

Academic Coaching in Secondary and Higher Secondary Level - An Overview

Introduction and background

In modern life Education become one of the most important vehicles of social progress and socio economic transformation. It is the process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values or attitudes. Students meet the challenges of modern society as well as economic by acquiring proper knowledge. But the education system itself becomes a tough thing for the students' to coup up with it. The education system in Bangladesh and also in the world is running so fast for the students' that they are taking the help of coaching both inside and outside of the Institution.

The word 'coaching' originated in the world of sport, but now coaching is a distinct profession, clearly different from counselling, training, mentoring, therapy or consultancy. What is remarkable is its sheer power and versatility. Coaching will help someone to perform a new task, improve performance in his/her chosen profession, develop new skill or solve a problem.

The term "Coaching" literally comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word for a carriage, which is something that takes someone from where he/she are now to where he/she wants to be. In a nutshell: Coaching is a vehicle to transport a client from where he is now in his life to where he wants to be (Kennedy, 2009). From the view of Eric Parsloe, "Coaching is a process that enables learning and development to occur and thus performance to improve. To be a successful a coach requires knowledge and understanding of process as well as the variety of styles, skills and techniques that are appropriate to the context in which the coaching takes place" (International Institute of Coaching, 2012).

Sandy Maynard said that "academic coaching is a designed alliance between a teacher and student for the purpose of fostering success skills in an educational environment. It is an individualized process that facilitates goal clarification and achievement. The purpose of academic coaching is to stimulate and motivate students towards their scholastic goals by providing structure, support and feedback" (International Institute of Coaching, 2012).

A Stanford University School of Education study suggests that undergraduates who receive executive-style "coaching"- including guidance on setting goals and time management- are more

likely to remain in college and graduate (Bettinger & Baker, 2011). They also argued that “The results are clear: coaching had a clear impact on retention and completion rates. And not only does coaching improve the likelihood students will remain in college, but expenditures on coaching are much smaller than the costs of other methods to encourage persistence in college.”

In Bangladesh the coaching practices both academic and private coaching has a great importance. Academic coaching means the coaching or support given to the students from inside school and the private coaching means support for the students from outside of the school. Students from Secondary and Higher Secondary are very much relying on this both kind of coaching.

There is a common allegation against the teachers that most of them are not interested in involving themselves in coaching. Now-a-days, students are compelled to come to them to receive private coaching otherwise they will not pass or obtain the expected marks. If any student reads with a particular teacher other teachers of that subject look at the student with frowned eye and a silent competition or clash exists among the teachers due to this private coaching. This unhealthy competition leads the students to shed the respect for the teachers and make the teaching profession a commercial one. It is a common complaint that teachers do not teach properly in the class just to invite the students to come to them to have private teaching (Billah, 2011).

Objectives of the study

The secondary and Higher secondary education system is widely spread throughout the country. The study tried to find out the current situation of coaching (both academic and private) in secondary and Higher secondary level, its impact on students’ learning and also whether it was good or bad for the students. It was also covered the stakeholders related to academic coaching and the government Education Officials. The overall objective of this study was to assess the current status of academic coaching in secondary and higher secondary level. The specific objectives were to-

- a. Identify the nature of academic coaching practiced in secondary and higher secondary level;

- b. Identify the type of academic coaching offering for secondary and higher secondary students;
- c. Explore the reasons for getting academic coaching by the students besides classroom teaching-learning;
- d. Examine the influences of academic coaching system on students learning;

Methodology of the study

The study integrated qualitative and quantitative approaches to find out the real picture of the present situation of coaching in secondary and higher secondary levels through collecting data from primary sources. The data were collected through questionnaire, checklist and interview schedule. The study methodology were consisted of the following activities:

Population of the study

The stakeholders of academic coaching were as teachers, students, parents and coaching personnel were considered as the population of the study.

The Sample

The study covered two Thanas of Dhaka Metro and another two Upazilas from Kustia city and Pirojpur city were selected purposively as the sample areas for the study. Thus, the sample categories were as follows:

- 4 Upazila/Thanas (2 Thanas Ramna and Lalbag from Dhaka Metro and other two Upazilas are Kustia Sadar and Pirojpur Sadar) were selected purposively to collect data about the condition of academic coaching.
- Household survey was conducted in the selected Thana/Upazilas to find out the coaching scenario in the respective areas.
- A total of 16 institutions (12 secondary schools and 4 colleges) from the 4 upazilas were selected randomly as sample of the study.
- A total of 160 students (10 from each institution) were selected randomly to know their views about academic coaching.
- A total of 48 teachers (3 from each institution) were selected purposively to their opinion about the status of academic coaching.

- From each institute 6-8 parents were selected for interviews which a total of 128 parents.
- From each upazillas 4 coaching centre, a total of 16 coaching centre were selected randomly as sample.
- 16 key personnel (1 from each centre) of the coaching centers were selected for interview.

Major Findings

Based on the analysis of the collected data from different group of respondents the some findings were emerged. The major findings of the study are in the following:

- Majority of the teachers teaching in coaching centers were students of a range of grades. The professional school teachers were involved in coaching or private tutoring in very few cases.
- Majority of the parents', whose children studying in coaching, had higher educational qualification. The parents were mostly service holders and business proprietors who had financial capability to send their children in coaching centers or appoint teachers to teacher their children at home. It might be happened as the educated and financially solvent parents were very much aware of their child's education and results in the examinations.
- The coaching centers usually included the hard subjects like English, Mathematics, Science subjects. They also provided supports for all subjects to the students. It was found that some students were studying in two, three or more coaching institutions simultaneously. Moreover, one student got supports from two or more tutors at home for even one subject.
- There were several types of coaching systems were explored from the data collected from different sources. It was found that different types of coaching systems were available for secondary students like private tutoring, home tutoring, School Coaching, Subject Based Coaching, Skill development coaching, and Coaching for public examinations.
- There were some reasons for enrolling in the coaching centers or getting supports from different tutoring systems. The main reasons for enrolling in coaching were need to

develop subject based knowledge, lack of quality education in schools, need to achieve good scores/results in examinations, need to complete syllabuses on time, and lack of supports for weak students in schools. Surprisingly, it was found that in few cases schools teachers influenced students to get supports through private tutoring.

- The coaching systems helped students to remove their weaknesses in subject based knowledge, in improving quality of preparation for examinations, provided opportunities for learning practices, helped to complete syllabuses before examinations. It was argued by the parents that unexpectedly teachers were more careful and gave more time in coaching than schools.
- There were also some negative influences of coaching out of schooling systems existing on students and on their learning. The students became more dependent on coaching or private tutoring than regular school lessons and they became more dependent on memorizing notes or guides. Therefore, the meaning of learning at secondary level became only result and examination oriented.