



# The PIQ: a tool for assessing parental involvement in tennis.

Virginie Hurtel.

Bourgogne University, France.

## ABSTRACT

Success in tennis is based on a combination of different social (e.g. parents, coach) and individual (e.g. training, genetics) factors. To date French tennis has no tool to evaluate the role of parents. In order to fill in this gap in the literature, the present study puts forward the creation and validation of a Parental Involvement Questionnaire (PIQ) measuring the three aspects of long term parental support: their logistical involvement (transport), their emotional involvement (encouragement) and their informational involvement (advice).

**Key words:** Parental involvement, Parent-children relationship, Factorial exploratory analysis, Questionnaire.

**Received:** 8 October 2010.

**Accepted:** 25 November 2010.

**Corresponding author:** Virginie Hurtel, Bourgogne University, France.

**Email:** [hurtel\\_v@hotmail.fr](mailto:hurtel_v@hotmail.fr)

## INTRODUCTION

In spite of the great number of people playing tennis, there is no denying that only a small percentage of them will reach the elite level. Indeed, success in tennis is determined by a combination of various environmental and social factors (Côté, Salmela, Trudel & Baria, 1995). Though talent (ITF CSSR 39, 2006) might determine success in tennis to some extent, factors such as the number of hours spent on court (training and competition) as well as the role of the coach and the parents also appear essential (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Durand-Bush, Salmela & Thompson, 2004).

Furthermore, research has shown that tennis players usually reach top-level performance after approximately 10 years or 10,000 hours of deliberate practice. This type of extended activity demands that the player be able to overcome three constraints: Firstly, they must develop a strong and constant motivation, sustaining prolonged and intense efforts – which are not always a pleasure. They must also gather all the necessary resources and be exposed to the appropriate environmental conditions – chiefly logistical and financial. As a result, the presence, help, and support of an athlete's relatives play an important part in his or her rise to the elite level (Hurtel, 2009), a fact that players don't hesitate to emphasise:

"My father would support me and follow me everywhere. He would pick me up from school and take me to training sessions and matches... [...] he had organised his professional life according to that. He was there all the time. You could say that he saved my career when I was young (Michaël Llodra)."

Parents play a significant role in the long term. They get involved in their children's activities logistically (transport), emotionally (moral support) and informationally (advice), during each progressive step to the elite level (Wolfenden & Holt, 2005).

The results from this research and identification of these characteristics was primarily achieved through retrospective interviews. The literature in this subject area, also makes use of questionnaires, albeit to a lesser extent. These, however, generally relate to British and American cultures and deal very little with tennis. When the present researcher identified the absence of a French equivalent to these questionnaires, it was decided to undertake the creation and validation of one. The aim of this article is therefore to describe the formulation process of this measurement tool.

## PIQ (PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE)

This questionnaire was created based on the existing literature on the role of family with regard to sport. In addition, interviews conducted with 36 parents of young tennis players (aged 11 to 16; either leisure or competitive players) have contributed to the enrichment and specification of the tennis-related questions. Particular attention was also directed to the wording of the different sentences of the questionnaire that was to be filled out later by the parents of the players.

## Version 1

The first Parental Involvement Questionnaire that was put forward was divided into three parts: Logistical Parental Involvement (LPI), Emotional Parental Involvement (EPI) and

Informational Parental Involvement (IPI), each of which consisted of 10 questions. The LPI focuses on the frequency at which parents take their children to training sessions or competitions, on their presence throughout these events and on the efforts in terms of time to allow the player to play tennis. The EPI focuses on the moral support, reassurance, praise or encouragements that parents provide for their children. Finally, the IPI corresponds to parent-child discussions about tennis, in particular to the advice parents give to their children before, during and after training sessions or competitions. Note : The numbers at the beginning of the questions correspond to the order they follow on the document distributed to parents.

LOGISTICAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (LPI)
2. I play tennis with him.
5. I invest a great deal of myself in terms of time to allow him to play tennis.
8. I help him with transport.
11. I come to see him play.
14. I adjust my working schedule in order to take him to play tennis.
17. I spend time with him for tennis.
20. I take him to his practice sessions and competitions.
23. I stay with him during his lessons or matches.
26. I make sacrifices so that he can practice and play matches.
29. I make efforts to take him to tournaments and/or training sessions.
EMOTIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (EPI)
3. I congratulate him on his efforts after his lessons or matches.
6. I congratulate him on his achievements after his lessons or matches.
9. I encourage him.
12. I support him.
15. I am always present for him.
18. I provide moral support.
21. I reassure him.
24. I congratulate him on the positive aspects of his performance, even when he loses a match or makes errors during practice.
27. I cheer him up when he is down.
30. I comfort him when he is not well.
INFORMATIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (IPI)
1. I provide technical and tactical advice.
4. I give him recommendations before and after his lessons and/or matches.
7. I make fair and constructive comments that help him progress.
10. I lend an attentive ear to his problems related to tennis.
13. I am someone he can turn to to talk about the technical and tactical issues in his game.
16. I encourage him to talk with me about the tennis-related questions or problems he has in mind.
19. I provide him with advice to overcome tough situations.
22. I talk with him about his tennis game.
25. I talk with him about matches and/or lessons.
28. I ask him questions about what he does during matches and lessons.

Table 1. Version 1, PIQ.

## Version 2

In order to be validated, the Parental Involvement Questionnaire was completed by 209 parents (103 men and 106 women) of tennis players aged 13.5 years-old on average.

The collected data was submitted to a Factorial Exploratory Analysis in order to reduce the number of questions for a better internal coherence and to allow the tool to be used easily on court. The results of the analysis show that less questions makes for a more reliable questionnaire. Thus, the LPI questions that were retained are the following:

- I invest a great deal of myself in terms of time to allow him to play tennis.
- I help him with transport.
- I take him to his practice sessions and competitions.
- I make efforts to take him to tournaments and/or training sessions.
- I adjust my working schedule in order to take him to play tennis.

The EPI includes the following questions:

- I congratulate him on his efforts after his lessons or matches.
- I congratulate him on his initiatives after his lessons and matches.
- I provide moral support.
- I cheer him up when he is down.
- I comfort him when he is not well.

And lastly, the IPI contains the following:

- I provide technical and tactical advice.
- I give him recommendations before and after his lessons and/or matches.
- I make fair and constructive comments that help him progress.
- I am someone he can turn to to talk about the technical and tactical issues in his game.
- I talk with him about his tennis game.

This second version of the PIQ developed through the first analysis was distributed to 1200 parents and is currently awaiting for final approval (Confirmatory Analysis in progress).

### PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Even though the questionnaire hasn't yet reached its definitive form, this second version foreshadows interesting results. Indeed, the analysis of averages and graphs has revealed differences related to the gender and involvement of the parents. Notes. LPI = Logistical Parental Involvement; EPI = Emotional Parental Involvement; IPI: Informational Parental Involvement. The scale of answers ranges from 1 to 7.

	MOTHERS	FATHERS
LPI	4.68	4.35
EPI	5.53	5.05
IPI	2.59	3.40

**Table 2. Averages of the answers to the sub-parts of the questionnaire according to gender.**

At first glance, there appears to be a meaningful correlation between the three kinds of parental involvement, meaning that regardless of gender, the more parents involve themselves emotionally, the more they become involved from an logistical and informational point of view, and vice-versa. However, mothers seem to provide more emotional support (comfort, reassurance) than fathers but give less technical and tactical advice than the latter.

Fathers therefore appear to be more interested in the performance- related aspect of the activity in the present sample, and strive to foster the success of their children, whereas mothers have more consideration for their well-being and are more concerned about the problems they might encounter during the activity.

### CONCLUSION

It seems important to put more emphasis on the role of parents in relation to the progression of young tennis players towards the elite level. The Parental -logistical, emotional and informational- Involvement Questionnaire attempts to answer the need to measure this role. In the long term (after the completion of the validation of this tool), it will allow coaches to have a better understanding of the family environment of the player and to adapt their relationships to parents out of concern for positive, coherent and harmonious player development.

### REFERENCES

- Bloom, B. S. (1985). Developing talent in young people. New York: Ballantine.
- Côté, J. (1999). The influence of the family in the development of talent in sport. *The Sport Psychologist*, 13, 395-417. <https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.13.4.395>
- Côté, J., Salmela, J. H., Trudel, P., Baria, A. & Russel, S. (1995). The coaching expert model: A grounded assessment of expert gymnastic coaches' knowledge. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 17, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.17.1.1>
- Durand-Bush, N., Salmela, J. H. & Thompson, K. A. (2004). Le rôle joué par les parents dans le développement et le maintien de la performance athlétique experte. *Revue Staps*, 64, 15-38. <https://doi.org/10.3917/sta.064.0015>
- Ericsson, K.A., Krampe, T.K. & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*, 100(3), 363-406. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.100.3.363>
- Hurtel, V. (2009). Les parents : rôle et influences en tennis. In L. Crognier & E. Bayle (Ed.), *Le tennis dans la société de demain : regards croisés*. Montpellier : AFRAPS.
- Wolfenden, L. E. & Holt, N. L. (2005). Talent development in elite junior tennis: Perceptions of players, parents, and coaches. *Journal of applied sport psychology*, 17, 108-126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200590932416>

### RECOMMENDED ITF TENNIS ACADEMY CONTENT (CLICK BELOW)



Copyright (c) 2010 Virginie Hurtel .



This text is under a [Creative Commons BY 4.0 license](#)

You are free to Share - copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format - and Adapt the content - remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially under the following terms:

Attribution: You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

[CC BY 4.0 license terms summary](#) [CC BY 4.0 license terms](#)