

Assessing School Through Parents' Voices: Construction And Validation Of The Parents' School Improvement Assessment Questionnaire (PSIAQ)

Sabitha Mani¹ and Greta D'Souza²

¹ Research Scholar, School of Education, CHRIST University, Bangalore.

² Associate Professor, School of Education, CHRIST University, Bangalore.

Abstract

Increasing attention has been directed toward understanding school improvement as a multidimensional and participatory process. Current researches have emphasised that parents contribute significantly to school improvement, but this factor remains insufficiently operationalised. To bridge this gap, this study aims to examine the factorial structure, reliability, and construct validity of a Parent-School Improvement Assessment Questionnaire (PSIAQ) that has been developed to identify important school improvement factors noticed by parents. The study sample consists of 282 parents of students enrolled in middle and secondary schools. The findings verify that for assessing parent-perceived school improvement dimensions, the PSIAQ is a valid instrument. The most prominent factors identify teaching and learning factors, supportive learning environment, leadership practices and community participation. Overall, the PSIAQ is recommended as a reliable tool for future research and practices aimed at strengthening parent-informed school improvement initiatives.

Introduction

A substantial body of recent global research highlights the critical importance of parental involvement in school education and its multifaceted impact on student outcomes (Boonk et al., 2022; Tan et al., 2020). Studies consistently show that parental involvement is positively associated with improved academic achievement, with students demonstrating higher performance when parents actively contribute to learning activities at home and school (Kim & Hill, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). International evidence indicates that students with higher levels of parental involvement significantly outperform those with low parental engagement across diverse educational contexts (Benner et al., 2021; Vega-Díaz, González-García, & de Labra, 2023; Castro et al., 2015). Furthermore, parental involvement has been found to enhance students' motivation, self-esteem, and attitude towards learning, contributing to overall academic success (Gubbels et al., 2020; Ng, Ng, & Pomerantz, 2021). Research also demonstrates that parental engagement plays a crucial role in shaping students' social and emotional development, including improved well-being and reduced behavioural issues (Wang et al., 2022; Piquart, 2023). Cross-national studies reveal that parental involvement contributes to and supports a positive school learning climate and inclusive educational practices (OECD, 2021; Goodall, 2022). In developing contexts, studies highlight that despite socio-economic challenges, parents view education as a pathway for upward mobility and actively strive to support their children's schooling (Boonk et al., 2020; Kim, 2022). Meta analyses further confirm that parental involvement significantly enhances student engagement, resilience, and creativity across diverse educational settings (Castro et al., 2023; Piquart, 2023). Additionally, collaborative partnerships between parents and schools have been shown to improve curriculum relevance and student behaviour (Goodall, 2022; Cheung & Pomerantz, 2021). Overall, the convergence of findings across recent international studies emphasise that parental involvement is a key determinant of academic success, holistic development, and effective school improvement (Benner et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2022).

Recent research strongly emphasises the importance of parental perspectives in shaping effective teaching and learning processes. Studies indicate that their perceptions of school environments and teaching practices significantly influence children's academic and developmental outcomes, particularly when aligned with teachers' expectations (Jensen et al., 2025). Research also highlights that mismatches between parental and teachers' perceptions can negatively affect students' social, cognitive, and behavioural development, accentuating the need for shared understanding (Jensen et al., 2025). Moreover, parental perspectives provide critical insights into school education, as parents' experiences, expectations and socio-cultural backgrounds shape how teaching strategies are received and supported at home (Nurse, 2023). Global studies reveal that effective teaching improves when schools actively incorporate parental voice into communication and decision-making processes, strengthening home-school partnerships (Monfrance et al., 2024). In addition, research on diverse educational contexts shows that parental perspectives help educators to design more responsive and context-sensitive pedagogies, especially in multilingual and multicultural settings (Rivera et al., 2024). In general,

the literature demonstrates that integrating parental perspectives is essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness, improving student engagement, and fostering holistic learning outcomes across global educational systems.

Similarly, recent research highlights that parental perspectives play a vital role in shaping a positive environment that supports sustained school improvement. Studies show that when schools actively integrate parents' views, they are better able to create inclusive, safe, and supportive learning climates that enhance student engagement and well-being (Gracia-Moya et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021; Simons-Morton et al., 2009). Furthermore, parental feedback has been found to contribute to the development of trust, transparency, and a collaborative culture within schools, which are key drivers of their academic achievement and effective improvement (Barger et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2024; Sivabalan et al., 2024; Goodall & Vorhaus, 2011). Emerging evidence highlights that parental perspectives are instrumental in influencing school leadership practices and decision-making. Research indicates that school leaders who actively seek and respond to parental inputs demonstrate more adaptive, responsive and context-sensitive leadership approaches for a sustainable school system (Erkenbrack, 2025; Peng et al., 2026; Harris & Jones, 2022). Moreover, incorporating parental voice into leadership processes has been linked to enhanced accountability, distributed leadership, and stronger home-school partnerships that drive sustainable improvement outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2020; Pont, 2020). Thus, the literature suggests that recognising and embedding parental perspectives within the school environment and leadership practices is essential to achieve meaningful and long-term school improvement (Harris & Jones, 2022; Shen et al., 2020). Additionally, studies emphasise the critical role of parental opinions in strengthening community participation as a driver of school improvement, together with the learning environment and school leadership. Studies indicate that when parents' voices are actively incorporated into community-level educational initiatives, schools are better able to build meaningful partnerships with local stakeholders, thereby enhancing collective responsibility for student outcomes (Ishimaru et al., 2020; Omariba, 2025; Jones & Palikara, 2023; Warren et al., 2009). Besides, parental perspectives have been shown to facilitate culturally responsive community engagement, enabling schools to align educational practices with local values and expectations (Paccaud et al., 2021; Ishimaru & Takahashi, 2017; Greenberg et al., 2020). Research also highlights that parents' insights contribute to mobilising community resources and social capital, which in turn supports sustained school development and innovation (Maier et al., 2021; Hill, 2022). In addition, integrating parental opinion within community participation frameworks fosters the greatest trust and shared decision-making between schools and communities (Goodall, 2023; Epstein et al., 2020). Generally, the literature highlights that valuing parental perspective in community engagement is essential for building collaborative ecosystems that promote long-term and contextually relevant school improvement (Pattison et al., 2025).

Recent studies highlight that while parental engagement is strongly associated with student outcomes, there is insufficient conceptual and empirical integration of parental perspectives in shaping school environment, leadership practices, and community participation within the unified framework (Goodall, 2022; Barger et al., 2019; Kim, 2022; Cosso et al., 2022). This fragmentation is further evident in meta-analyses, which call for more holistic and multidimensional approaches that move beyond participation metrics to capture the transformative role of parents (Tan et al., 2019; Hall, 2020; Tan et al., 2025). Also, there is a notable lack of validated instruments that are contextually grounded in diverse educational settings, particularly in developing countries, where socio-cultural dynamics significantly influence parental engagement (Wang et al., 2022; Benner et al., 2021). So, a critical gap remains in the development of a comprehensive, context-sensitive instrument that captures parental contribution to school improvement in an integrated manner. Existing tools such as the Family Involvement Questionnaire, Parental School Involvement Questionnaire, and related scales primarily focus on measuring levels of involvement across home and school domains, with limited attention to how these dimensions collectively influence broader school improvement processes (Boonk et al., 2018; Hernandez-Padilla et al., 2023). Research also reliably points out the significant role of parental involvement in enhancing student achievement, attendance, and overall school effectiveness, particularly within the government schooling system (Peng et al., 2026; Jones & Palikara, 2023; Singh & Ranganathan, 2026), but empirical studies demonstrate that parental engagement contributes to improved self-regulated learning, classroom behaviour, and strengthened home school relationships, all of which are critical for school improvement (Varshney & Joshi, 2022; Sharma et al., 2026; Pillai & Sethurajkumr, 2022). Several instruments, such as the Parental Involvement Scale (PIS) and Parental Involvement Rating Scale (PIRS) have been developed to measure dimensions like parental encouragement, supervision, and participation in children's education (George and Jose, 2019). However, these tools are largely limited to assessing the extent of parental involvement at the individual or home level and do not adequately capture parents' perspectives on broader school improvement dimensions such as teaching learning processes, school environment, leadership practices, and community participation (Sharma, 2024; Singh & Mahajan, 2021).

This indicates a lack of comprehensive, multidimensional, and validated instruments that integrate parental voice into systematic school improvement frameworks (NCERT, 2021).

To bridge these gaps, the present study makes a significant contribution by proposing a comprehensive Parent School Improvement Assessment Questionnaire (PSIAQ) that integrates parental perspectives across teaching, learning, school environment, leadership, and community participation, thereby offering a theoretically grounded and empirically testable framework for global application. By advancing a multidimensional and context-responsive instrument, it contributes to international literature by bridging the gap between parental involvement and systematic school improvement, and provides a robust tool for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, aiming to enhance educational quality and equity worldwide (Morales-Castillo et al., 2023; Goodall, 2022). It aims to incorporate parental perspective across key domains of school functioning, thereby offering a contextually relevant and theoretically strong tool to support evidence-based school improvement and contribute to the global educational research landscape.

Specifically, the aims of study are: (a) to examine the factorial structure of PSIAQ, (b) to establish its convergent and discriminant validity in relation to theoretically relevant constructs, and (c) to identify the dominant school improvement dimensions as perceived by parents, based on their self-reported responses, in line with contemporary stakeholders and informed school improvement frameworks (OECD, 2020; Sheldon & Turner-Vorbeck, 2019).

Method

Validated questionnaires help to measure complex educational development outcomes, evaluate educational development initiatives and their outcomes within teaching and learning environments (Baig et al., 2021). Educational scales are commonly developed through multistage procedures involving item generation, expert validation, pilot testing and statistical validation (Teresi et al., 2022; Abulela, 2023).

The authors drew up questionnaires to examine the factorial structure of the PSIAQ, by administering it to a diverse sample of parents of middle school and secondary school students.

Instrument development studies typically employ exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis to establish construct validity and reliability of the scale (Dorotea et al., 2023). Validation ensures that instruments accurately measure educational constructs through evidence of reliability and validity (Qin et al., 20224).

Participants

In the first phase, item generation was done through extensive literature review and the face validity of the questionnaire was conducted by five experts. After expert validation, six items were removed from a total of 32 items, while 26 items were available for pilot study. The sample comprises 282 parents of students enrolled in private schools, drawn from suburban areas of Punjab. Of the total participants, 194 are females and 88 are males. The parents' age ranges from 28 to 63 years, with a mean age of 59 (SD = 8.75). With regard to their children's educational level, 173 (61%) parents' children were attending middle school, while 109 (38%) had children enrolled in secondary education. Additionally, the duration of parents' engagement with the school, measured by the number of years their children attended, range from minimum to maximum years, with a mean of 7 (SD = 1.83).

Data Collection and Procedure

The PSIAQ was designed to capture key dimensions of school improvement from the parental perspective. It consisted of 26 items organised into four factors and qualitative items were excluded for factor analyses. The items reflected core domains identified in contemporary school improvement and family-school collaboration literature.

Specifically, the questionnaire assessed on the basis of the different domains included in it: learning environment with 8 items, e.g. what is your opinion regarding the quality of school classrooms? Teaching and Learning practices with 4 items (e.g. What is your ranking on teaching methods used in the class), School Leadership with 9 items (e.g., Did you contribute to policy making), and Community Participation (4 items, e.g., Are you informed about changes that occur in school on a regular basis). The complete instrument is presented in Appendix 1.

Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement, with each statement using yes/ no on the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1(very poor) to 5 (excellent). Higher score on each subscale indicates a more positive parental perceptions of school improvement practices within the corresponding domain

PSIAQ was subjected to evaluation, to examine the factorial structure, reliability, and construct validity. Preliminary analyses indicated that the proposed factor structure is empirically supported, and the internal

consistency of the subscales was found to be satisfactory, with McDonald's coefficient ranging from .60 to .86, consistent with recommended standards for newly developed educational measurement instruments.

A convenient sample of parents was recruited for the present study, conducted from November to December, 2025. Participation was entirely voluntary, and no incentives were offered. Parents were informed about the purpose and are assured that their responses would remain anonymous and would be used exclusively for research. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation. The data was collected using a hard copy of the PSIAQ, which was developed and administered directly. The questionnaire was distributed to parents and school communication channels, facilitating broad and efficient participation.

Findings

Factorial Structure and Reliability of the Scale

Preliminary Reliability and Internal Consistency

Internal consistency is examined prior to factor analyses procedures to assess the rationality of the proposed School Improvement Performance Scale. The overall instrument demonstrates strong internal consistency (McDonald's $\omega = .862$, indicating substantial shared variance among items. The qualitative questions included in the questionnaire are excluded from statistical analysis, because they generate descriptive, open-ended responses that do not produce numerical data suitable for quantitative, statistical techniques. Instead, such responses are intended to provide contextual data to complement the quantitative findings and aim to capture participants' perspectives in greater depth.

Dimension-specific reliability estimates reveal variability across domains. The learning environment subscale demonstrates accepted reliability ($\alpha = .768$), whereas Teaching and Learning ($\omega = .605$), School Leadership ($\omega = .635$), and Community Participation ($\omega = .640$) show marginal internal consistency. These findings suggest uneven interrelation across theoretically defined domains and require further structural examination.

Table 1 Internal consistency Reliability Estimates prior to Factor Analysis

Dimension	No. of Items	Reliability Coefficient	Value
Overall Scale	23	McDonald's ω	.862
Learning Environment	8	McDonald's ω	.768
Teaching and Learning	5	McDonald's ω	.605
School Leadership	6	McDonald's ω	.635
Community Participation	4	McDonald's ω	.640

Note. Reliability estimates are calculated prior to factor analytic procedures to evaluate the internal consistency of the proposed School Improvement Performance Scale. McDonald's (ω) is the primary reliability index for the overall scale and most subdimensions. It provides a more accurate estimate of internal consistency, when items exhibit differential contributions to the latent construct and congeneric measurement assumptions.

Assessment of Factorability

The suitability of the data for factor analysis is assessed using Bartlett's Test and the Kaiser -Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. Bartlett's test is significant, $\chi^2 (253) = 1550$, $p < .001$, indicating that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix. The KMO value is .865, showing sampling adequacy. These results confirm that the data are appropriate for factor analysis.

Table 2 Assessment of Factorability

Test	statistic	Df	P	Interpretation
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	1550	253	< .001	Significant
Kaiser Meyer Olkin (overall)	.865	—	—	Meritorious

Note. The significant Bartlett's Test ($p < .001$) indicates that the correlation matrix is appropriate for factor analysis. The KMO value of .865 reflects meritorious sampling adequacy and confirms sufficient shared variance among items. Degrees of freedom ($df = 253$) correspond to the number of unique inter-item correlations among the 26 items.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is conducted using the Minimum Residual (MinRes) extraction method with oblimin rotation to allow for correlated latent constructs. This pattern suggests the presence of strong general dimensions underlying the scale.

Several items demonstrate moderate to strong loadings ($\geq .60$), particularly within the domain of School Leadership and Teaching and Learning. However, a subset of items exhibit weak loadings ($< .40$) and high uniqueness values ($> .80$), indicating limited shared variance with the extracted factor. These findings point to the presence of a strong principal construct, while also suggesting that certain indicators may not function optimally within a unidimensional structure.

The EFA results thus provide provisional evidence for a dominant general factor, reflecting overall school improvement capacity, while simultaneously highlighting areas requiring confirmatory validation.

Table 3 Exploratory Factor Analysis Loadings

Item	Factor 1	Uniqueness
The quality of school classrooms (LE1)	.582	.662
The students having access to textbooks (LE2)	.659	.566
Providing each student with access to a high quality desk and chair (LE3)	.584	.659
Availability of a library for students (LE4)	.611	.626
The quality of books available in the library for students (LE5)	.567	.679
The quality and hygienity of toilets for girls and boys (LE6)	.371	.863
Safety of students in the school campus (LE7)	.363	.868
Satisfaction level regarding the co-curricular activities in the school (LE8)	.636	.595
Satisfaction with policy making in school (SL1)	.459	.789
Effectiveness of school leadership in handling everyday activities (SL2)	.720	.481
Efforts made by school leadership to minimize teacher absenteeism (SL3)	.697	.514
Ability of school leadership to manage school finances transparently (SL4)	.659	.565
Teacher student ration in the classroom (TL1)	.337	.887
Teaching method used in the classroom (TL2)	.699	.512
Satisfaction regarding homework given to students (TL3)	.366	.866
Appropriate correspondence between teachers and parents (TL4)	.681	.537
Information about changes that occur in the school on a regular basis (CP1)	.334	.888
Satisfaction with the methods school uses to communicate with the parents (CP2)	.417	.826

Note. Extraction method – Minimum Residual; Rotation – Oblimin to evaluate loading strength and uniqueness (suppress loadings $< .30$).

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To evaluate the structural validity of the scale, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted using Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) estimation due to the ordinal nature of the data. Robust standard errors and a mean and variance adjusted chi-square statistics were applied. The model converged successfully (N=238), with 47 free parameters estimated.

Although the chi-square test is statistically significant, $\chi^2 (119) = 208, p < .001$, an expected outcome given sample size sensitivity and alternative fit indices indicated an acceptable model fit. The model demonstrated strong comparative fit (CFI = .977; TLI = .974) and satisfactory absolute fit (RMSEA = .056, 90% CI [.04, .069]). The SRMR value (.094) indicated a modest residual but remained within a tolerable range for complex latent constructs.

Table 4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Recommended Threshold	Interpretation
χ^2 (df = 119)	208	-	Significant
CFI	.977	$\geq .95$	Excellent

TLI	.974	≥ .95	Excellent
RMSEA	.056	≤ .06	Good
90% CI	[.043, .069]	-	Acceptable
SRMR	.094	≤ .08	Marginal

Note: The model fit is evaluated using robust indices appropriate for DWLS estimation with ordinal data. Although the chi-square statistic is statistically significant, χ^2 (df = 119) = 208, $p < .001$, this outcome is common in moderate sample sizes. Incremental fit indices (CFI = .977; TLI = .974) exceeds .95, indicating excellent comparative fit. The RMSEA value (.056), with a 90% confidence interval of [.043, .069] shows a good absolute fit. The SRMR value (.094) slightly exceeds the conventional .08 criterion, indicating modest residual misfit; however, taken collectively, the indices support an acceptable and substantively sound measurement model. All standardised factor loadings are statistically significant ($p < .001$). Loadings range from moderate to strong ($\beta = .46-.71$), with the strongest contributions emerging from school leadership and teaching and learning indicators. These findings support the presence of a consistent, concealed construct representing school improvement performance.

Table 5 Standardised Factor Loadings

Item	Standardised Loading (β)	P
LE1	.575	< .001
LE2	.642	< .001
LE3	.592	< .001
LE4	.593	< .001
LE5	.562	< .001
LE6	.372	< .001
LE7	.636	< .001
LE8	.663	< .001
SL5	.470	< .001
SL6	.708	< .001
SL7	.684	< .001
SL9	.644	< .001
TL1	.467	< .001
TL2	.695	< .001
TL3	.457	< .001
TL4	.673	< .001
CP2	.694	< .001
CP4	.688	< .001

Note. All standardised factor loadings were statistically significant ($p < .001$), ranging from .37 to .71, indicating moderate to strong associations between the retained items and the latent School Improvement construct.

Post-Validation Reliability

Following confirmatory validation, the refined scale demonstrated enhanced internal consistency (McDonald's $\omega = .884$), indicating improved coherence after structural refinement. This suggests that the validated measurement model captures a stable and internally consistent representation of school improvement performance.

Table 6 Post-Validation Reliability

Statistic	Value	Threshold	Interpretation
McDonalds ω	.884	≥ .70	Strong
Composite Reliability (CR)	.88	≥ .70	Strong
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	.46	≥ .50 (preferred)	Acceptable (with high CR)

Note. The refined scale demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\omega = .884$) and composite reliability ($CR = .88$), both exceeding recommended thresholds. Although the AVE (.46) was below .50 criterion, it was considered acceptable given the high composite reliability, supporting adequate convergent validity of the construct.

Discussion

The present study was undertaken to examine the factor structure and psychometric properties of the PSIAQ, a newly developed instrument designed to assess school improvement dimensions from the parental perspective. Following a comprehensive series of statistical analyses, as reported above, the findings indicate that the PSIAQ reliability, as well as convergent and discriminant validity is strong. These results provide empirical support for the robustness of the PSIAQ as a measurement tool and confirm its capacity to capture key domains of school improvement as perceived by parents, thereby addressing a notable gap in existing school improvement assessment instruments.

In particular, the PSIAQ assesses four core dimensions of school improvement from the parental perspective, namely Learning Environment, Teaching and Learning Practices, School Leadership, and Community Participation, reflecting both the instructional and relational aspect of school functioning. This multidimensional configuration extends beyond many existing parent-focused or school effectiveness instruments, which often emphasise parental involvement as a unidimensional construct or limit assessment to communication related practices (Goodall, 2018; Sheldon & Turner-Vorbeck, 2019). Contemporary school improvement studies increasingly underscore the importance of examining processes through ecological and systems-based lenses that capture interactions across multiple contexts influencing students' learning and well-being (Ainscow, 2020; OECD, 2020).

Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the PSIAQ captures parental perceptions operating at the microsystem level (e.g., classroom climate and teaching learning experiences), the mesosystem level (e.g., leadership responsiveness and home-school collaboration), and the exosystem/community level (e.g., opportunities for parental and community participation in school initiatives) (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Neal & Neal, 2019). By integrating these interconnected levels, the PSIAQ provides a more comprehensive representation of school improvement as a socially embedded and relational process. To the authors' knowledge, few contemporary instruments explicitly position parents as evaluative stakeholders across such a broad range of school improvement domains.

Finally, the present study also seeks to identify which domains are perceived by parents as most influential for school improvement. The findings indicate that learning environment and school leadership emerge as the most salient dimensions, highlighting parents' prioritisation of an emotionally supportive climate, safety, trust, and responsive leadership as foundational conditions for sustainable school improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020; Aldridge & Blackstock, 2024; Aldridge et al., 2024; Sharma et al., 2022).

The parents' values and beliefs dimension of the PSIAQ pertains to their perceptions of schooling as a meaningful and shared social responsibility, grounded in intrinsic motivations, such as commitment to children's holistic development, trust in education as a transformative force, and a belief in collaborative school-family partnerships. Contemporary empirical evidence suggests that parents' engagement and evaluative judgement of schools are driven less by instrumental or extrinsic considerations and more by value-based orientations related to purpose, belonging, and relational trust (Boonk et al., 2018; Jeynes, 2022; Goodall & Montgomery, 2022). At the individual level, parents who hold strong educational values and a sense of moral responsibility toward schooling are more likely to demonstrate sustained engagement, constructive feedback, and resilience in navigating school-related challenges (Kim & Hill, 2021; Wang et al., 2022).

At the institutional level, when parents' values align with the school's mission and vision, particularly with respect to inclusivity, students' well-being, and shared accountability, schools are better positioned to foster collective efficacy and mobilise collaborative efforts toward improvement goals (Ainscow et al., 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020). Thus, parents' values and beliefs constitute a foundational dimension through which school improvement processes are interpreted, supported, and sustained.

The emotional and behavioural competence dimension of the PSIAQ primarily encompasses parents' capacity for constructive communication, emotional regulation, empathy toward children and teachers. Their ability to draw on prior experiences to support school-related interactions is also important. Parents who demonstrate the effective organisation of home learning routines, manage academic-related stress, and respond calmly to school challenges are better positioned to support their children's engagement. They are also considered to be in a good position to collaborate productively with schools (Barger et al., 2022).

Recent research indicates that parents' emotional regulation and problem-solving skills play a crucial role in navigating school demands. Thus, during periods of uncertainty or change, they contribute to more adaptive families and good school relationships (Masten & Barnes, 2018). Moreover, empathic listening and respectful dialogues with teachers and school leaders have been shown to strengthen mutual trust, reduce conflict, and enhance collective efficacy in school improvement efforts (Kim et al., 2022). Empirical evidence further suggests that parents who exhibit higher levels of emotional competence and proactive behavioural strategies are more likely to engage in supportive learning practices at home and to provide constructive feedback, ultimately fostering more coherent and resilient school improvement processes (Moroni et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2020).

It is noteworthy that based on parents' self-reports, school improvement is perceived to be influenced primarily by school-internal and relational domains rather than by broader external or structural factors. Among the PSIAQ dimensions, parents placed greater emphasis on learning environments and school leadership, highlighting the importance of emotionally supportive climate, safety, trust, and responsive leadership practices in shaping their overall evaluation of school effectiveness. This finding aligns with recent evidence suggesting that parents tend to prioritise directly experienced and relational aspects of schooling, such as every day interactions, communication quality and leadership accessibility with teacher collaborations over more distal systematic factors when assessing school quality and improvement (Cayak, 2021; Persson et al., 2025)

However, community participation emerges as a salient contextual domain, indicating that parents value opportunities for meaningful involvement and collaboration, when such structures are clearly articulated and facilitated by schools (Sheldon & Turner-Vorbeck, 2019; Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020). Although policy frameworks and formal regulations are often perceived as distant or opaque by parents, recent research suggests that transparent governance practices and clarity around school policies can function as indirect enablers of trust and engagement, thereby supporting parents' confidence in school improvement processes (OECD, 2020; Godall, 2022). Overall, these findings suggest that parents predominantly rely on proximal, relational, and experimental domains when evaluating school improvement, underscoring the importance of strengthening school-based practices and leadership responsiveness to foster sustained parental trust and engagement.

Conclusion

The development of the PSIAQ represents a significant advancement in capturing parents' perspectives on the multifaceted processes that underpin school improvement. The tool systematically assesses both school internal dimensions, such as Learning Environment and teaching and learning practices, and relational and contextual dimensions, including school leadership and community participation. By assessing them, the PSIAQ provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how parents evaluate and support school improvement. The findings highlight the key domains that parents perceive as most influential, offering valuable insights for school leaders and policymakers seeking to enhance collaboration and trust between schools and families.

Moreover, the instrument lays the ground work for targeted interventions aimed at strengthening parent-school partnerships, promoting positive learning environments and fostering inclusive and participatory practices. Finally, the PAIAQ opens avenues for future research to examine the applicability of its dimensions across diverse cultural and educational contexts, enabling the development of evidence-based strategies that enhance school improvement outcomes, while actively engaging parents as critical stakeholders in the educational process.

Future Research

Collectively, the findings provide empirical support for a structurally coherent school improvement. Future research should aim to administer the PSIAQ across diverse cultural and educational contexts to examine the stability of its factorial structure, reliability and construct validity in different settings. Additionally, longitudinal studies could explore how parents' perceptions of school improvement evolve over time and how these perceptions relate to student outcomes, school climate, and leadership effectiveness. Expanding the use of the PSIAQ internationally would also enable cross-cultural comparisons, providing insights into universal and context specific aspects of parent-informed school improvement and supporting the development of strategies to strengthen parent-school collaboration worldwide.

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Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study, including data sheets and analysis are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ORCID IDs

Sabitha Mani <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2574-0382>

Greta D'Souza PhD <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0213-6660>

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Appendix 1

Parent Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Tick most appropriate answer for your opinion and give at least one reason for your answer)		
No:	Questions	Give reasons for your answers
	Name: Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female Education qualification: which standard is your in:	
1.	What do you think about the quality of school classrooms? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	

2.	What do you think about students having access to textbooks? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent ☐	
3.	What is your perspective on providing each student with access to a high-quality desk and chair, one set per student? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good Excellent	
4.	What is your viewpoint on the availability of a library for students? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
5.	What is your opinion of on the quality of books available in the library for students? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
6.	What is the opinion regarding quality and hygienity of toilets for girls and boys? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
7.	Are you provided with opportunities to participate in school committees? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
8.	If yes, which are the responsibilities given to you and the decision making in which you are a part.	
9.	Are you satisfied with policy making in the school? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
10.	Did you have any contribution in policy making? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
11.	The decisions or policies of school which you are dissatisfied, or you consider need to be changed	

12.	What is your view on the effectiveness of school leadership in handling day-to-day operations? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
13.	What is your perspective on the efforts made by school leadership to minimize teacher absenteeism? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
14.	What is your view on the ability of school leadership to manage school finances transparently? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
15.	Are you getting awareness regarding the different scholarships available for students? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
16.	What is your opinion regarding the ability of school leadership to get School Grant fund and other funds? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
17.	Are you comfortable with the safety of students in the school campus. ☐ Yes ☐ No	
18.	What is your satisfaction level regarding the co-curricular activities in the school? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
19.	The teacher student ratio in the classroom is optimum? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
20.	What is your ranking on teaching methods used in the classroom ? ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	

21.	Are you satisfied with the homework given to the students. ☐ Yes ☐ No	
22.	What is your opinion regarding evaluation system in the school ☐ Very poor ☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good ☐ Excellent	
23.	Is there proper correspondence between teachers and parents ☐ Yes ☐ No	
24.	What the school is doing for advanced and slow learners?	
25.	Are you informed about the change that occur in the school on a regular basis? ☐ Yes ☐ No	If your answer is yes, ☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Half yearly ☐ yearly
26.	Are you satisfied with the methods school uses to communicate with parents? ☐ Very dissatisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Neutral ☐ Satisfied ☐ Very satisfied	

Thank you for your time and valuable insights. Your responses will be instrumental in understanding and enhancing school improvement strategies.