



A Study on the Effect of Participating in Tutorial Courses on Happiness During the Summer Break of Thai High School Students in Bangkok

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ABSTRACT: During the semester break of high school years, one of the most common activities of students is taking tutorial courses, as most students consider this interval to be the preparation time for entering their dream school. The attitude of each student toward tutorial courses is very different; some are very happy to attend, while others are not happy at all. Happiness plays an essential role in high school students' lives during the summer break since happiness helps students relax and also increases their productivity. Thus, we are curious about the effect of tutorial courses on the happiness of Thai high school students in Bangkok. In order to determine the correlation between these two factors, we decided to conduct a cross-sectional survey. The data was collected by sending questionnaires about the effect of participation in tutorial courses on happiness to students in various high schools in Bangkok. We received a total of 324 respondents, who are from various types of high schools, including public, private, international, and home schools. Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) was used for data analysis. The results show no significant relationship between tutorial courses and happiness, which include: 1) the number of tutoring hours taken per day (P-value = 0.342), 2) the duration of the semester breaks (P-value = 0.727), 3) the number of days to take tutorial courses in a week (P-value = 0.319), and 4) the type of tutorial courses taken (P-value = 0.221). This research has most of the respondents studying in public schools and studying in grade 12, so this might be the reason that extra tutorial classes do not affect happiness. This research helps us understand whether there is a relationship between happiness and taking tutorial courses during summer break, and also provides us with information for further research.

KEYWORDS: Happiness, High school students, Summer break, Tutorial courses, Bangkok

1. INTRODUCTION

Tutoring is private academic support provided by an expert teacher or someone with deep knowledge of particular subjects [1]. In many countries, a tutoring course is a small class, ranging from only a few students to about a dozen. The perspective of tutoring differs all around the world, especially in some Asian countries (Thailand, Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore, and Japan) and in America, where the education systems are quite different. For instance, the education systems in these Asian countries are more centralized, using standardized tests to rank students and disregarding those who have talents in fields other than science and mathematics [2]. While in America, it is more decentralized, meaning students can focus on the subjects they like and have more time and freedom to choose their career paths [3]. This is why tutoring has been a big part of many Asian adolescents' lives since the education system does not provide enough material for students to pursue the university they want or succeed at something they are passionate about. In Japan, \$12 billion was spent on private tutoring in 2010 by families to ensure their children caught up with their friends; this indicated the success of tutoring as a whole [4]. This centralization of educational trends and the rise of tutoring schools are also seen in Thailand, where a high proportion, over one-third, of Thai students aged 15-18 were reported to be attending tutoring schools in 2022 [5].

According to the National Academies of Sciences of America, almost 73% of family members said that it is important for their children to have summer activities, and over half of this group reported that they wanted their children to learn in a summer program [6]. This is also true for the population of Bangkok, the city with the most students and the most competition in the country. Attending tutoring schools affects the students not just their performance on the subject but also in social life, sleep schedules, and mental health. This is evidenced in a report by Yildiz et al., 2022, where students were found to have increased stress and anxiety [7]. And this is likely due to the fact that 38.08% of Thai youths spend 2 days a week going to study at a tutoring school [8], not to



mention the homework they were given and the weather conditions they have to go through, making it harder for them to focus and making them feel exhausted easier.

Mental health problems, such as depression, have been reported to be affected by seasonal changes, school break time, time management, and attending tutoring courses. This is supported by a study from Chen, I-Chien, who said, "There is a trade-off between mental health and school achievement for secondary education students"[9.] In addition, research has shown that summer is the worst time of the year for our mental health due to the heat, which can lead to increased rates of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders, especially in tropical regions [10]. School semester break may seem good for students' mental health on the surface, but if they are not careful about their time management, this could be a doubleedged sword. When students are away from school settings, there is a lot of free time to do hobbies, play games, and hang out with family and friends, but these times for high school students might be depressing as a result of the pressure from family members for ones to meet family expectations and get accepted to their dream university. A study by Thomas Curran in 2022 discovered that during the past 32 years, young people's perceptions of their parents' expectations and criticism have grown and are associated with a rise in mental health problems in students [11].

Summer is the most precious time for Thai high school students to prepare for college admissions and work on what they are interested in. Students' happiness is in question if attending tutoring makes students happier than if they were doing other activities. This research was, therefore, conducted to investigate the effect of participating in tutoring courses on happiness during the summer break of Thai high school students in Bangkok. We hope this research can help students be more aware of how to manage their time and find the right amount of hours per week to study tutoring courses to minimize mental problems in the summertime.

2. METHODOLOGY

We conducted a cross-sectional survey research to determine the effect of participating in tutorial courses on happiness during the summer break for Thai high school students in Bangkok. The survey was performed using a two-part questionnaire: 1) general information and 2) happiness during the summer break, consisting of 23 questions in total. In section 2, the questions are assessed using a five-point Likert scale; the choices for each question range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We reached out to participants by using social media such as Line, Instagram, and Facebook. The approximate time for each respondent to fill out the Google form was 5 minutes, and 324 responses were collected for data analysis. The index of item-objective congruence (IOC) was assessed by three experts, and their comments contributed to improving the final questionnaire by rearranging questions, merging duplicates, and rechecking grammar and spelling. The answers from a pilot group of 34 participants were collected to determine the internal reliability. The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) score was 0.710, which is above the benchmark value and is suitable for practical use [12]. Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) was used for data analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: General information of participants (N=324)

General Information		Frequency	Valid Percentage
Type of school	International school	11	3.4
	Private school	37	11.4
	Public school	275	84.9
	Home school	1	0.3
Grade	Grade 12	171	52.8
	Grade 11	99	30.6



	Grade 10	54	16.7
	More than 1 months	61	18.8
Duration of semester break	More than 2 months	236	72.8
	More than 3 months	27	8.3
Hours taking tutorial courses per day	Less than 5 hours	187	57.7
	More than or equal 5 hours	137	42.3
Days per week taking tutorial courses	1-2 days	104	32.1
	3-4 days	89	27.5
	More than 5 days	131	40.4
Take tutorial courses in specific subjects that you aren't good at	Yes	126	38.9
	No	198	61.1

According to Table 1, it is clear that the vast majority of students attend public school while only 0.3% are homeschooled. While most of the students taking tutorial course(s) are attending 12th grade with a valid percentage of just over 50%, only 16.7% are in 10th grade. Out of 324 students surveyed, 236 students (72.8%) have over 2 months of semester break, contrary to the other group that has a break duration of over 3 months with 27 of 324 (8.3%). Students tend to study over 5 hours per day with a valid percentage of 57.7%. Moving on to how many days per week students take tutorial course(s), most students do not take course(s) in specific subjects that they are not good at with a valid percentage of 61.1%, which means roughly 40% of the total take tutorial course(s) in subjects they are not good at.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Happiness	324	3.350	0.525

According to Table 2, among 324 participants, the mean turned out to be 3.350 which indicates that participants were relatively happy; the standard deviation was 0.525.

Table 3: The difference of mean between the number of tutorial course hours taken per day

Hours a day taking tutorial course(s)	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P
Less than 5 hours	187	3.326	0.492	-0.951	0.342
More or Equal than 5 hours	137	3.382	0.567		



According to Table 3, it illustrates that out of 324 respondents, the number of people studying less than 5 hours a day is higher than people studying more than or equal 5 hours a day with different 50 respondent and found that the significance value is 0.342, which means that the number of hours per day spent on tutorial courses does not affect the estimation of happiness.

Table 4: The difference of mean between taking tutorial only in subjects that you are not good at

Taking specific subjects that you aren't good at in tutorial courses	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T	P
Yes	126	3.305	0.533	-1.227	0.221
No	198	3.378	0.519		

According to Table 4, out of the 324 respondents, 126 responded that they take tutorial courses only in subjects they are not good at, which is less than 72 people compared to those who take tutorial courses in other subjects. This result shows that taking the tutorial course only in subjects that they are not good at does not affect the happiness of Thai students (P value = 0.221).

Table 5: One-Way ANOVA table; happiness and duration of semester break

Break duration	df	Sum of squares	Mean square	F	P
Between groups	2	0.177	0.088	0.320	0.727
Within group	321	88.818	0.277		
Total	323	88.994			

According to Table 5, it illustrates that break duration has no significant effect on happiness. The result from One-Way ANOVA obtained a p-value of 0.727, mean square between groups of 0.088, and mean square within group of 0.277.

Table 6: One-Way ANOVA table; happiness and days per week taking tutorial course

Days per week taking tutorial course(s)	df	Sum of squares	Mean square	F	P
Between groups	2	0.631	0.316	1.147	0.319
Within group	321	88.363	0.275		
total	323	88.994			

According to Table 6, it illustrates that the number of days per week taking tutorial courses has no significant effect on happiness. The result from One-Way ANOVA obtained a p-value of 0.319, mean square between groups of 0.316, and mean square within group of 0.275.



As an adolescent in Thailand, it is typical that students have to take tutoring courses, be it through social pressure or their own free will. Thus, it is very interesting to know whether the level of Thai students' happiness will be affected by attending tutoring courses. From our survey, we found the majority of the participants to be relatively happy (Table 2). This is likely because students can make new friends, find new skills, feel fun when they solve problems, or some people feel happy when they study.

Unfortunately, our study found no factors that have a significant effect on the level of happiness, which include: 1) the number of tutoring hours taken per day; 2) the duration of the semester breaks; 3) the number of days to take tutorial courses in a week; and 4) the type of tutorial courses taken (subjects that you are not good at). This could be due to our sampling population, which consisted mostly of respondents studying in public schools and studying in grade 12, who would have to take extra tutorial classes. It is typical that Thai students in grade 12 require extra knowledge in order to enter the Thai education system in higher education and also to get good grades in school. In addition, school teachers are unable to make students grasp the lessons in class and the knowledge received from school does not correlate with the university admission [5]. Moreover, tutoring can be stressful for students, where 48.2 percent of high school students reported that they are under stress and 70.3 percent of high school students reported that they are under pressure from self-expectations [14].

4. CONCLUSION

The research presents the effect of participation in tutorial courses during semester break on the happiness of Bangkok high school students. We initially hypothesized that tutoring courses would help students be happier during the summer months. However, after conducting a cross-sectional survey research, we found that there is no correlation between these variables. This is surprising for us, but after we precisely analyzed the raw data, we found multiple reasons that could explain the unexpected outcomes as discussed above. In the future, it might be better to survey a bigger number of the population in order to present results with more accuracy.

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Cite this Article: Kantaphon Chairungpanya, Natariny Tassanapreechachai, Napat Darasit (2023). A Study on the Effect of Participating in Tutorial Courses on Happiness During the Summer Break of Thai High School Students in Bangkok. International Journal of Current Science Research and Review, 6(6), 3274-3279