.06	1.84	6.68	100.0

* *This includes all students viz. those attending tuition classes as well as those not attending tuition classes.*

TABLE 18

Family Income Classified by Category of Schools in Colombo City*

Category of Schools	Rs. 0 – 200 %	Rs. 201–400 %	Rs. 401–600 %	Rs. 601–1000 %	Rs. 1001–2000 %	Rs. 2001 & Over %	Total %
A	0.98	1.96	10.78	16.67	36.28	33.34	100.0
B	0.00	2.27	4.55	21.59	42.05	29.54	100.0
C	4.00	16.00	20.00	24.00	20.00	16.00	100.0
D	—	36.36	36.36	27.27	—	—	100.0
All	0.88	5.31	10.62	19.91	34.95	28.32	100.0

* *This includes all students viz. those attending tuition classes as well as those not attending tuition classes.*

The class character in education was thus historically present and the education reforms of the 1940s (i.e. the free education system etc.) were only partially successful in reducing this class character. It continued to exist and in the 1970s it appears to have gained ground once again. This was not merely as an avenue of upward social mobility but equally if not more significantly a reproduction of social class, that is by the prevention of downward mobility. It is recognized that with the educational reforms of the 1940s the numbers in the middle class were swelled by the avenue of education. But by the late 1960s or early 1970s the gates were once again closing, as we noted, since stagnant economies are incapable of providing jobs for all. The new members of this class were equally anxious, if not more, as the older members, to close the gates now and prevent any downward social mobility from their newly gained positions. In the reproduction of social classes, education, particularly science education that produces and reproduces the new brahmins, is limited to their own class members. It is in this process that tuition classes have begun to play a crucial role.

Admittedly, competition in the educational system, particularly the admission to the universities becoming extremely acute, paved the way for this. Greater numbers were seeking university admission than before (Vide Table 1). In some districts, particularly in Colombo and Jaffna, this competition was made even more acute by the district quota system. But when this occurred the class mechanism became operative to ensure that members of privileged classes use their class power, both economic and social to gain advantage.

What we wish to draw out of this, is that the emergence of tuition classes as a growing and striking phenomenon of the late 1970s is a manifestation of the resurging and growing importance of social class influence on educations Tuition classes can be attended only by those who could afford it and the class character is apparent. It acts as a class mechanism to restrict the access to education, particularly science education, to the members of its own class. It is therefore once again symptomatic of the strong and resurgent relationship between social class, social class reproduction and education in Sri Lanka.

APPENDIX

English Translation of the Sinhala Questionnaire Administered to the Students

1. Grade : .....

2. Male/Female : .....

3. Subjects Offered :.....

4. Do you attend Tuition Classes : Yes/No.

5. If yes, for what subjects do you attend and tuition fees for a month

	Subjects	**Tuition Fees**
(i)	.....	.....
(ii)	.....	.....
(iii)	.....	.....
(iv)	.....	.....
(v)	.....	.....

6. At what time are your classes held :

Monday .....

Tuesday .....

Wednesday.....

Thursday .....

Friday.....

Saturday.....

Sunday .....

7. The place where your Tuition Classes are held :..... .....

   The distance to the Tuition Class from your Residence .....

   The Travelling Expenses (one way) .....

   The time you have to spend on Travelling (one way) .....

8. Did you attend Tuition Classes in the previous grade ? Yes/No.

9. Reasons for your attending Tuition Classes now or before :

   (i) As there is a lack of teachers to teach the relevant subjects

   (ii) Though there are sufficient teachers, teaching is unsatisfactory

   (iii) Insufficient school time to cover syllabus

   (iv) As other students attend tuition classes

   (v) At the request of parents or others (specify if others)

   (vi) Weak in certain subjects

   (vii) Any other reason (Please specify)

10. If you do not attend Tuition Classes, the reasons:

   (i) As there is not enough money to spend on tuition

   (ii) As you can manage on self study

   (iii) As school teaching is inadequate

   (iv) As you are not allowed to attend tuition classes by your parents or others (specify)

   (v) As there are no tuition classes at a convenient place

   (vi) Any other reason (Please specify)

11. Do you feel that to get better results at the examination attending Tuition Classes is:

    (i) Necessary

    (ii) Necessary to a certain extent

    (iii) Not Necessary

12. Are there enough Teachers who are qualified to teach your Subjects in the school : Yes/No.

    Is their teaching good enough : Yes/No

    Is your school time adequate to learn your subjects fully: Yes/No.

13. Do your teachers like you to attend Tuition Classes:

    Like [ ] Dislike [ ] Do not know [ ]

14. Are you a Scholarship holder: Yes/No.

15. Do you stay somewhere out of your home to attend school: Yes/No.

16. Father's Occupation:

17. Mother's Occupation:

18. Monthly Family Income:

19. Number of Brothers:

20. Number of Sisters: