

# Educational Coaching as a Strategy for Academic Performance of Students in the International Trade Program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar

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## ABSTRACT:

This study analyzes the impact of educational coaching on the academic performance of students in the International Trade program at the Popular University of Cesar. Using an explanatory quantitative design, data were collected through surveys and interviews with students and teachers. Educational coaching techniques aimed at improving personal skills such as time management, self-efficacy, and motivation were implemented, contributing to better academic results. The results showed a significant increase in academic performance among students who participated in educational coaching compared to those who did not. Additionally, a positive development in interpersonal and emotional skills was observed, which translated into greater resilience and adaptation to academic challenges. Students also reported feeling more confident and motivated, which facilitated their active participation in the learning process. This study highlights the relevance of integrating educational coaching into university education to improve both academic and personal performance. It concludes that educational coaching is a valuable tool that promotes comprehensive growth by combining academic development with personal and professional training. The findings suggest the need to expand this methodology to other academic programs to maximize its benefits.

**Keywords:** Educational coaching, academic performance, interpersonal skills, time management, self-efficacy.

## Introducción

Educational coaching has emerged as a key tool in the academic field, particularly in higher

education, where students face challenges that go far beyond the acquisition of domain knowledge. Educational coaching aims to unlock students' potential through techniques and approaches that

promote their comprehensive development, both personally and academically. According to Whitmore (2017), coaching is a process that facilitates coachee learning and development, helping them improve their performance and acquire critical skills. In the university context, these skills are essential for students to successfully cope with academic, social, and emotional demands.

The International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar faces common difficulties in university education, such as student demotivation, low academic performance, and a lack of skills to properly manage time and responsibilities. These factors affect not only academic performance but also students' emotional and personal well-being. It is in this context that educational coaching emerges as a potential solution to enhance academic performance and foster personal growth.

Educational coaching focuses on the development of soft skills, such as self-confidence, time management, problem-solving, and motivation—aspects that are crucial for academic success. In this sense, coaching addresses not only students' academic difficulties but also personal and emotional barriers that may hinder their progress. As García and Velasco (2019) point out, educational coaching enables students to develop communication and self-regulation skills that allow them to take an active role in their own learning process.

This study aims to analyze how the implementation of educational coaching can influence the academic performance of students in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar. Based on the premise that educational coaching has a positive impact in both academic and personal spheres, the objective is to demonstrate that its implementation improves self-management skills, commitment to learning, and academic achievement.

Educational coaching, in addition to being aligned with the four pillars of education proposed by UNESCO (learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live

together), has stood out for its ability to foster holistic student development. Learning in the 21st century is not limited to acquiring technical knowledge; it also involves developing emotional and social competencies essential for professional and personal success. In this regard, educational coaching plays a crucial role, as it not only provides tools to boost academic performance but also facilitates the development of interpersonal skills and emotional self-regulation.

In higher education, studies such as that of Aguilar and Rodríguez (2019) have demonstrated that educational coaching significantly improves academic performance by equipping students with effective strategies to manage their time, set clear goals, and overcome obstacles in their learning journey. This comprehensive approach, combining academic and personal growth, makes educational coaching a highly valuable strategy in the university environment.

However, despite the documented benefits of educational coaching across various higher education institutions, its implementation within the Colombian context remains limited. The present research seeks to fill this gap by exploring how educational coaching can be utilized as a strategy to enhance academic performance in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar. Through this study, empirical evidence is expected to be provided regarding the benefits of educational coaching, not only in improving academic grades but also in fostering students' personal and professional growth.

Educational coaching is relevant not only for boosting academic grades but also for promoting greater self-confidence in students, enabling them to face academic challenges with greater assurance. According to Ruiz and Castro (2018), educational coaching promotes self-regulation in learning, helping students establish clear goals and monitor their progress effectively. This capacity for self-management is essential for academic success, as it allows students to take control of their learning and be proactive in problem-solving.

Furthermore, educational coaching has a positive impact on students' emotional intelligence,

translating into an enhanced capacity to manage academic stress and maintain a positive focus toward their objectives. According to Sánchez and Morales (2021), educational coaching assists students in developing emotional management skills, allowing them to approach academic challenges with greater resilience. In a university environment where stress and anxiety are common factors, educational coaching stands as an effective tool for improving students' emotional well-being.

This study is structured into four main sections. The first part presents the methodology used to conduct the research, describing the explanatory quantitative approach and data collection instruments employed. The second part analyzes the results obtained from surveys and interviews conducted with students and teachers. The third part is dedicated to the discussion of results, comparing findings with existing literature on educational coaching and academic performance. Finally, the fourth part presents the study's conclusions and recommendations, highlighting the importance of integrating educational coaching into university education and proposing potential improvements for its implementation in the Colombian educational context.

## 2. Methodology

The study was conducted using a methodological design aimed at analyzing the impact of educational coaching on students' academic performance. Although it incorporates a quantitative component with a descriptive-correlational scope, the research is complemented by qualitative elements that enable a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by the participants. In this regard, the interpretive paradigm is particularly relevant because it recognizes that educational phenomena cannot be understood exclusively through quantifiable indicators; rather, they require an examination of the interpretations that individuals construct based on their particular experiences and contexts (Martínez, 2025).

Consistent with this perspective, the qualitative approach made it possible to explore in greater

depth the experiences of students and faculty regarding educational coaching, recognizing their discourses, assessments, and meanings as relevant sources for understanding the phenomenon under study (Martínez, 2026). Likewise, the literature review constituted a cross-cutting process for identifying previous research, conceptual foundations, scholarly debates, and knowledge gaps related to educational coaching and academic performance, thereby providing theoretical support for the categories and variables addressed in the study (Martínez et al., 2025).

Similarly, critical thinking guided the examination and comparison of the evidence, avoiding the automatic assumption that every variation in academic performance was a direct consequence of coaching. From this perspective, critical analysis involves contrasting arguments, recognizing contextual conditions, evaluating different forms of evidence, and constructing well-grounded interpretations before drawing conclusions (Martínez et al., 2025).

A non-probability sample consisting of 60 students from the International Trade Program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar was selected. These students participated in educational coaching sessions throughout an academic semester. Data were collected through structured surveys and semi-structured interviews administered to both students and faculty members. The surveys addressed variables such as self-confidence, motivation, time management, and academic performance, while the interviews provided a qualitative exploration of participants' perceptions and experiences related to educational coaching.

### 2.1. Type of Research

This study is classified as applied research with a descriptive-correlational approach. It aims to describe the characteristics of educational coaching and its relationship with student academic performance. Applied research is appropriate because it seeks practical solutions to specific problems—in this case, improving academic performance through coaching (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2018).

## 2.2. Research Design

The research design is non-experimental and cross-sectional. It is non-experimental because independent variables are not manipulated; rather, phenomena are observed as they naturally occur in their context. The cross-sectional design was selected because data collection occurred at a single point in time, providing a 'snapshot' of educational coaching's impact at a specific moment. This design is appropriate when the objective is to analyze existing relationships without direct intervention in the environment (Kerlinger & Lee, 2015).

### 2.2.1. Validity

Study validity was guaranteed through data triangulation, employing surveys, interviews, and documentary analysis. Triangulation allows for contrasting and validating findings from multiple perspectives, thereby reducing the likelihood of bias and error. As Maxwell (2016) suggests, this approach is crucial for ensuring the accuracy and credibility of results.

### 2.2.2. Reliability

Reliability was ensured by standardizing data collection instruments and conducting pilot testing. Consistency in method application enables study replication across different contexts, yielding comparable and reliable results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

### 2.3.1. Population and Sample

The target population of the study comprises students and faculty in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar. This population is characterized by diversity in age, gender, and academic background, offering a rich variety of perspectives and experiences relevant to the study. The population size consists of approximately 20 teachers and 100 students.

### 2.3.2. Sample

A non-probability convenience sample was used, selecting students who were willing to participate and adequately represented the diversity of the target population. According to Patton (2015),

convenience sampling is useful in exploratory studies where participant accessibility and willingness are key factors.

## 2.4. Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

For data collection, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were employed. The interviews allowed for an in-depth understanding of student experiences and perceptions, while questionnaires provided complementary quantitative data. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), semi-structured interviews are flexible and allow for exploring emerging themes during conversation.

## 2.5. Data Analysis Technique

Qualitative data analysis was conducted through thematic coding, identifying patterns and recurring themes within participant responses. Braun and Clarke (2019) propose thematic coding as a robust methodology for interpreting qualitative data, allowing for a clear and structured representation of findings.

## 2.6. Research Processing

Research processing included transcribing interviews, coding data, and using qualitative analysis software to organize and analyze collected information. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018) suggest that leveraging technological tools in qualitative research enhances data analysis precision and efficiency. El procesamiento de la investigación incluirá la transcripción de entrevistas, la codificación de datos y el uso de software de análisis cualitativo para organizar y analizar la información recolectada. Miles, Huberman y Saldaña (2018) sugieren que el uso de herramientas tecnológicas en la investigación cualitativa mejora la precisión y eficiencia del análisis de datos.

## 3. Results

### Teachers

Population: 20

Sample: 15

### Students

Population: 100

Suggested Sample: 60

Table 1. Teacher’s Results

| Answer | Responsea 1 | Response 2 | Response 3 | Respond 4 | Respond 5 |
|--------|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1      | 0%          | 0%         | 20%        | 80%       | -         |
| 2      | 40%         | 60%        | -          | -         | -         |
| 3      | 80%         | 20%        | -          | -         | -         |
| 4      | 10%         | 40%        | 40%        | 10%       | -         |
| 5      | 50%         | 30%        | 10%        | 10%       | -         |
| 6      | 90%         | 10%        | -          | -         | -         |
| 7      | 60%         | 30%        | 10%        | -         | -         |
| 8      | 40%         | 40%        | 20%        | -         | -         |
| 9      | 70%         | 30%        | -          | -         | -         |
| 10     | 50%         | 30%        | 10%        | 10%       | -         |
| 11     | 80%         | 20%        | -          | -         | -         |

Source: (Acevedo, 2024)

The results obtained from this study on the implementation of educational coaching among students in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar have been positive and significant across various domains, including academic performance, personal motivation, interpersonal skill development, and stress management. This section details the main findings, presenting quantitative and qualitative evidence supporting the hypothesis that educational coaching positively impacts students' academic and personal performance.

Academic Performance

One of the study's most significant findings was the improvement in academic performance among students who participated in educational coaching sessions compared to those who did not. Average grades rose considerably following coaching implementation. Prior to participation, the average grade stood at 3.2 (on a 1 to 5 scale), whereas upon program completion, the average rose to 4.0. This increase reflects a significant academic performance improvement, largely attributable to self-management and planning skills developed through coaching.

Statistical analysis revealed a positive correlation between participation in coaching sessions and grade improvement, with a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.78$ , indicating a strong relationship. Additionally, students participating in coaching demonstrated a reduction in dropout rates and failed subjects. Before the intervention, 25% of students failed at least one subject per semester, whereas after coaching participation, this figure dropped to 10%. These data confirm the effectiveness of educational coaching as a strategy to enhance academic achievement and student retention.

Motivation and Self-Confidence

Among the most notable effects of educational coaching was an increase in student motivation and self-confidence. When asked about their perceived ability to handle academic responsibilities before and after coaching sessions, 85% of students reported a significant enhancement in self-confidence. Many noted that prior to coaching, they felt overwhelmed by academic workload and difficulties in time organization. However, after participating in coaching sessions, they felt more capable of

managing tasks and tackling academic challenges with a more positive mindset.

### **Time Management and Organization**

Another key area enhanced through coaching was students' capacity to manage time effectively. Prior to coaching implementation, many students reported struggling to balance academic responsibilities with personal and professional commitments. Seventy percent (70%) of students expressed that they did not utilize effective planning or time management techniques, which negatively impacted their academic results and personal well-being.

Through coaching, students learned to use planning tools and prioritize effectively. An important aspect of coaching sessions was teaching students how to break large tasks down into smaller, achievable goals and allocate specific timeframes for task completion. Ninety percent (90%) of participating students reported that they now use calendars or task lists to organize their time, enabling them to meet deadlines and improve academic work quality.

This shift in time management positively impacted not only academic performance but also emotional well-being, as many students reported feeling less stressed and more in control of their academic lives.

### **Stress and Emotional Well-being**

Academic stress is a common issue among university students, and the International Trade program is no exception. At the beginning of the investigation, 65% of students reported experiencing high levels of study-related stress, affecting their emotional health and academic performance. However, following coaching participation, this percentage decreased significantly, with only 25% reporting elevated stress levels at program completion.

Coaching provided students with tools to handle stress more effectively, such as relaxation techniques, improved time organization, and setting clear goals. Many students mentioned feeling calmer and less overwhelmed by academic responsibilities post-coaching. This finding aligns

with prior research demonstrating that educational coaching reduces academic stress by providing effective strategies for managing emotions and responsibilities (Gómez & Pérez, 2017).

### **Interpersonal Skills**

Beyond its impact on academic grades and stress management, educational coaching positively affected students' interpersonal skills. Many highlighted that through coaching, they developed greater capacity for effective communication and teamwork. Prior to coaching, 55% of students affirmed having difficulty collaborating in groups and expressing ideas in the classroom. After sessions, 80% reported feeling more confident when working in teams and actively participating in class discussions.

Students in coaching also improved interpersonal relationships with peers and faculty. This communication and teamwork enhancement not only yielded positive academic impacts but also contributed to a more collaborative, positive learning environment. Participating faculty noted that coached students showed greater willingness to collaborate in group activities and participate actively in class, enriching teaching-learning dynamics.

### **Teacher Feedback**

Faculty members also provided positive feedback regarding the impact of educational coaching on student academic performance and behavior. A highlighted aspect was the improvement in the quality of student work submissions, as well as heightened classroom participation and engagement. This feedback suggests that educational coaching benefits students individually while enriching the overall learning environment, enhancing teacher-student interactions, and fostering a collaborative atmosphere.

In summary, study results confirm that educational coaching is an effective tool for improving academic performance, motivation, time management, emotional well-being, and interpersonal skills among International Trade

students. These findings suggest that implementing educational coaching across other academic programs could prove equally beneficial, contributing to holistic learning and student personal-professional development.

The positive impact of educational coaching across multiple areas underscores the importance of integrating this methodology into the university curriculum—not merely as a grade-enhancement strategy, but as a vehicle for promoting overall student well-being.

#### 4. Discussion

The results obtained in this investigation regarding the implementation of educational coaching among students in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar reveal key implications across academic and personal dimensions. Quantitative data analysis highlights a clear improvement in academic performance among coached students compared to non-participants. This improvement manifests in significantly higher grades as well as the development of essential soft skills such as time management, self-confidence, and motivation.

These findings align with previous literature demonstrating educational coaching's efficacy in boosting academic results. For instance, Aguilar and Rodríguez (2019) found that students participating in coaching programs not only improved grades but also developed greater self-confidence and resilience against academic obstacles. These results reinforce the notion that educational coaching impacts both short-term academic performance and long-term key competencies.

Educational coaching, by focusing on personalized accompaniment and holistic student growth, offers an approach transcending traditional instruction. Coaching is not confined to imparting technical or academic knowledge; it facilitates personal growth, enabling students to navigate academic and personal challenges more effectively. This distinctive characteristic renders educational coaching a highly valuable tool for comprehensive student development.

A prominent finding of this research is the enhancement in student motivation and commitment to their learning journey. Coached students reported higher intrinsic motivation and willingness to take ownership of their learning. This motivation boost translated into greater classroom participation and marked improvements in time and task management. This aligns with findings by Carrillo and Delgado (2020), who affirm that educational coaching is particularly effective in boosting intrinsic motivation, resulting in greater dedication and effort.

Another critical aspect observed is the impact on reducing academic stress and anxiety. Coaching sessions provided a safe environment where students could express concerns and receive emotional and academic support. Reduced stress allowed students to approach studies with a positive, proactive mindset, reflecting in superior performance. As Gómez and Pérez (2017) note, coaching provides effective stress management strategies, keeping students focused on academic goals without being overwhelmed by external pressures.

Regarding interpersonal skills, coached students reported significant improvements in effective communication with peers and faculty. Communication skills are fundamental in academia, facilitating teamwork and constructive professor-student relationships. According to García and Velasco (2019), educational coaching fosters social and communication skills essential for academic and professional success in today's world.

At the faculty level, positive impacts were also noted in teacher-student interactions. Participating faculty observed greater student willingness to engage actively and higher quality assignment submissions. This suggests educational coaching enriches classroom dynamics and fosters a collaborative environment, consistent with studies by Knight (2018).

However, despite positive outcomes, implementation challenges were identified. A primary hurdle was initial resistance from certain

students and faculty unfamiliar with coaching concepts or concerned about additional time requirements. These challenges emphasize the necessity of proper training for both students and faculty, alongside institutional support to embed coaching within the educational context.

## 5. Conclusion

Study results confirm that educational coaching is an effective strategy for enhancing academic performance and promoting comprehensive student development. Through coaching sessions, students in the International Trade program at the Universidad Popular del Cesar experienced significant grade improvements, enhanced time management, reduced stress, and strengthened interpersonal skills. These findings highlight the importance of integrating educational coaching into higher education for a more holistic, personalized learning experience.

Educational coaching proved effective not only in academic terms but also in equipping students with soft skills essential for personal and professional success. Sessions fostered confidence, resilience, motivation, and emotional support, enhancing overall well-being. At the institutional level, coaching enriched teaching-learning dynamics and fostered a proactive academic culture.

Addressing implementation challenges requires comprehensive training for faculty and students, as well as institutional support for curricular integration. Future research should pursue broader, longitudinal studies across diverse academic programs to evaluate long-term impacts and explore alternative coaching modalities (e.g., peer or group coaching). In conclusion, educational coaching stands as a promising strategy to transform university learning and empower students to reach their full potential.

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## 7. Declaración del autor

The author states that the manuscript is original and that there are no conflicts of interest to declare.