

Evaluating Quality and Trustworthiness in One-to-One Private Tutoring Services: A Case Study of The Swami Academy, Pune

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Abstract

This case study examines how parents and students rate one-to-one private tutoring at The Swami Academy, Pune, India. It draws on two summary outputs from a survey with a reported 48 respondents: a Pearson correlation matrix among 13 rating items (78 unique item pairs) and, for each item, the percentage of respondents who rated it 4 or 5 on an implied five-point scale. Respondent-level data were analysed. All 78 coefficients are positive, ranging from 0.53 to 0.96 (median 0.83); the four coefficients below 0.60 all involve punctuality and regularity. The share rating an item 4 or 5 was highest for tutor's friendliness and support and for tutor's behaviour and communication (75% each) and lowest for perceived improvement in the child's performance (48%), a gap of 27 percentage points. Twelve of the 13 items were rated 4 or 5 by more than half of the respondents. Perceived improvement nevertheless correlated strongly with teaching quality ($r = 0.90$), which shows that co-variation among ratings and the favourability of each rating are separate features of the data. The findings are descriptive. The sample is small and drawn from one academy, sampling details are unconfirmed, ratings are self-reported, three coefficients were reconciled from inconsistent source labels and remain provisional, and no independent measure of academic progress is available. The paper offers a bounded account of one provider's ratings and suggests that making academic progress more visible to families is a reasonable focus for improvement.

Keywords: private tutoring; one-to-one tutoring; perceived service quality; parent satisfaction; trust; descriptive case study; India

1. Introduction

Private supplementary tutoring, often called shadow education, forms a substantial part of the educational experience of many children worldwide (Bray, 2009). In India it has been documented as a growing presence alongside schooling. In urban Maharashtra, for example, the role of tutoring has been reported to expand from the lower to the higher grades and, in the final two school years, to appear to supplant rather than supplement mainstream schooling (Bhorkar & Bray, 2018). One-to-one tutoring is a particular form of this service. Its central promise is individual attention: explanations paced to one learner, doubts resolved as they arise, and practice matched to that learner's needs.

Families who choose a tutoring provider usually have limited information about the quality of what they are buying. Some features of the service can be judged directly by parents and students, such as the tutor's clarity, courtesy, punctuality and willingness to answer questions. Others, above all improvement in the child's

academic performance, develop slowly, depend on many influences besides tutoring, and are difficult to attribute to the service. A provider's ratings may therefore look different depending on whether they concern the service experience or its perceived results.

The present study asks a narrow question about one provider. When parents and students rate 13 aspects of one-to-one tutoring at The Swami Academy, Pune, how do the ratings move together, and what share of respondents rate each aspect 4 or 5? The paper describes both patterns, relates them cautiously to two established frameworks (SERVQUAL and expectation–confirmation theory), and draws practical suggestions for the academy. It does not test either framework. Trustworthiness is treated in a restricted, operational sense, as perceived competent and courteous conduct together with willingness to recommend; the survey did not measure trust directly.

2. Theoretical Background and Literature Review

2.1 Perceived service quality and SERVQUAL

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) proposed that customers judge service quality along five dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) and developed SERVQUAL to measure the gap between what customers expect and what they perceive. The dimensions translate readily to tutoring. Reliability corresponds to dependable, regular sessions; responsiveness to prompt help with doubts; assurance to the tutor's knowledge and courtesy and the confidence these inspire; and empathy to individual care and attention. Tangibles, such as facilities and materials, matter less in a one-to-one format and are not represented among the 13 items examined here.

Two limits on the use of SERVQUAL in this paper should be stated plainly. First, the survey summaries contain perception ratings only, with no expectation measures, so SERVQUAL gap scores cannot be computed. Second, the 13 items were not designed or analysed as SERVQUAL dimensions; any mapping between items and dimensions (Table 2) is an indicative reading aid, not a validated measurement structure. SERVQUAL is therefore used here as a vocabulary for describing service features, not as a model under test.

2.2 Expectation–confirmation theory and satisfaction

Oliver (1980) proposed that satisfaction arises from the comparison between expectations and perceived performance, and that satisfaction in turn shapes later attitudes and intentions. Bhattacharjee (2001) adapted this logic to explain continued use of information systems, with satisfaction depending on confirmation of expectations and on perceived usefulness, and continuance intention depending on satisfaction. For tutoring, the theory suggests why different aspects of a service might be judged differently: aspects that are easy to observe can be checked against expectations quickly, whereas aspects that need time to show results may remain unconfirmed for longer. The survey summaries contain no expectation or confirmation measures. The theory therefore offers an interpretive lens only, and nothing in this paper demonstrates expectation confirmation.

2.3 Teaching quality, teacher–student relationships and personalised tutoring

A systematic review of 31 studies published between 2015 and 2024 identified teaching quality, teacher–student relationships, personalised services, facilities, cost and parental involvement as key factors in satisfaction with private tutoring, and proposed feedback mechanisms and stronger parental involvement among the strategies for improving satisfaction (Shi et al., 2025). The review also noted research gaps, particularly for rural areas and for longitudinal effects. These statements are drawn from the review's abstract; its full text was not examined.

Evidence from school settings points to a distinction that matters for interpretation. In a metaanalysis of 99 studies covering preschool to high school, Roorda et al. (2011) found that the quality of affective teacher–student relationships was associated with student engagement at a medium-to-large level and with achievement at a small-to-medium level. That evidence concerns schools rather than tutoring and is correlational, so it cannot be transferred directly to a tutoring academy. It does, however, illustrate why a favourable relationship with a teacher and a perception of academic gain should be treated as related but separate judgements.

2.4 Trustworthiness, communication and willingness to recommend

In SERVQUAL, assurance covers the knowledge and courtesy of staff and their ability to convey trust and confidence (Parasuraman et al., 1988). Parents' ratings of a tutor's behaviour and communication, and of the friendliness and support they receive, are therefore reasonable indicators of trust-related service attributes. Willingness to recommend a provider is a behavioural intention. Service-quality research has linked perceived quality to behavioural intentions of this kind (Zeithaml et al., 1996), but an intention to recommend is neither evidence of trust itself nor of actual recommendation or continued enrolment. In this paper, "trustworthiness" refers only to the combination of ratings on tutor behaviour and communication (I6), friendliness and support (I9), and recommendation to other parents (I7).

2.5 Service experience and perceived educational outcomes

Perceived improvement in a child's performance is a subjective judgement. It may reflect marks, teacher comments at school, the child's confidence, or the parent's own expectations, and it is shaped by influences other than tutoring. Without a baseline, an independent performance measure or a measure of prior expectations, a rating of perceived improvement cannot be read as evidence of instructional effectiveness. The same holds for the related item on motivation and confidence. This paper therefore distinguishes service-experience items from perceived-outcome items throughout, and does not treat either as a measure of learning gain.

2.6 The Indian one-to-one context and the contribution of this case

The sources consulted for this paper that concern India (for example, Bhorkar & Bray, 2018) address the scale of tutoring and its relationship with schooling rather than parents' and students' ratings of an individual provider. Within those limits, a transparent description of one academy's ratings fills a modest gap: it shows both how the ratings co-vary and how favourably each aspect is rated, using a small set of items that parents and students can actually observe. It cannot show why the ratings take these values, and it cannot be generalised beyond the 48 respondents.

3. Research Gap, Objectives, Research Questions and Descriptive Propositions

3.1 Research gap

The gap addressed is practical and bounded. Studies of satisfaction with tutoring identify likely drivers, but the sources consulted for the Indian one-to-one setting give limited provider-level evidence that reports, for the same set of rating items, both the pattern of associations among the items and the share of respondents who rate each item favourably. The survey summaries available for The Swami Academy provide exactly these two displays, and the objectives below were written to be answerable from them and from nothing more.

3.2 Objectives

- O1.** To describe the pattern and strength of associations among 13 parent and student ratings of one-to-one tutoring at The Swami Academy.
- O2.** To report the percentage of respondents who rate each item 4 or 5 and to identify the highest- and lowest-rated items.

O3. To compare the ranking of favourable-rating shares with the pattern of associations, in particular for relational and process items relative to perceived improvement in the child's performance.

3.3 Research questions

RQ1. How strong are the correlations among the 13 rating items, and which item pairs are most and least strongly associated?

RQ2. What percentage of respondents rate each item 4 or 5, and which items are rated relatively more and less favourably?

RQ3. How do the most strongly associated items compare with the most and least favourably rated items?

3.4 Descriptive propositions

Because no hypothesis tests are reported, three directional expectations are stated as descriptive propositions rather than hypotheses. They are checked against the observed values in Section 6.4 and are not tested statistically. The paper does not claim that they were specified before the summary outputs were inspected.

P1. Items that describe closely related facets of tutor performance (overall rating, teaching quality, concept clarity) will show strong positive correlations.

P2. Relational and trust-related items (friendliness and support, behaviour and communication, recommendation) will have relatively high shares rating 4 or 5.

P3. The item on perceived improvement in the child's performance will have a relatively low share rating 4 or 5.

3.5 Alignment of objectives, questions, analyses and findings

Table 1 summarises how each objective and research question maps onto an analysis and the section in which it is reported.

Table 1. Alignment of objectives, research questions, analyses and findings

Obj.	RQ	Analysis	Reported in	Principal finding (descriptive)
O1	RQ1	Pearson correlation matrix, 13 × 13 (78 unique pairs), as supplied	Section 6.2; Figure 2; Table 4; Appendix A	All 78 coefficients positive (0.53–0.96; median 0.83); 50 of 78 at or above 0.80; the four coefficients below 0.60 all involve punctuality and regularity (I4).
O2	RQ2	Percentage of respondents rating each item 4 or 5, ranked	Section 6.3; Figure 3; Table 5	Range 48%–75%; highest for I9 and I6 (75% each), lowest for I5 (48%); 12 of 13 items above 50%.
O3	RQ3	Descriptive comparison of the ranking with the correlation pattern (no further statistics)	Sections 6.4, 7.3 and 7.4	Relational items I9, I6 and I7 rank highest and perceived improvement (I5) lowest, a 27-point gap; yet I5 correlates 0.65–0.90 with the other items (0.90 with I2 and I3).

Note. I1–I13 are the item codes listed in Table 2. Findings are descriptive and are based on summary outputs for a reported n = 48.

4. Analytical Framework

The study uses a descriptive analytical framework, not a theoretical path model (Figure 1). Its central concept is perceived tutoring service quality and experience: the respondents' own evaluations of one-to-one tutoring at The Swami Academy, as expressed in 13 ratings on a five-point scale. The framework does three things. First, it organises the 13 items into four descriptive categories (Table 2): instructional delivery; interpersonal

conduct and service reliability; perceived progress and motivation; and overall evaluation and endorsement. Second, it shows that the items are examined through two complementary analyses:

Component 1, the correlation matrix, describes which ratings tend to move together, and Component 2, the share rating each item 4 or 5, describes how favourably each aspect is rated. Third, it places SERVQUAL and expectation–confirmation theory beside the analysis as interpretive lenses.

The four categories are an analytic grouping assigned by reading the item content. They were not derived from factor analysis, and no claim is made that the items measure four validated dimensions. Lines in Figure 1 indicate organisation and analysis, not causal or predictive paths. No latent constructs, mediation or direction of influence are specified, because the available summaries could not support them.

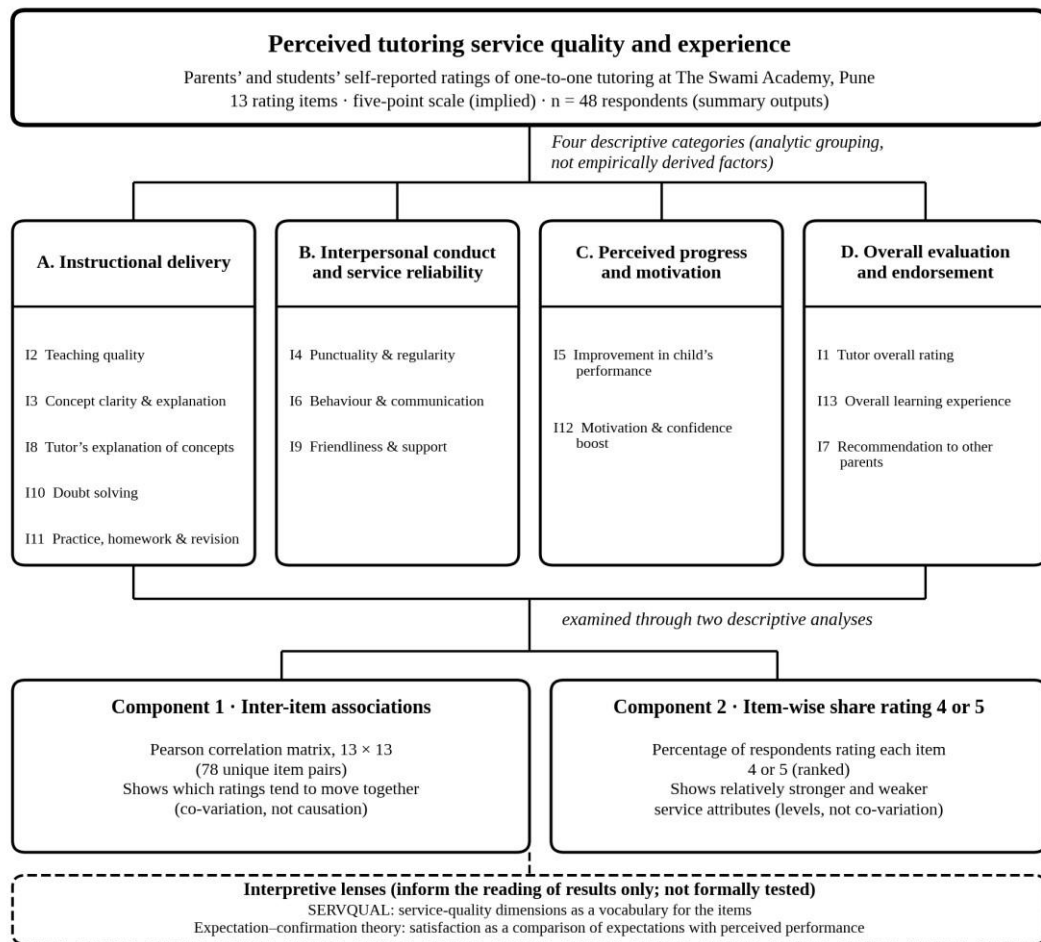


Figure 1. Descriptive analytical framework for perceived tutoring service quality and experience

Note. Categories are the authors' descriptive grouping and are not empirically derived factors. SERVQUAL and expectation–confirmation theory inform interpretation only and were not tested. I1–I13 are the item codes in Table 2.

Table 2. Rating items, descriptive categories and indicative SERVQUAL reference

Code	Item (label as in the source figures)	Descriptive category	Indicative SERVQUAL reference (not tested)
I1	Tutor's overall rating	D. Overall evaluation and endorsement	Overall judgement
I2	Tutor's teaching quality	A. Instructional delivery	Assurance (competence)
I3	Concept clarity & explanation	A. Instructional delivery	Assurance (competence)
I4	Punctuality & regularity	B. Interpersonal conduct and service reliability	Reliability
I5	Improvement in child's performance	C. Perceived progress and motivation	Perceived outcome (outside SERVQUAL dimensions)
I6	Tutor's behaviour & communication	B. Interpersonal conduct and service reliability	Assurance (courtesy)
I7	Recommendation to other parents	D. Overall evaluation and endorsement	Behavioural intention
I8	How well does the tutor explain concepts?	A. Instructional delivery	Assurance (competence)

I9	Tutor's friendliness & support	B. Interpersonal conduct and service reliability	Empathy
I10	Doubt solving by tutor	A. Instructional delivery	Responsiveness
I11	Practice, homework & revision	A. Instructional delivery	Service content (no direct dimension)
I12	Motivation & confidence boost	C. Perceived progress and motivation	Perceived outcome (outside SERVQUAL dimensions)
I13	Overall learning experience	D. Overall evaluation and endorsement	Overall judgement

Note. Item wording and scale anchors were not available (Section 5.3); labels are those printed in the source figures. Items I3 and I8 appear to overlap in content. The SERVQUAL column is an indicative reading aid; tangibles are not represented.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research design and unit of analysis

The study is a single-academy descriptive case study based on survey-summary outputs. The case is The Swami Academy, Pune, and the unit of analysis is the respondent (a parent or student) who rated the academy's one-to-one tutoring. The reported sample is $n = 48$. The study is cross-sectional and descriptive. It does not test hypotheses, estimate models or compare groups.

5.2 Study setting and geographical coverage

The summary materials document that respondents were drawn from five localities in Pune: Baner, Koregaon Park, Dattawadi, Swargate, Wagholi and Kharadi.

5.3 Sample, instrument and reporting status

Table 3 lists what the materials do and do not report. Details that are unavailable are marked as not reported and are not assumed. In particular, the paper does not state or imply a sampling technique, response rate, data-collection period, respondent demographics, consent procedure or ethics approval.

Table 3. Study details and reporting status

Detail	Status in the available materials
Sample size	$n = 48$ reported (parents and students combined)
Respondent type	Parents and students; the split between them is not reported
Localities	Five Pune localities listed (Section 5.2); numbers per locality not reported
Number of items and scale	13 rating items; a five-point scale is implied, with 4 or 5 treated as satisfied

The 13 items are listed in Table 2: tutor's overall rating (I1), teaching quality (I2), concept clarity and explanation (I3), punctuality and regularity (I4), improvement in the child's performance (I5), behaviour and communication (I6), recommendation to other parents (I7), the tutor's explanation of concepts (I8), friendliness and support (I9), doubt solving (I10), practice, homework and revision (I11), motivation and confidence boost (I12), and overall learning experience (I13). The summary outputs imply a five-point scale on which ratings of 4 or 5 count as satisfied; the anchors (for example, 1 = very dissatisfied) are not stated.

The term “satisfied share” is used below for the percentage of respondents rating an item 4 or 5, and it should be read as that convention, not as a separate measure of satisfaction.

5.4 Data source, analysis and scope

Two summary outputs were analysed: a heatmap of Pearson correlation coefficients among the 13 items, and a bar chart of the percentage of respondents who rated each item 4 or 5. These outputs derive from a survey workbook that was not available when this paper was prepared. All values were therefore transcribed from the output figures and checked for internal consistency: the 13×13 layout and diagonal; symmetry across all 78 item pairs; the stated range; the ranking and the percentages; and whether each percentage corresponds to a whole number of respondents out of 48. Three cells of the heatmap failed the symmetry check. Their treatment is described in Section 6.1, and they are marked † in Figure 2 and Appendix A.

Correlations are reported as supplied, the matrix is treated as symmetric, and diagonal entries equal 1.00. Satisfied shares are reported as percentages and ranked. Because the ratings are ordinal and respondent-level data were not available, it is not known whether Pearson coefficients were computed on complete cases, how missing values were handled, or how the coefficients would compare with rank-based alternatives. No standard errors, p-values or confidence intervals were reported, and none is calculated here; the coefficients are treated as descriptive associations, not as tests of significance. For context only, a single two-tailed test at the 5% level with 48 complete observations would require an absolute coefficient of about

0.28. This figure is not used for inference, because 78 coefficients are examined, the ratings are ordinal and the number of complete pairs is unknown.

The summary outputs do not permit respondent-level reliability analysis (for example, Cronbach’s alpha), factor analysis, comparisons by respondent type, locality or enrolment length, regression, or structural modelling. None was attempted.

6. Results

6.1 Data checks

The correlation matrix has 13 rows and 13 columns with matching row and column labels, a unit diagonal and 78 unique off-diagonal pairs. Three cells of the heatmap did not match their mirror cells. The punctuality–motivation cell (I4–I12) was labelled 0.34 above the diagonal and 0.54 below it; the behaviour–friendliness cell (I6–I9) was labelled 0.84 above the diagonal and 0.34 below it; and the friendliness–overall learning experience cell (I9–I13) was labelled 0.67 above the diagonal and 0.87 below it. In each case the two labels differ by a single digit. The mirror values (0.54, 0.84 and 0.87) are used throughout and are marked † as provisional.

The evidence for each choice differs in strength. For I4–I12 and I6–I9, the 0.34 labels would be inconsistent with the range of 0.53 to 0.96 stated for the matrix, so they are treated as display errors. For I9–I13, both labels fall within the stated range; the choice of 0.87 rests on the shading of the cell in the source heatmap and is the least firmly supported of the three. All three values require confirmation against the original workbook.

The satisfied shares are 75%, 75%, 73%, 71%, 69% (five items), 65%, 58%, 56% and 48%. Each corresponds to exactly one whole number of respondents out of 48 (36, 36, 35, 34, 33, 31, 28, 27 and 23), which is consistent with $n = 48$. These counts are inferred from the percentages and were not reported.

6.2 Associations among rating items

All 78 off-diagonal coefficients are positive (Figure 2; Appendix A). They range from 0.53 to 0.96, with a median of 0.83 and a mean of 0.81. Fifty of the 78 coefficients are 0.80 or higher, 18 are 0.90 or higher, and 74 are 0.60 or higher. The strongest association is between the tutor’s overall rating and teaching quality ($r =$

0.96), followed by the tutor's explanation of concepts and doubt solving ($r = 0.95$) and recommendation to other parents and overall learning experience ($r = 0.93$). Four pairs are at 0.91, including teaching quality with concept clarity (Table 4).

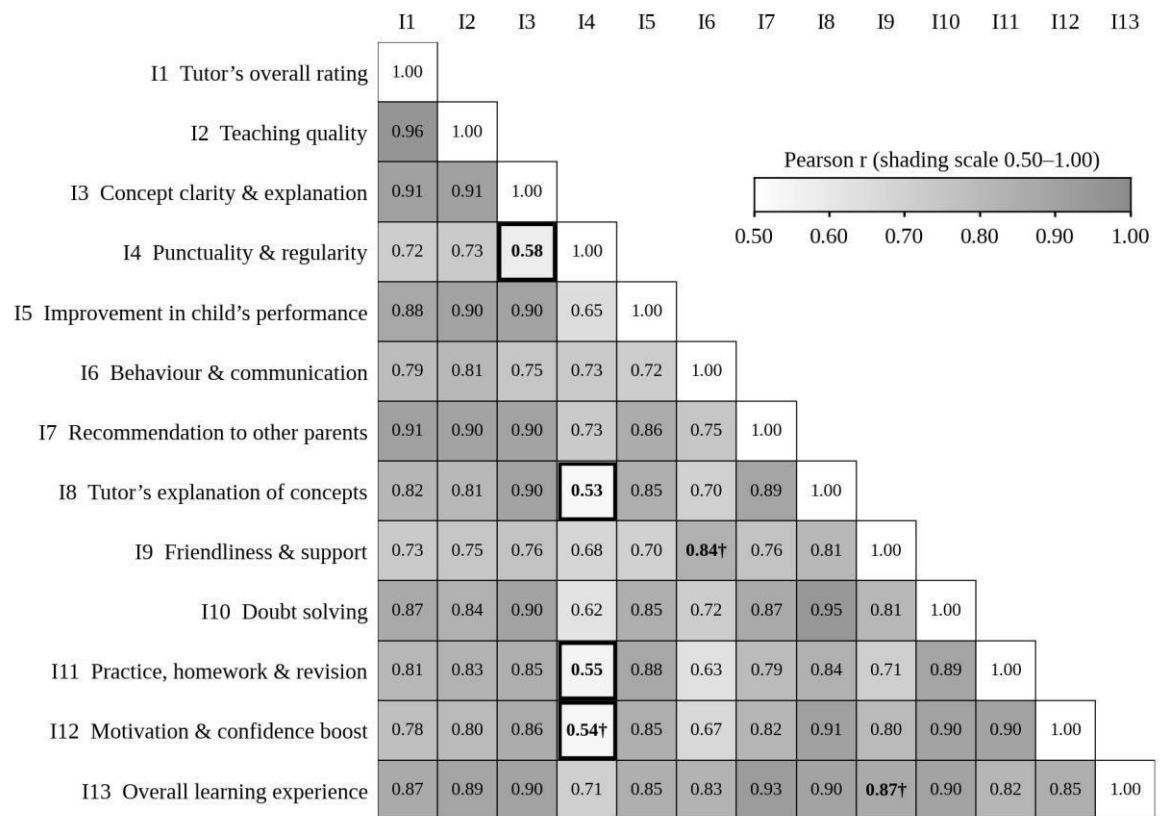


Figure 2. Pearson correlation coefficients among the 13 rating items (reported $n = 48$)

Note. Lower triangle shown; the matrix is symmetric and the diagonal equals 1.00. Darker shading indicates a stronger positive correlation; the scale runs from 0.50 to 1.00 because the smallest coefficient is 0.53 and no coefficient is negative. Cells with a heavy border and bold values are below 0.60 and all involve I4. † marks the three provisional values described in Section 6.1 (see Appendix A).

The weakest associations all involve punctuality and regularity (I4). The four coefficients below 0.60 are I4 with the tutor's explanation of concepts (0.53), motivation and confidence boost (0.54), practice, homework and revision (0.55) and concept clarity (0.58). I4 has the lowest average correlation with the other items (0.65, range 0.53–0.73). When I4 is set aside, the lowest of the remaining 66 coefficients is 0.63, between behaviour and communication and practice, homework and revision. Behaviour and communication (I6) and friendliness and support (I9) have the next lowest average correlations (0.75 and 0.77), compared with 0.79–0.86 for the other items.

Table 4. Strongest and weakest item pairs among the 78 correlations

Pair	Items	r	Group
I1–I2	Tutor's overall rating – Teaching quality	0.96	Strongest
I8–I10	Tutor's explanation of concepts – Doubt solving	0.95	Strongest
I7–I13	Recommendation to other parents – Overall learning experience	0.93	Strongest
I1–I3	Tutor's overall rating – Concept clarity & explanation	0.91	Strongest
I1–I7	Tutor's overall rating – Recommendation to other parents	0.91	Strongest

I2–I3	Teaching quality – Concept clarity & explanation	0.91	Strongest
I8–I12	Tutor’s explanation of concepts – Motivation & confidence boost	0.91	Strongest
I4–I8	Punctuality & regularity – Tutor’s explanation of concepts	0.53	Weakest
I4–I12	Punctuality & regularity – Motivation & confidence boost	0.54†	Weakest
I4–I11	Punctuality & regularity – Practice, homework & revision	0.55	Weakest
I3–I4	Concept clarity & explanation – Punctuality & regularity	0.58	Weakest
I4–I10	Punctuality & regularity – Doubt solving	0.62	Weakest
I6–I11	Behaviour & communication – Practice, homework & revision	0.63	Weakest

Note. All seven pairs at 0.91 or above are shown (four are tied at 0.91). The weakest pairs are those below 0.65 plus the next lowest pair outside I4. † Provisional value (Section 6.1). Coefficients are descriptive; no significance tests were reported.

6.3 Share of respondents rating each item 4 or 5

The share rating an item 4 or 5 ranges from 48% to 75% (Figure 3; Table 5). Friendliness and support (I9) and behaviour and communication (I6) are highest at 75% each, followed by recommendation to other parents (73%) and the tutor’s overall rating (71%). Five items are tied at 69%: overall learning experience, teaching quality, concept clarity and explanation, doubt solving, and the tutor’s explanation of concepts. Punctuality and regularity is at 65%, motivation and confidence boost at 58%, and practice, homework and revision at 56%. Perceived improvement in the child’s performance (I5) is lowest at 48%, which is 27 percentage points below the highest items and the only item below 50%.

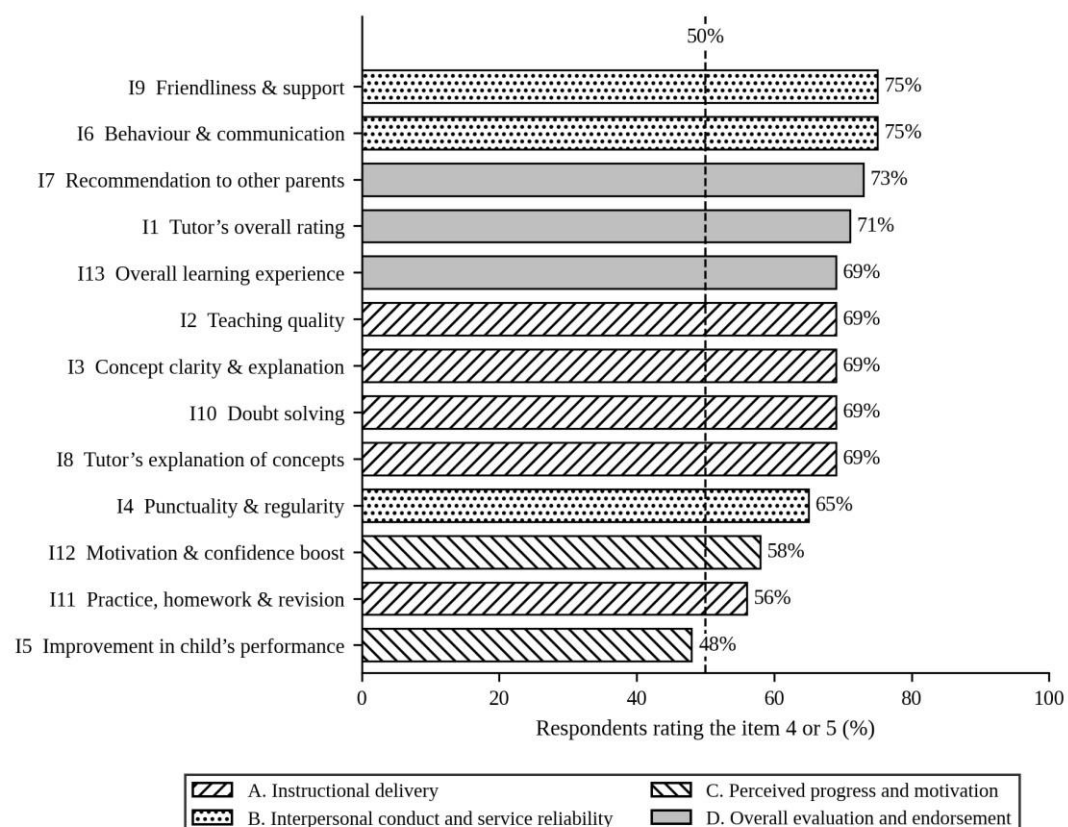


Figure 3. Percentage of respondents rating each item 4 or 5, ranked (reported n = 48)

Note. Bar lengths equal the reported percentages. The dashed line marks 50%. Fill patterns show the descriptive categories of Table 2 and carry no statistical meaning. Tied items are listed in the order of the source chart.

Table 5. Ranked percentage of respondents rating each item 4 or 5

Rank	Code	Item	% rating 4 or 5	Implied respondents (of 48)*
1=	I9	Tutor's friendliness & support	75%	36
1=	I6	Tutor's behaviour & communication	75%	36
3	I7	Recommendation to other parents	73%	35
4	I1	Tutor's overall rating	71%	34
5=	I13	Overall learning experience	69%	33
5=	I2	Tutor's teaching quality	69%	33
5=	I3	Concept clarity & explanation	69%	33
5=	I10	Doubt solving by tutor	69%	33
5=	I8	How well does the tutor explain concepts?	69%	33
10	I4	Punctuality & regularity	65%	31
11	I12	Motivation & confidence boost	58%	28
12	I11	Practice, homework & revision	56%	27
13	I5	Improvement in child's performance	48%	23

6.4 Observed pattern relative to the descriptive propositions

The observed values are consistent with all three propositions. For P1, the correlations among overall rating, teaching quality and concept clarity are 0.96, 0.91 and 0.91. For P2, friendliness and support, behaviour and communication, and recommendation occupy the first three places in the ranking (75%, 75% and 73%). For P3, perceived improvement has the lowest share (48%). This consistency is descriptive.

7. Discussion

7.1 Overall pattern of associations

The ratings of the 13 aspects move together. Every coefficient is positive, and more than half of them are 0.80 or higher. One reading is that respondents form a general impression of the academy and let it colour their ratings of individual aspects. Another is that the aspects are genuinely closely linked when the same tutor delivers all of them in the same setting. The summary outputs cannot separate these explanations, which would require respondent-level data and a suitable design. The very high coefficient between the two explanation

items (I3 and I8, 0.90) may also reflect overlapping item content, although the wording was not available to confirm this.

7.2 Strongest and weakest associations

The strongest associations link the overall judgement items (I1, I13, I7) with the items on teaching quality and explanation (I2, I3, I8), and link explanation with doubt solving (I8–I10, 0.95). This is what would be expected if respondents' overall impressions were closely tied to their experience of the instructional interaction. The weakest associations all involve punctuality and regularity. A plausible reading is that regularity of sessions is experienced as a somewhat separate matter from the quality of explanation, but the coefficients remain moderate to strong (0.53–0.73), and the data do not show whether punctuality is a distinct dimension of service.

It is also noteworthy that two of the three most favourably rated items, friendliness and support (I9) and behaviour and communication (I6), have lower average correlations with the other items than most items do. Favourable interpersonal ratings were thus less tightly tied to the ratings of instruction than the instructional items were to one another.

7.3 Highest and lowest satisfied shares

Twelve of the 13 items were rated 4 or 5 by more than half of respondents, which is a positive result for the academy. The highest shares were for friendliness and support, behaviour and communication, and recommendation. Four of the five instructional-delivery items (teaching quality, concept clarity, the tutor's explanation of concepts and doubt solving) cluster at 69%; the fifth, practice, homework and revision (I11), is among the lowest at 56%. The other lowest shares were for perceived improvement (48%) and motivation and confidence boost (58%).

The shares also show the limits of a 4-or-5 threshold. Even for the highest-rated items, a quarter of respondents (12 of 48, if the inferred counts are right) did not give a rating of 4 or 5, and the summaries do not say whether they gave lower ratings or did not answer.

7.4 Relational and process perceptions versus perceived improvement

The 27-percentage-point gap between the top-ranked relational items and perceived improvement is the main contrast in the data. Several explanations are compatible with it. Relational and process features are observed directly and repeatedly in every session, whereas improvement takes time to appear and is hard to attribute. Respondents may also have held higher expectations for improvement than for friendliness, or the improvement they saw may have been modest. The survey summaries contain no expectation measure, no baseline and no independent performance data, so these explanations cannot be distinguished. The schoolbased evidence that affective relationships relate more strongly to engagement than to achievement (Roorda et al., 2011) points in a similar direction, but it concerns a different setting and is offered only as context.

The correlation results add a useful qualification. Ratings of perceived improvement correlate strongly with ratings of teaching quality and concept clarity (both 0.90), and between 0.65 and 0.90 with all other items. Respondents who rated teaching highly therefore tended to rate improvement highly too, even though fewer respondents gave improvement a 4 or 5. Correlation describes how ratings vary together across respondents, whereas the satisfied share describes the level of the ratings. The two should not be conflated, and the framework keeps them as separate components for that reason.

7.5 Relevance and limits of the theoretical interpretations

The items fit the SERVQUAL vocabulary reasonably well (Table 2), and the high ratings on conduct and communication are consistent with the assurance and empathy dimensions. However, no SERVQUAL gap scores or dimension structure were estimated, so the study neither validates nor tests SERVQUAL. The pattern of higher favourability for observable process features than for perceived improvement is compatible with an

expectation– confirmation account, but no expectations or confirmation were measured, so the study does not demonstrate expectation confirmation. High ratings on behaviour, communication and recommendation indicate favourable trust-related perceptions; they do not prove trustworthiness. Finally, willingness to recommend is an intention.

8. Implications

8.1 Theoretical and methodological implications

In one provider's ratings, strong co-variation among items can coexist with large differences in favourability between items. Studies that use batteries of rating items in tutoring should report both, and should avoid inferring from strong correlations that all aspects are rated equally well. Separating service-experience items from perceived-outcome items is also worth retaining in future instruments, ideally alongside an independent measure of academic progress. The very strong correlation between I3 and I8 suggests checking whether nearduplicate items add information.

8.2 Practical implications for The Swami Academy

The following suggestions are informed by the descriptive findings and by the broader literature on feedback and parental involvement (Shi et al., 2025). They are not proven causal interventions, and the present data cannot show how much any of them would change ratings.

- **Make progress visible.** Perceived improvement had the lowest share (48%). Short, regular progress notes after fixed intervals, shared practice records, and periodic parent–tutor reviews of recent work could make progress easier for families to see.
- **Build a feedback loop.** Collecting a brief rating on the same items at regular intervals, together with a baseline at enrolment, would allow the academy to track perceived improvement, practice routines (I11) and motivation (I12) over time, and to see whether changes in practice are followed by changes in ratings.
- **Strengthen parent–tutor communication.** Scheduled updates that link session content to agreed goals may help parents connect what happens in sessions with the progress they observe.
- **Monitor punctuality and regularity.** This item had a 65% share and the weakest associations with other items. Simple attendance and scheduling records would show whether it needs attention.
- **Maintain existing strengths.** Friendliness, behaviour, communication and recommendation were rated most favourably, and 12 of 13 items were rated 4 or 5 by more than half of respondents.

9. Limitations and Future Research

9.1 Limitations

The study has several limitations. It concerns a single academy and a reported sample of 48, so the findings cannot be generalised to other providers or families. The analysis is based on summary outputs, not respondent-level data, and the values were transcribed from figures because the underlying workbook was not available; three heatmap cells required reconciliation and remain provisional. Sampling method, recruitment, response rate, administration mode, data-collection period, respondent type, demographics, consent and ethics approval are not reported. Item wording and scale anchors are unknown, parents and students are combined in one sample, and the treatment of missing data is unknown.

All measures are self-reported perceptions. There is no independent measure of academic performance or enrolment, so the findings cannot be read as evidence of instructional effectiveness. The design is cross-sectional, so temporal order and causation cannot be established. The outputs do not permit respondent-level

reliability analysis, factor analysis, demographic comparisons or structural modelling, and no inferential statistics were reported.

9.2 Directions for future research

Future research should use complete respondent-level data, a transparent and documented sampling procedure, and validated or piloted measurement instruments with stated wording and anchors. It should record respondent type, subject, grade and length of enrolment so that subgroups can be compared; compute reliability and examine dimensionality; and consider rank-based coefficients for ordinal ratings. It should include additional tutoring providers to place one academy's pattern in context and, where feasible, add objective measures of academic progress and expectation measures. A longitudinal design that follows the same families would allow examination of whether willingness to recommend is followed by continued enrolment. **10.**

Conclusion

his study examined how parents and students evaluated 13 aspects of one-to-one tutoring at The Swami Academy, Pune, based on ratings from 48 respondents. The findings address all three research objectives by identifying the relationships among service attributes, the most and least favourably rated aspects, and the differences between these two patterns. All 78 item-pair correlations were positive, ranging from 0.53 to 0.96, with the strongest association between the tutor's overall rating and teaching quality ($r = 0.96$). Friendliness and support and behaviour and communication received the highest favourable ratings (75% each), whereas perceived improvement in the child's performance received the lowest (48%).

The study's central insight is that strong relationships between service ratings do not necessarily mean that every aspect of the tutoring experience is equally favourably perceived. Although perceived improvement was strongly correlated with teaching quality ($r = 0.90$), it remained the lowest-rated aspect, creating a 27-percentage-point gap between academic progress and the highest-rated relational attributes. This distinction highlights the importance of evaluating tutoring through both the quality of the service experience and respondents' perceptions of educational outcomes. A positive relationship with a tutor is valuable, but it should be complemented by clear communication about learning goals and progress. Overall, the study offers a focused contribution to understanding private tutoring by distinguishing favourable service experiences from perceived educational progress and identifying a practical direction for further improvement and research.

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Appendix A. Pearson correlation matrix among the 13 rating items

Reported n = 48. The matrix is symmetric; † marks the three provisional values described in Section 6.1. Item codes are defined in Table 2.

Table A1. Full 13 × 13 Pearson correlation matrix

Item	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8	I9	I10	I11	I12	I13
I1 Tutor's overall rating	1.00	0.96	0.91	0.72	0.88	0.79	0.91	0.82	0.73	0.87	0.81	0.78	0.87
I2 Teaching quality	0.96	1.00	0.91	0.73	0.90	0.81	0.90	0.81	0.75	0.84	0.83	0.80	0.89
I3 Concept clarity & explanation	0.91	0.91	1.00	0.58	0.90	0.75	0.90	0.90	0.76	0.90	0.85	0.86	0.90
I4 Punctuality & regularity	0.72	0.73	0.58	1.00	0.65	0.73	0.73	0.53	0.68	0.62	0.55	0.54†	0.71
I5 Improvement in child's performance	0.88	0.90	0.90	0.65	1.00	0.72	0.86	0.85	0.70	0.85	0.88	0.85	0.85
I6 Behaviour & communication	0.79	0.81	0.75	0.73	0.72	1.00	0.75	0.70	0.84†	0.72	0.63	0.67	0.83
I7 Recommendation to other parents	0.91	0.90	0.90	0.73	0.86	0.75	1.00	0.89	0.76	0.87	0.79	0.82	0.93
I8 Tutor's explanation of concepts	0.82	0.81	0.90	0.53	0.85	0.70	0.89	1.00	0.81	0.95	0.84	0.91	0.90
I9 Friendliness & support	0.73	0.75	0.76	0.68	0.70	0.84†	0.76	0.81	1.00	0.81	0.71	0.80	0.87†
I10 Doubt solving	0.87	0.84	0.90	0.62	0.85	0.72	0.87	0.95	0.81	1.00	0.89	0.90	0.90
I11 Practice, homework & revision	0.81	0.83	0.85	0.55	0.88	0.63	0.79	0.84	0.71	0.89	1.00	0.90	0.82
I12 Motivation & confidence boost	0.78	0.80	0.86	0.54†	0.85	0.67	0.82	0.91	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	0.85
I13 Overall learning experience	0.87	0.89	0.90	0.71	0.85	0.83	0.93	0.90	0.87†	0.90	0.82	0.85	1.00

Note. Values in bold are below 0.60 (all involve I4) or are provisional (†). Values were transcribed from the survey output figures (Section 5.4).