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General Health and Psychological Well-Being among Coaching-Going and Non-Coaching going Students: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

The present study examined the differences in general health and psychological well-being between coaching-going and non-coaching students and explored the relationship between these two variables. A mixed-method research design was adopted. Quantitative data were collected from 100 students aged 13–18 years using the General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (18-item version). Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into students' experiences related to coaching and academic life. Independent samples t-tests and Pearson correlation analysis were used to analyzed the quantitative data, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative responses. The findings revealed that non-coaching students reported significantly better general health and psychological well-being than coaching-going students. A significant positive relationship was also found between general health and psychological well-being ($r = .62$, $p < .001$). Qualitative findings indicated that coaching-going students commonly experienced inadequate sleep, physical fatigue, headaches, eye strain, and continuous academic pressure. The study concludes that although private coaching may support academic achievement, excessive academic demands may adversely affect students' physical health and psychological well-being. The findings highlight the importance of maintaining a balance between academic achievement and students' overall well-being.

Keywords: *General Health, Psychological Well-Being, Private Coaching, Coaching-Going Students, Adolescents, Academic Stress.*

1.Introduction

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

—Nelson Mandela

This statement is given by Nelson Mandela. The quote focuses on the value of education, how knowledge can help individuals grow, break the cycle of poverty, and spark social progress. In today's world, education has become one of the most powerful assets for students to live prosperous lives. Parents and society have high expectations for students. Society has connected students' success with their academic results. Academic competition has also increased day by day. The rising level of competition has put pressure on students' lives. This pressure can adversely affect students' well-being and health. There has been intense competition among students to score the highest marks and earn a higher degree. That's why many students join coaching along with their schools. Coaching trends are increasingly emerging in developed countries where education depends on employment.

The increasing trend of coaching may be harmful for students' well-being and health, and has developed many psychological problems like stress, anxiety and emotional issues. Private coaching is defined as education provided for a fee to increase students' knowledge. After long hours of school, students spend time in coaching to achieve good marks. On the other hand, spending long hours in after-school coaching. This long coaching session may adversely affect students' mental and psychological health. They have less time; therefore, their social interactions have decreased. Those students who have not attended coaching have some extra time. They interact with people, participate in social activities, and play many outdoor games. These types of activities help to maintain their well-being and health.

According to the WHO (1948), health is defined as a state of complete mental, physical, and emotional well-being, not merely the absence of disease. During adolescence, health is particularly important because many psychological, emotional, and cognitive changes occur. Excessive hours of study, academic pressure, and stress may deteriorate students' overall health and lead to fatigue, headaches, and other health problems.

Psychological well-being can be conceptualised as a person's psychological functioning that helps maintain a meaningful sense of purpose and a satisfying life while effectively managing personal challenges. It includes positive self-evaluation, autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and the ability to establish healthy and meaningful relationships with others. (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Psychological well-being is considered a very important factor in student development. Those students who are constantly feeling pressure, stress, and anxiety due to academic competition may experience negative health symptoms. Thus, their mental health is also worsened. When mental and general health are poor, students are unable to concentrate on their studies and do not achieve good scores.

Many studies show that spending longer hours in school and coaching hampers students' mental and overall health. Spending longer hours in coaching and school may deteriorate students' health

because they don't have enough time to play outdoor games and exercise. High pressure of fulfilling the expectations of parents and achieving higher marks may become the cause of mental health problems.

Although there has been an increasing trend in private coaching in India, little research has examined differences in mental and general health between coaching-going and non-coaching-going students. Most of the research focuses on academic achievement. There is a need for studies focusing on students' well-being and general health.

The aim of the present study is to identify empirical differences between coaching-going and non-coaching-going students. Also, qualitatively explore students' personal experiences through interviews. The results of this study will be helpful for future policymaking, encouraging the type of education that helps them achieve good health and well-being.

1.1 Review of Literature

Bray (2009) described private coaching as a form of shadow education. Shadow education refers to taking extra coaching beyond regular school education. Bray found that attending coaching has both advantages and disadvantages. Attending coaching may be beneficial, as it increases students' academic achievement; however, students may not have enough time to rest, play, and participate in outdoor activities. As a result, their mental and physical well-being may gradually deteriorate.

Similarly, Bray (2003) found that the trend of private coaching has increased rapidly across different countries worldwide. The study also reported that coaching provides several academic benefits, such as improving school learning and enhancing students' academic performance. However, it is not possible for every student to attend coaching classes because of low socioeconomic conditions, which may create educational inequalities.

Furthermore, Pascoe et al. (**2020**) found that high levels of academic stress adversely affect the mental health of students. Students experiencing excessive academic pressure often reported anxiety, stress, and emotional disturbances, particularly when they had insufficient time for rest and other non-academic activities.

Ryff (1989) described that students who have less time for rest and other activities may be unable to achieve important dimensions of psychological well-being, such as personal growth, positive relationships, environmental mastery, and purpose in life. On the other hand, students who are able to maintain sufficient time for rest and regular physical activity are more likely to experience better psychological well-being.

Similarly, the model proposed by Ryff and Keyes (1995) suggests that psychological well-being is influenced by an individual's everyday experiences and surrounding environment. Students who spend long hours in school followed by private coaching may experience greater academic demands and reduced opportunities for rest, recreation, and social interaction. Such conditions may adversely influence different dimensions of psychological well-being. Therefore, the present study compares coaching-going and non-coaching students to examine whether extended academic schedules are associated with differences in psychological well-being.

1.2 Research Gap and Rationale of the Present Study

Till now, research on coaching has shown academic benefits such as exam performance and academic achievement. Some research also shows that coaching increases pressure on students. Because of this, they have no time for rest and leisure activities. But most researchers are limited in their focus on educational outcomes. There have been fewer researchers available on psychological well-being and general health.

Several investigations have demonstrated that academic stress is negatively associated with students' mental well-being. High academic expectations, examination pressure, parental demands, and excessive workload have been identified as major contributors to stress among adolescents and college students. However, in most of these studies, academic stress itself was treated as the primary variable, while the possible influence of prolonged school hours combined with private coaching on broader indicators such as general health.

Research on psychological well-being has established that positive psychological functioning extends beyond happiness and life satisfaction and includes dimensions such as self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relationships, and personal growth. Although these theoretical models provide a comprehensive understanding of psychological well-being, relatively few empirical studies have examined how demanding academic environments, particularly the combination of regular schooling and private coaching, influence these aspects among school-going adolescents.

In the Indian context, available studies have mainly explored academic stress, examination anxiety, parental expectations, and coaching experiences among secondary school or engineering students. While these investigations provide valuable insights into students' academic challenges, direct comparisons between coaching-going and non-coaching students regarding both general health and psychological well-being remain scarce. Moreover, evidence focusing specifically on school students rather than on college or professional education remains limited.

Another limitation observed in the existing literature is the predominance of quantitative research designs. Most previous studies have relied exclusively on questionnaire-based assessments, providing a limited understanding of students' personal experiences and perceptions regarding academic pressure, health, and emotional well-being. Qualitative evidence that explains students' lived experiences remains relatively limited, particularly in the context of private coaching.

Considering these gaps, the present study compares coaching-going and non-coaching students with respect to their general health and psychological well-being. In addition, the study includes qualitative interviews to deepen understanding of students' experiences with prolonged academic engagement, coaching participation, health-related concerns, and psychological well-being. By integrating quantitative and qualitative evidence, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of extended academic schedules on students' overall well-being and to contribute evidence that may inform educational practices and student support initiative

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- To compare psychological well-being between students who attend coaching and those who do not.
- To compare general health between students who attend coaching and those who do not.
- To examine the relationship between general health and psychological well-being among students.
- To explore students' experiences and perceptions of extended school hours and private coaching through qualitative interviews.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

H01: There will be no significant difference in psychological well-being between coaching-going and non-coaching students.

H02: There will be no significant difference in general health between coaching-going and non-coaching students.

H03: There will be significant relationship between general health and psychological well-being among students.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Method

The research adopted a mixed-methods approach to examine differences between coaching-going and non-coaching-going students, and to explore the causes of any differences in their general health and well-being. A mixed-methods design combines qualitative and quantitative methods. In the quantitative part, psychological scales were used to assess students' well-being and mental health; in the qualitative part, structured interviews were conducted to understand their experiences with coaching, sleep schedules, stress, and academic pressure. Therefore, this method provided both the students' neurological and personal experiences.

2.2 Research Design

The present study is an **Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Research Design**, in which the first phase involved collecting quantitative data, followed by the qualitative data to explain the quantitative findings. In the first quantitative phase, 100 data points were collected from the students to measure their general health and well-being. The data were analysed by descriptive and inferential techniques. To measure group differences and the relationship between variables, central tendency measures, the independent t-test, and the Pearson correlation were used.

In the second qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students to obtain detailed information on their experiences of academic pressure, coaching, physical health, and emotional well-being. The findings were analysed thematically to gain a comprehensive result of the study.

2.3 Participants: The present study consists of 100 school students enrolled in classes 9th to 12th . The participants were 13- to 18-year-old adolescents from different academic backgrounds. The sample was collected from two groups, each equally divided into 50 coaching-going students who attended coaching after school education and 50 non-coaching-going students who attended only regular education. This equal distribution of groups provides a balance among them.

2.4 Sampling Technique

The present study employed the purposive sample technique.

2.5 Research Instruments

The present study measures general health and psychological well-being using the Scales General Health Questionnaire-12 (GHQ-12) and the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale (18 items).

General Health Questionnaire-12

The GHQ shows excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha between 0.78 and 0.9 across populations. The test reliability is also good.

Ryff Psychological Well-Being

The Ryff Psychological Well-Being measures 6 dimensions: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. It shows good internal consistency (overall alpha typically 0.70–0.88), though shorter subscales can sometimes yield lower reliability.

2.6 Data Collection Procedure

The study's data were collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative part, a structured Google Form was prepared, consisting of the GHQ-12 and the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale, along with participants' information and informed consent. Following the quantitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected students who voluntarily agreed to participate in the qualitative phase of the study. Some students were interviewed telephonically, while others were interviewed face-to-face at coaching institutes. Each interview lasted approximately 15-20 minutes.

2.7 Results

Comparison of Psychological Well-Being between Coaching-going and Non-Coaching Students

Table 1

Comparison of Psychological Well-Being Scores between Coaching-going and Non-Coaching Students

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	df	P
Coaching-going Students	50	49.20	7.80	4.02	98	< .001
Non-Coaching Students	50	55.60	8.10			

Interpretation

An independent t-test was used to compare the psychological well-being of coaching-going and non-coaching-going students. The result shows a significant difference between the two groups. $t(98) = 4.02$, $p < .001$. The results revealed higher psychological well-being in the non-coaching group (M = 55.60, SD = 8.10) than in the coaching group (M = 49.20, SD = 7.80). Findings clearly show that students who have attended private coaching alongside regular school show comparatively lower psychological well-being. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, which stated that there would be a significant

difference in psychological well-being between coaching-going and non-coaching students, was accepted.

Comparison of General Health between Coaching-going and Non-Coaching Students

Table 2

Comparison of General Health Scores between Coaching-going and Non-Coaching Students

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Coaching-going Students	50	34.50	5.20	4.85	98	< .001
Non-Coaching Students	50	39.80	5.70			

Interpretation

An independent t-test was used to compare the general health of coaching-going and non-coaching-going students. The result shows a significant difference between the two groups. $t(98) = 4.85$, $p < .001$. The results revealed higher general health in the non-coaching group (M = 39.80, SD = 5.70) than in the coaching group (M = 34.50, SD = 5.20) Findings clearly show that students who have attended private coaching alongside regular school show comparatively lower general health. Therefore, Hypothesis 2, which stated that there would be a significant difference in general health between coaching-going and non-coaching students, was accepted.

Relationship between General Health and Psychological Well-Being

Table 3

Correlation between General Health and Psychological Well-Being

Variables	R	P
General Health and Psychological Well-Being	.62	< .001

Interpretation
Table 3 shows a statistically significant positive correlation between general health and psychological well-being ($r = .62$, $p < .001$). These findings show that students who reported better general health also show better psychological well-being. This shows a moderately strong positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, Hypothesis 3, which proposed a significant relationship between general health and psychological well-being, was accepted.

2.8 Qualitative Findings

Theme 1: Extended Study Hours and Academic Burden: Most of the coaching-going students reported that after spending a large amount of time in school and coaching, they have left very little time for rest, walking and other activities. They also reported a large amount of time wasted travelling between home, school, and coaching.

Participant 1(Coaching-going, Class XI)

“School sai coaching fir coaching sai ghar .Ghar phucte phucte bhut raat ho jati thee .Homework krne mai hi time khatam ho jata tha . Kisi dusti activity kai liye time nhi milta tha.”

Participant 10 (Coaching-going, Class XII): "Mera poora din school aur coaching mein nikal jata hai. Self-study aur rest ke liye bahut kam time bachta hai."

Interpretation

These student responses show that extended academic hours increased students' workload and reduced opportunities for adequate rest and other activities.

Theme 2: Sleep Disturbance and Physical Fatigue

Participants reported inadequate sleep because of prolonged school and coaching schedules. Students explained that they frequently stayed awake until late at night to complete all their work. which resulted in them feeling tired all day, they feel tired and are sleepless at night.

Participant 3 (Coaching-going, Class X): "Homework complete karte-karte raat ho jati thi. Isliye meri neend poori nahi hoti thi aur subah bhi thakan rehti thi."

Participant 8(Coaching-going, Class XII): "Din bhar itni thakan hoti thi ki ghar aakar padhne ki energy hi nahi bachti thi."

Interpretation

The interview responses show that insufficient sleep and persistent fatigue were common among coaching participants.

Theme 3: Physical Health Problems

Participants reported many physical problems such as eye strain, nausea, headache, weakness and vomiting. Participants also reported that all these problems were associated with continuous study and inadequate sweep time.

Participant 2(Coaching-going, Class XI): "Hamesha aankhon mein dard aur headache rehta tha. Kabhi-kabhi nausea bhi feel hota tha."

Participant 9 (Coaching-going, Class XII): "Lagatar padhai ki wajah se aankhen bahut thak jati thi aur body mein weakness mehsoos hoti thi."

Interpretation

The responses show that continuous academic stress and inadequate sleep time were also responsible for their physical health.

Theme 4: Psychological Stress and Emotional Well-Being

Most participants associated prolonged academic schedules with increased psychological stress. Students reported feelings of anxiety, frustration, emotional exhaustion, and continuous academic

pressure. Students reported frustration, stress and anxiety due to emotional pressure. Students' responses that prolonged academic schedules increased psychological problems.

Participant 4 (Coaching-going, Class XI): "Har waqt tests aur homework ki tension rehti thi. Kabhi-kabhi bahut stress feel hota tha."

Participant 7 (Coaching-going, Class XII): "School aur coaching dono manage karna mentally bahut difficult lagta tha."

Interpretation

These responses suggest that continuous academic demands negatively affected students' emotional well-being.

Theme 5: Reduced Leisure Time and Social Interaction

Participants reported that long hours of coaching reduced the time available for leisure, hobbies, social interactions, and exercise.

Participant 5 (Coaching-going, Class X): "Friends ke saath bahar jana aur games khelna almost band ho gaya tha."

Participant 6 (Coaching-going, Class XII): "friends and family kai sath jada time spend nhi kr pati thee. Kyoki samye kam rheta tha."

Interpretation

The interview findings indicate that limited leisure time contributed to reduced life satisfaction and overall well-being among coaching-going students.

3.Discussion

The aim of the present study was to compare the general health and psychological well-being of coaching-going and non-coaching-going students. Findings suggest that students who attend coaching alongside school report lower general health and psychological well-being than those who do not. Interview findings also supported these results. The findings show that greater academic pressure reduces students' psychological well-being. Thus, to develop good general health, it's necessary to strike a balance between students' general health and well-being.

The present study shows lower psychological well-being among coaching participants than among non-coaching participants. Interview findings also showed that students feel stress and anxiety due to academic pressure. The findings are consistent with Ryff's (2014) study, which found that psychological well-being is not just the absence of mental illness but includes components of purpose in life, personal growth, self-acceptance, positive relationships, and environmental mastery. Ryff suggests that good psychological well-being helps enhance resilience and well-being.

Findings also show that coaching-going students have lower general health than non-coaching-going students. Students reported feeling tired, having headaches, and experiencing nausea after the combined timing of school and coaching. These findings show that greater academic pressure and increased coaching time were associated with greater general health symptoms among students. The findings are consistent with those of Maji et al. (2024), who reported that academic stress during coaching.

One of the main causes of mental and physical health deterioration among engineering students is that, in the present study, students also experience general health problems due to academic pressure .These findings align with Bray (2007), who described private supplementary tutoring as a rapidly expanding educational phenomenon with significant implications for students, families, and education systems. Bray argued that while private tutoring may improve academic achievement and provide additional learning opportunities, it may increase educational pressure and widen inequalities if students experience excessive academic demands. The present study also supports the idea that students who feel more academic pressure have lower general health and lower psychological well-being. That's why it is necessary to pay attention to students' general health and psychological well-being, along with the academic benefits of coaching.

4.Conclusion

This research used a mixed-methods design to compare general health and psychological well-being among coaching-going and non-coaching-going students and to examine the relationship between these variables. The GHQ-12 and Ryff psychological well-being (18 items) scales were used to measure the general health and well-being of coaching-going and non-coaching-going students using quantitative methods, and qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to understand students' experiences. Non-coaching students show better general health and psychological well-being than coaching students, and the results also show a statistically significant difference. Qualitative findings also support the quantitative results. In the interview, students reported that they feel high stress , anxiety and a poor level of sleep because of the coaching timing. Students also reported that because of the combined timing of school and coaching, they have less time for social interactions and self-care.

Overall, the findings indicate that although private coaching may provide academic support and improve examination preparation, excessive academic demands may adversely affect students' health and psychological well-being. Therefore, it is important to promote a balanced educational environment that supports both academic achievement and students' physical and mental well-being. Schools, parents, coaching institutes, and educational policymakers should work collaboratively to reduce unnecessary academic pressure and encourage healthy study habits, adequate rest, and emotional support. Such efforts may contribute to the holistic development and long-term well-being of adolescents.

5.Limitations

The present study has certain limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. First, the study was limited to students from Kanpur city, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to other geographical regions. Second, a convenience sampling technique was used, and the sample size was relatively small. Third, the study relied on self-report measures (GHQ-12 and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale), which may be influenced by participants' personal perceptions and response bias. Finally, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between general health and psychological well-being. Future studies may

address these limitations by using larger and more diverse samples and longitudinal research designs.

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