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**‘Enhancing Tennis Excellence in the Seychelles by Implementing New Talent Identification and
Development Strategies’**

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Abstract

This research study examines how the Seychelles Tennis Association (STA) can enhance talent development and identification programs to increase the number and level of tennis players. The literature emphasizes the importance of integrated Talent Identification and Development (TID) systems and resource allocation for sustainable sports growth.

A survey of 50 junior tennis players aged 8–16 and 30 parents revealed significant engagement among the young athletes, with their responses used to assess various aspects, such as motivation, availability of training facilities, and perceived barriers. Results indicated that players were constrained by limited training opportunities, with forty-four percent (44%) of players and fifty-seven percent (57%) of parents reported practicing only once per week.

In terms of what players enjoyed most, seventy-six percent (76%) of players selected competition and only fifty-three (53%) of parents identified competition. As for issues, parents reported being more concerned about time management (77%) compared to players (39%) and parents believed a tennis career goal was more motivating to players (57%) than the players indicated (46%). Interviews with Administrators and coaches also highlighted resource limitations as a key challenge.

Based on TID best practices, additional training and skills coaching as well as tennis-specific courts, mental training sessions and implementation of a player development tracking system are needed.

Résumé

Cette recherche examine comment l'Association de Tennis des Seychelles (STA) peut améliorer ses programmes de développement et d'identification des talents afin d'augmenter le nombre et le niveau des joueurs de tennis. La littérature souligne l'importance de systèmes intégrés d'Identification et de Développement des Talents (IDD) et de l'allocation des ressources pour une croissance sportive durable.

Une enquête menée auprès de 50 jeunes joueurs de tennis âgés de 8 à 16 ans et de 30 parents a révélé un engagement significatif chez les jeunes athlètes, leurs réponses étant utilisées pour évaluer divers aspects, tels que la motivation, la disponibilité des installations d'entraînement

et les obstacles perçus. Les résultats ont indiqué que les joueurs étaient limités par des opportunités d'entraînement restreintes, avec quarante-quatre pour cent (44 %) des joueurs et cinquante-sept pour cent (57 %) des parents déclarant ne s'entraîner qu'une fois par semaine.

En ce qui concerne ce que les joueurs apprécient le plus, soixante-seize pour cent (76 %) des joueurs ont choisi la compétition, contre seulement cinquante-trois pour cent (53 %) des parents. Quant aux problèmes, les parents se sont montrés plus préoccupés par la gestion du temps (77 %) que les joueurs (39 %), et ils pensaient qu'un objectif de carrière dans le tennis était plus motivant pour les joueurs (57 %) que ce que les joueurs ont indiqué (46 %). Des entretiens avec des administrateurs et des entraîneurs ont également souligné les limitations de ressources comme un défi majeur.

Sur la base des meilleures pratiques d'IDD, des entraînements et un encadrement des compétences supplémentaires, ainsi que des terrains de tennis spécifiques, des séances d'entraînement mental et la mise en œuvre d'un système de suivi du développement des joueurs sont nécessaires.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	2
Abstract.....	3
Résumé	3
CHAPTER ONE	8
INTRODUCTION	8
1.1 Background and Context.....	8
1.2 Problem Statement	10
1.3 Research Questions and Objectives	11
1.4 Significance of the Study	12
CHAPTER TWO	14
LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 Defining Talent Identification and Development (TID) in Tennis	14
2.2 Global TID Models and Best Practices in Tennis.....	17
2.3 Factors Influencing TID Success	20
2.3.1 Coaching Quality	20
2.3.2 Facilities and Infrastructure	20
2.3.3 Support Systems	21
2.3.4 Competition Opportunities	21
2.3.5 Cultural, Economic, and Geographic Context.....	22
2.4 Innovative Approaches to Talent Identification and Development (TID) in Tennis	23
2.4.1 Use of Technology in Talent Identification.....	23
2.4.2. Early Specialization vs. Diversification: Emerging Insights	24
CHAPTER THREE	25
METHODOLOGY	25
3.1 Research Design	25
3.2 Data Collection Methods.....	26
3.2.1 Survey of Junior Players and Parents.....	26
3.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews with Coaches	27
3.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews with Administrators	28
3.3 Data Analysis	29
3.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis.....	29
3.3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis.....	29
3.3.3 Data Integration Strategy	30
3.4 Ethical Considerations	30

CHAPTER FOUR	31
RESULTS AND FINDINGS	31
4.1 Junior Players' Demographics and Practice Patterns.....	31
4.1.1 Challenges Identified by Junior Players	32
<i>Table 4.1: Junior Players' Practice Frequency</i>	33
4.1.2 Practice Facilities, Frequency, and Motivational Drivers	34
<i>Figure 4.1: Barriers to Tennis Participation (Junior and Parent Surveys</i>	35
4.2 Comparison of Junior and Parent Data	35
<i>Table 4.2: Comparison of Junior vs Parents' Motivations</i>	36
4.3 Coaches' Perspectives from Interviews.....	36
4.3.1 Challenges in Coaching	36
4.3.2 Positive Developments and Opportunities	37
<i>Table 4.3: Coaches' Reported Challenges</i>	38
4.4 Administrator Survey Results	39
<i>Table 4.4: Administrators' Key Themes and Recommendations</i>	40
CHAPTER FIVE.....	41
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	41
5.1 Interpreting the Findings	41
5.2 Proposed TID Strategies for Seychelles.....	44
<i>Table 5.1: From Recommendations to Actions</i>	47
<i>Table 5.2: Feasibility and Implementation Plan with Budget Considerations</i>	48
5.3 Addressing Key Barriers	49
5.4 Feasibility and Implementation	51
CHAPTER SIX.....	52
CONCLUSION.....	52
6.1 Summary of Key Findings.....	52
6.2 Contribution to Knowledge	52
6.3 Limitations.....	53
6.4 Future Research Directions.....	54
References	54
Appendices	58
Appendix A1: Feasibility and Implementation Plan with Budget Considerations	58
Appendix A2: Junior Survey Questionnaire	58
Appendix B: Parent Survey Questionnaire	59
Appendix C: Interview with Administrators.....	61

Appendix D: Interview with Coaches	62
Appendix E: Survey Data Summary.....	64
Appendix F: STA Program Overview	65

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

The Seychelles Tennis Association (STA) is the governing body responsible for managing, promoting, developing and growing the sport of tennis on the islands of Seychelles. Founded in the 1960s, the STA has increasingly raised the profile of the sport, with the great achievement of being upgraded from Class C to Class B Group in 2021, enabling Seychelles to compete in international elite events, such as the Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup Championships ([the World Cup of Tennis](#)) (Seychelles Nation, 2021). The vision of the Association is “to become a social hub of choice for everyone to enjoy tennis and to develop the young stars of tomorrow.” It is this vision statement that outlines the community and elite competitive ambitions quite specifically. To support this, the mission of the STA is to provide “a vibrant club with great facilities, striving to offer tennis at its best where members are welcomed and involved across all ages and levels to compete to win locally, regionally and internationally.” These statements effectively encapsulate the twin ambitions of promoting inclusivity and the competitive development of talent.

Headquartered at the Roche Caiman Sports Complex on the island of Mahé, the STA oversees five state-of-the-art tennis courts, which were renovated and completed in August 2024, serving as the hub of tennis activity on the island ([State House of Seychelles, 2024](#)). While all official tennis programs are conducted on these courts, tennis programs are also included in the sports curriculum of certain schools. However, all schools in Seychelles do not have a tennis court, so these sessions are often held on multi-purpose courts or other facilities available on the school campus. The system makes it possible for tennis training to be accessible to more people in schools without specific tennis courts. In recognition of the fact that the game of tennis is a costly sport, provision of accessibility, fee waivers from 2020 to

2025 have been implemented through the Executive Committees of the STA, which has donated tennis equipment and provided access to the usage of these equipment, making the sport even more accessible and affordable to an even greater segment of the population (Coach Interviews, 2025). This push towards affordability is augmented by pragmatic support initiatives, such as providing transport for children from schools like Cascade Primary and Perseverance Primary to the Roche Caiman courts, thereby removing logistical obstacles to participating in the sport.

Apart from facility and cost factors, the STA is also facilitating grassroots engagement through initiatives such as the Junior Tennis Initiative (JTI), which actively engages over 500 junior players annually across Seychelles' main islands. This program engages young players through school-based training, community outreach, and tennis camps, creating opportunities for youths to learn and develop skills in tennis.

Although such programs have increased participation, and produced players who compete regionally and internationally, they have not yet translated into a consistent pathway for developing competitive success at these levels. That is where the concept of Talent Identification and Development (TID) becomes central. TID is the systematic process of identifying potential athletes and nurturing them through successively more complex levels of skill development, competition experience and mental preparation, from the local grassroots level to the national and international elite levels (Barracough et al., 2022). The process here in Seychelles needs to accommodate the country's small population, geographical constraints and limited resources.

Theoretically, research draws upon existing TID models—that is, the “talent development ecosystem” model (Galagan & Vital, 2019) and Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles—to compare the STA's existing activity with the evidence-based, best practice models. The research, needed in this instance is for a holistic, country-specific TID

model for Seychelles that addresses not only the problem of sport and coaching infrastructure and coaching capacity, but also stakeholder priority alignment.

These programs, despite infrastructural and material limitations, have created an increasing base of players and overall interest among the population. The Association's overall strategy—combining infrastructural investment, program development, and community outreach—is closely aligned with its vision and purpose, providing a solid foundation for the sport's long-term growth. However, with no structured TID model transferable to Seychellois environments, fear prevents innovative breakthroughs in participation from being converted into elite, leading to sustainable success. Filling such a hole is this MEMOS research, where the established system is reviewed, barriers are identified and in-context, evidence-based suggestions for Seychelles' tennis talent development are presented.

1.2 Problem Statement

Despite increased involvement in tennis in Seychelles, the establishment of world-class tennis talent remains constrained by severe system limitations. The Seychelles Tennis Association (STA) has effectively established grassroots programs, reaching over 500 juniors on the main islands by 2024. However, this expansion of participation has not been accompanied by the development of players capable of competing at regional or international levels.

In contrast, the five major public courts at Roche Caiman are used by both seniors and juniors. However, there are no other public-standard centre anywhere else on the island of Mahé. The only option is hotel-owned courts, which cost 700 rupees (equivalent to USD \$ 50) and above per hour and are beyond the means of most juniors (STA Annual Report, 2024). The absence of appropriate infrastructure prevents consistent skill development and competitive readiness. Furthermore, for juniors from the southern part of the island, it is one hour's traveling

time (minimum) to Roche Caiman, hindering their ability to practice constantly as well as to compete properly.

One of the major hindrances to the growth of tennis in Seychelles is the absence of a harmonized and systematic approach in Talent Identification and Development (TID) that effectively develops players from grassroots levels right through to elite competitions. The coaching framework includes 28 ITF certified coaches across various levels, from Play and Stay (19), ITF level 1 (6), ITF level 2 (2 of which one is a non-Seychellois), to ITF Level 3 (1).

Administrative and finance issues add further complexity to the problem. The funding of the STA has relied heavily on ad hoc donations too small for facility upgrades, coaches' education and hosting tournaments between the islands regularly—each of these prerequisites for more advanced talent progression. Funding for sports, especially in tennis development, is ad hoc and with at times no strategy for longer-term finance, there is limited funding and thus, unstable capacity for finance for developing the players (Administrator Interviews, 2025). In an event where matches overlap with training sessions, it creates a barrier to progress, limiting players' match experience and psychological conditioning. These inter-connected challenges need an integrated TID plan to foster sustainable tennis development in Seychelles, addressing infrastructure deficits, alignment of stakeholders' objectives and development of the talent pathways to enhance participation and performance.

1.3 Research Questions and Objectives

Primary Research Question:

What strategies can the Seychelles Tennis Association utilize to enhance tennis excellence through effective talent identification and development planning that is context-specific to local requirements?

Secondary Research Questions:

What are the key structural, coaching, infrastructural and social limitations that hinder tennis talent development in Seychelles?

Which of the international TID models found in comparable small island states or in Africa or in resource-limited countries or worldwide are transferable to Seychelles?

What real-world measures can be suggested to address the issues highlighted and optimize the development pathways in tennis?

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that the implementation of integrated, contextually aligned TID models, such as additional after-school coaching, inter-island competition and mental training, will enhance player retention and performance by addressing resource constraints and aligning stakeholder priorities within the socio-cultural context of Seychelles.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings have significant potential to inform the planning for the development of tennis in Seychelles by offering a good, evidence-based benchmark against which the STA and other stakeholder bodies can make informed decisions and plan accordingly. Referring to in-locale empirical evidence—i.e., quantitative findings of junior and parental surveys (e.g., volume of training, reasons, facility access) and thematic trends of Administrator and coach interviews (e.g., constraints of available resources, facility usage, coaching qualifications)—the research speaks to actual issues rather than to hypothetical presumptions. By doing so, interventions will be more specifically targeted to meet Seychelles' distinctive socio-economic and infrastructural reality and are more likely to foster sustainable success in the long term.

By blending relevant overseas best practices with local realities, the research offers clear, practical recommendations to address current weaknesses in coach qualification, facility usage and competition exposure.

The talent identification and development process has the most significant impact on player performance, development and continuity from junior to elite levels. The research responds to several essential Seychellois system issues, including minimal training sessions, a lack of mental skill development and a high dropout rate among adolescents. By identifying and overcoming the constraints, the research aims to find pragmatic solutions that will improve and enhance the talent bank, with more players remaining in the sport and moving through competition levels. Enhanced player development would be central to improving Seychelles' ranking in regional and global tennis competitions, as well as expanding opportunities for improved participation and performance abroad. The youth would be further empowered through tennis by instilling discipline and confidence in them and by developing goal-oriented skills, thereby gaining social presence outside the court. National pride would be further boosted by successful players acting as role models for young players, in addition to representing Seychelles as a sporting nation.

Furthermore, the conclusions and recommendations in this study are applicable more broadly beyond Seychelles, as they offer valuable lessons to other small island nations or African countries facing similar levels of resource constraints and development challenges.

The flexible and scalable models presented create a template for developing inclusive and sustainable sporting programs within limited infrastructures and budgets. Policymakers, Sports Managers and Universities can apply the direction of the study to create and enact junior tennis programs that can simultaneously support grassroots interaction and elite development.

Theoretically, the research contributes to the academic literature on Talent Identification and Development (TID) in resource-constrained and island contexts by addressing the essential factors of geographic remoteness, socio-economic limitations and multi-role stakeholder involvement, which are tailored to established models such as the talent ecosystem development model. Pragmatically, the research provides a locally situated yet

immediately transferable set of strategies for Administrators, coaches, and sport developers to increase training intensity, competition exposure, and retention of players. From a policy perspective, the study's findings form an evidence base for national sports Ministries and organizations to guide the prioritization of sports architecture long-term investment, coach education and sports facilities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining Talent Identification and Development (TID) in Tennis

Talent identification and development (TID) is a process for identifying young individuals with the potential to excel in sports (Till & Baker, 2020); they state that TID evaluates physical, psychological and technical characteristics to determine future success. This predictive process is a blend of scientific analysis, practical assessment, and the evaluation of the culture in which talent is being developed. TID is, therefore, not a once-off or sequential process but a cyclical process that needs to be periodically evaluated. It includes identifying risk as well as guaranteeing resources, development and aid so that capability can be realized and growth can occur efficiently (Baker et al., 2021). Such frameworks ensure that the identified talent is developed through appropriate learning pathways that are unique to the individual. Building upon this particular view, the development aspect of TID is more than identifying gifted players. It also nurtures the surroundings, allowing individuals like these to blossom.

According to Baker et al. (2017), talent development (TD) is a systematic approach that provides support in all areas of an athlete's life, including coaching, competition, physical and mental development. The process must incorporate the LTAD model with age-specific development prioritized as recommended by the athlete's physiological and psychological maturation (Balyi & Hamilton, 2004). The LTAD model, widely used globally, categorizes

athlete development into phases, spanning from fundamental motor skills to elite competition (Jones & Smith, 2021). This step-by-step, staged development conforms to the view that mental ability should increase in conjunction with physical and technical ability, thereby ensuring a well-rounded approach. Freitas (2023) supported the argument that interventions targeting a specific age or those in the initial stages of development are essential for preventing burnout and achieving a positive sporting experience among athletes. Specifically, mentioning that tennis training programs need to include a balance between physical training, learning skills and psychological preparation in an incremental and methodical manner to facilitate young athletes' success in their competitive journey. One of the primary principles of this approach is that development should be focused on developing general athleticism before specialization can occur, which can easily lead to overtraining or burnout (Freitas, 2023).

In line with this multidimensional perspective, development and identification need to be based on a thorough and complete assessment of candidates. Physical tests of power, agility and endurance are critical, but so are the psychological tests that assess the athlete's mental toughness, motivation and pressure management skills (Jones & Smith, 2021). Although early screening of physical attributes, such as hand-eye coordination and foot speed, remains critical, psychological profiling has also gained prominence in identifying young potential players (Baker et al., 2017). Such dual evaluation models enhance the predictive validity of TID processes, ensuring that performers are both skilled and psychologically well-prepared for long-term demands. Most crucial in successful TID, Jones and Smith (2021) cite motivation, as this determines an athlete's dedication and ability to push through challenges. Mental toughness is also developed through mental skills training, a key component of comprehensive TID programs, which includes goal setting, visualization and awareness to help athletes respond to pressure and perform under stress (Jones & Smith, 2021). Coaches are increasingly recognizing that the emotional and psychological adjustment of a player in training and

competition can mean the difference between success and failure at the highest levels (Gould et al., 2022).

As a result, the integration of physical and mental evaluation tools into a holistic system of TID is key to uncovering those players who not only possess the potential to perform physically but also possess the psychological toughness to succeed in the highly demanding sport of tennis. As a study by Subramaniam (2022) theorizes, talent is not only a product of innate ability but also one that develops through critical thinking, emotional intelligence and resilience under pressure. These psychological qualities, combined with physical and technical preparedness, form the foundation of an athlete's readiness for high-level competition.

Furthermore, focusing on the early-stage provision of mental skill development, including mindfulness as well as focus skills, is beneficial for performance consistency and player retention (Gucciardi & Jones, 2012). Developing a mentally tough athlete, therefore, is as much a core concern as developing strong physical and technical skills.

Increasingly, researchers are suggesting that TID programs include sports psychology workshops, as well as mental toughness training, as early as possible in an effort to maximize potential in young players (Jones & Smith, 2021). By integrating psychological development into the training process earlier, programs are able to produce more resilient, more adaptable and better-equipped athletes to sustain high-level performance.

Lastly, the evolution of TID programs has begun to recognize the necessity for flexibility in the process. As players grow and mature, their needs change—what suits a young player may not be suitable as they become more specialized and older. TID programs must be individually responsive, offering diversity in experiences and the potential for players to specialize in those areas in which they are most likely to succeed (Gould et al., 2002). Notably, the modern TID philosophy places a strong focus on the fact that players need not only to develop physical skills but also a degree of self-awareness and self-motivation that will allow

them to maintain their motivation as they navigate the challenges of maturation in competitive tennis. This self-directed character of development illustrates the evolving role of psychological autonomy in long-term success in sport. It has been proven that providing athletes with the ability to self-monitor and control their own development is critical to long-term success (Gould et al., 2002). With this in mind, TID programs are increasingly employing technology, such as player tracking systems, to monitor progress and provide individualized feedback, ensuring that athletes receive what they need at each stage of their development (Freitas, 2023).

2.2 Global TID Models and Best Practices in Tennis

Developed nations are increasingly utilizing sports technologies and analytics for Talent Identification and Development (TID). According to Takahashi et al. (2022), the United States Tennis Association (USTA) and Japan use video analysis technologies and statistical models to evaluate the performance of top-ranked young athletes, ensuring continuous improvement over time. Japan also uses motion-tracking systems for player development and analytical decision-making.

Other comparable small-island states, such as Mauritius and Fiji, have also established initiatives that merit replication. In Mauritius, participation in French-speaking tennis federations and government-sponsored athlete scholarships have raised the prospect of young players training abroad (Polovina, 2018). According to Sugden (2017), Fiji, with guidance from the Oceania Tennis Federation, focuses on regional talent camps and international exposure through sponsored tournament travel, although with minimal in-country facilities. These are examples of how comparable environments have faced comparable challenges to those of Seychelles.

Among the attributes of a good TID model is the creation of age-grade pathways that provide clearly defined development stages for junior athletes. To illustrate, Tennis Australia's

National Athlete Pathway Framework outlines a structured development process, beginning with the Hot Shots program, designed for children aged 4-12.

This program utilizes modified gear and smaller courts to introduce tennis in a fun and engaging manner, allowing early skills development and sparking interest in the game. Tennis Australia (2020) explains that the structure will enable children to progress from initial skill acquisition to elite performance through unique, age-specific phases.

While purchasing these advanced technologies entails costs, the only plausible option is to resort to low-cost analysis solutions such as Coach's Eye or Dartfish. These mobile applications reduce the need to spend a significant amount on technological gadgets, allowing even the smallest organizations to adopt data-driven TID plans. Regardless of discipline, coaches must undergo proper training in these systems to ensure accurate information is relayed.

In Seychelles, therefore, the same program can be instituted, focusing on development in the initial phases and exposing young people to the sport through schools and community sports centres. Such an approach can significantly improve participation levels in tennis, particularly in underserved communities, as is evidenced by the fact that similar programs have improved engagement in geographically remote areas (Brustad & Gould, 2021).

The popularity of TID models also largely hinges on making tennis accessible to all socio-economic groups, particularly those who might otherwise not have the opportunity to play. Tennis Canada has been highly inclusive in this sense with its "First Set" program, introducing tennis to lower-resourced communities by offering low-cost programs for schools and community centres. These programs not only provide increased exposure to tennis but also offer children from all backgrounds an equal opportunity to play the game (Tennis Canada, 2023). The second key component of Tennis Canada's model is its focus on coach education, with nationally certified coaches delivering high-quality instruction to ensure that players from

all areas receive proper training. As argued by Liu et al. (2024), high-quality coaching that focuses on technical skills and youth development is critical in developing a long-term player pathway for tennis.

For countries like Seychelles, expanding such grassroots programs and education for coaches would significantly enhance the quality and depth of talent development, build an inclusive culture of tennis and create greater participation in the game.

In countries with limited infrastructure, forming partnerships at a regional scale is necessary to address resource shortages and promote competitive opportunities. Botswana, a small country located in southern Africa, is a prime example of how grassroots development programs can facilitate coordinated regional partnerships. Although hindered by a lack of tennis infrastructure, the Botswana Tennis Association has successfully developed community-based programs that have attracted thousands of young players (Botswana Tennis Association, 2021). The country has successfully leveraged regional partnerships to stage competitions and tournaments, thus providing young players with significant match experience despite limited local facilities. This strategy is especially beneficial for smaller countries as it enables them to expand their competitive exposure without relying on national infrastructure (Jones & Smith, 2019). Seychelles is in a similar position. It will benefit from developing partnerships with other countries in the region to enhance competitive opportunities and share best practices, ultimately leading to improved player development in resource-poor environments.

Botswana's success highlights the value of government backing within the public sector. The government funds about 50% of development costs, demonstrating the critical role played by public finance in maintaining and developing tennis programs (Botswana Tennis Association, 2021). In this context, Botswana has effectively developed a mechanism for the effective and efficient allocation of resources, developing elite tennis players within the region, with one female currently ranked at 703 and a male at 2,296 in the world. For Seychelles,

seeking government funding and exploring partnerships with regional organizations could contribute to the sustainable development of tennis by mitigating the financial constraints associated with infrastructure and program development. According to a study by Smith and Chan (2020) on Mauritius, extensive government funding has helped elite players gain greater exposure to competition at both international and regional levels.

2.3 Factors Influencing TID Success

2.3.1 Coaching Quality

Coaches play a crucial role in athletes' development, focusing on technical, physical, and mental aspects. They act as trainers, planners, and assessors to ensure training aligns with developmental objectives. Coaching involves systematic activities designed to enhance sport-specific skills and improve performance. Evaluative activities include skills assessment, feedback and performance review. According to Guerra and Chamberlain (2024), Spanish coaches have fostered supportive trainer relationships through a culture of friendly learning. Individual sports require more individual treatment to address weaknesses. However, all sports' coaches share clear communication, ongoing education and a positive working relationship with athletes.

Literature stresses ongoing professional development, with most studies highlighting how systematic coach education is crucial in producing talent (Jones et al., 2023). Jones & Smith's (2019) studies continue to indicate that qualified coaching drives player retention as well as overall development outcomes, as players are provided with more tailored and effective training that focuses directly on their specific development needs.

2.3.2 Facilities and Infrastructure

Centre access and availability directly control the quality and frequency of training. Whilst the Roche Caiman Sports Complex includes five newly renovated courts, the use is pooled with juniors, seniors and public bookings and can create conflict in the schedule. As

travel to courts takes in excess of one hour for the players in southern districts, the weekly frequency of training is compromised. With there being no other publicly accessible tennis courts, most families are forced to use expensive hotel courts (SCR 700+ per hour (equivalent to USD \$ 50), putting most of the potential athletes beyond the training environment budget.

2.3.3 Support Systems

Parental support has a twofold function: facilitating access (transport, fees, encouragement) and exerting priority influence. There has been significant convergence in response to this research—74% of the juniors and 83% of the parents gave "additional practice sessions" as their first priority to boost performance, then "mental training support" (58% of the juniors and 53% of the parents). While such high convergence indicates mutually accepted overarching developmental requirements, second-preference sources were diverse: juniors tended to want more competition opportunities, yet parents tended to consider access to fairly acceptable local facilities and coach programs as a priority. Without consistent continuity of aims among family, coach, and association, talent pathways are at risk of slowing down or becoming stagnant in adolescence. Seychelles Tennis Association manages with intermittent donations and has no fixed funding plan, restricting its capacity to commit to coach education, court building, and competition hosting. The finding accords with Bjørndal & Gjesdal (2020), McManama O'Brien et al. (2021), and Jones & Smith (2019), which illustrate that high parental and organisational congruity, backed by fixed funding provision, must exist to provide support for long-term success within TID.

2.3.4 Competition Opportunities

Competition exposure underpins match-specific acquisition of skills, resilient performances and tactic adjustments. Local tournaments were infrequent in Seychelles due to the court closure during the renovation of the tennis courts at Roche Caiman, leading to a mismatch with their training schedules/programs until the courts officially reopened on August

1, 2024.. Coaches indicated that without consistent competition exposure, even technically proficient players struggled with decision-making under the pressure of a match and lost psychological control under the stress of competition.

Periodic competition circuits in the regions are bridging the space between local training and high-performance games, which have been utilized in other small-island transformations (Mauritius), and an intervention is possible for Seychelles in regional collaboration. Empirical research by Freitas (2023) and Jones & Smith (2019) supports the stance that regular competition in a competition format is more than a test of preparedness but a catalyst for skills acquisition, players' retention and mental toughness development.

2.3.5 Cultural, Economic, and Geographic Context

A restricted base population, geographical inaccessibility, and Seychelles' level of development form a unique set of constraints on TID. A limited talent pool requires early diversification of promising athletes before specialisation and geographical inaccessibility, limits the occurrence of more competitions. These conditions create the need for high-level local adaptation of transferred TID prototypes from high-resource countries, enabling them to live a life of their own and thrive independently. Alternatively, Seychelles can turn to similar island nations, where regional cooperation, multi-sport early development, and low-cost infusion of technology are employed to maximize resources.

Ultimately, success for TID in Seychelles will be based on an across-the-board strategy to increase the quality of coaching, provide access to additional facilities, prioritize parental and organizational priorities with each other and make provision for regular, low-cost competition opportunities—all with full account taken of Seychelles' unique socio-economic and geographical limitations.

2.4 Innovative Approaches to Talent Identification and Development (TID) in Tennis

2.4.1 Use of Technology in Talent Identification

The use of technology is evolving rapidly in how talent in tennis is discovered and nurtured. Baker et al. (2017) highlight the utility of sport technology, including biomechanical analysis and performance monitoring systems, in assessing players' physical capabilities and technical skills. Technologies such as motion analysis software and GPS monitoring are widely used to track players' movement patterns, stamina and technical skills.

ShotSpotter technology, for instance, measures ball speed as well as spin and is one technology whose potential can be useful in shaping a player's potential early in development. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in tennis statistics also enables analysis of trends in player performance, which may not be apparent through traditional methods, presenting a possibility for more effective decision-making in recruiting talent (Gould et al., 2020). Technology can, in this way, prove to be useful not only in more effective talent identification but also in guiding players' personal growth. The utilization of wearable technologies, such as heart rate monitors and accelerometers, provides coaches with the opportunity to track a player's physical state and workload during training sessions, offering real-time feedback for informed decision-making (Baker et al., 2022).

Yet such innovations come with challenges—considering small island nations like Seychelles, the problem is, costly setups like motion tracking and ShotSpotter being totally beyond budget and wearables needing recurring finances in the form of maintenance, replacement and subscription charges to access information. There are also questions of ethics: the resultant biometric and performance information must comply to data privacy law governing the storage, transmission, and use thereof, particularly for underage participants. Reliance on information limits the range of testing to the extent that it becomes useless, as the essential intangibles of motivation, flexibility and emotional resilience are ruled inadmissible.

Affordable and scalable solutions for Seychelles are more practical choices: for example, phone-based video analysis programs like Coach's Eye or Dartfish, or open-source performance tracking programs are valuable tools providing trainers and players with valuable information without the exorbitant prices of high-end systems and wearables.

2.4.2. Early Specialization vs. Diversification: Emerging Insights

The early sport specialization development model is being questioned by increasing evidence. Jones & Smith (2019) argue that there is a trend toward diversification in training for early development stages among athletes. Balyi & Hamilton (2004) argue that multi-sport training is resistant to early burnout or emotional exhaustion, lowering long-term athletic development. Meisel et al. (2022) argue that despite the existence of a sport that would require early specialization, a broader introduction to other sports, such as football or basketball, is known to be a potential way for young players to be advantaged, increasing their higher athletic competence, decision-making and competitiveness. Adopting a diversified approach to sports in Seychelles could offer significant benefits, especially given the limited access to specialized sports facilities. Engaging in multiple sports would not only enhance physical resilience but also foster mental toughness, providing athletes with a well-rounded foundation. Additionally, diversifying early allows for greater familiarity with body movement as well as enhanced cognitive ability, which are fundamental demands in preparing for tactics and psychologically preparing for sports competition (Côté et al., 2020).

In practice, this involves putting juniors, and particularly primary-school ages, into athletics, football, or swimming in combination with tennis in early life, and then concentrating on tennis-specific training in the adolescent years. This strategy is also more easily culturally translatable in Seychelles, where already school programs and sports clubs have multi-sport introduction schemes in place. While some who are critical of diversification fear that it could slow the preparation of highly technical sports for the top level of competition, there are signs

to indicate that for small-island environments where throughout the year competition coverage is sparse, the wider initial base of skills results in sustainable longer-term participation and reduced dropout levels.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This research employs a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methods to offer a general picture of Seychelles tennis' TID system. Here, both qualitative and quantitative data of the same period are gathered, judged individually and then combined to generate aggregate knowledge. The method is well-suited to the Seychelles case, where resource constraints, the geographical dispersion of players, and striking a balance among stakeholders' interests necessitate measurable trends and a deep understanding of the context.

A mixed-methods design facilitates concurrent data collection and independent analysis of both quantitative and narrative understandings, then combines them to offer an in-depth perception of prevailing strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement (Pereira et al., 2024).

Quantitative methods, through the application of questionnaires, are employed to quantify quantifiable elements, such as participation levels, training frequencies, motivational pressure levels, and self-reported barriers, among junior players and their parents/guardians.

Qualitative methods, through the application of semi-structured interviews with Sports Administrators and coaches, provide contextual and professional insights into the challenges and opportunities facing Seychelles' tennis developmental environment. The convergent method ensures that results of survey research on issues such as training or having exposure to competition are validated and interpreted narratively through interviews, thereby ensuring the

validity and usability of results for policy and practice. The method is particularly well-suited for studies of sports development, where quantitative trends are complemented by responsiveness to organizational and social processes (Garito, 2024). Simultaneous information collection also enables the proper utilization of available resources and facilitates instant triangulation of perceptions, including the validation and reliability of findings.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

This study employs a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to provide an overall picture of Talent Identification and Development (TID) in Seychelles for young tennis players. The mixed-methods design enables the study to gather both numerical trends and in-depth contextual information, providing an overall picture of the current state of tennis development. By employing self-administered questionnaires with semi-structured interviews, the method secured triangulation of information from diverse resources and hence enhanced validity. This approach facilitated a multilateral understanding of the strengths, weaknesses and potential areas for improvement in the current TID system. The instruments were based on previous TID studies and were tailored to the Seychelles context, after content validity was established and then implemented fully.

3.2.1 Survey of Junior Players and Parents

Quantitative data was obtained through structured self-completion questionnaires distributed to 50 Junior tennis players aged 8 to 16 years who are registered in STA's programs and 30 parents actively involved in their child's tennis activities. Participants were invited to complete and participate in the survey questionnaire. Purposive sampling was used to secure gender representation, training frequency and geographical area representation. It helped to maximize the representativeness of the Seychelles population engaging in tennis to investigate disparities between groups in participation and developmental variables.

The questionnaires asked about training habits, motivating factors, availability of facilities, parent involvement and self-reported barriers to improvement in tennis through closed and Likert-scale questions to enable statistical examination and capture of attitudinal detail.

Participants filled in paper questionnaires and the researcher manually entered the data captured on the SurveyMonkey platform which facilitated information analysis. The surveys were primarily completed by participants on Mahé island, thereby enhancing data representativeness (Garito, 2024). The questionnaires facilitated the collection of critical baseline information to assess patterns of engagement and identify areas requiring strategic intervention.

Assent of the participants and consent of parents were obtained for all the children who participated in the study and participation was voluntary.

3.2.2 Semi-Structured Interviews with Coaches

Qualitative evidence was collected using semi-structured interviews of 11 experienced tennis coaches of varying qualification levels: six ITF Play Tennis, four ITF Level 1 and one ITF Level 3 (Coach Interviews, 2025). The range of certification and coaching years provides depth to qualitative data, which allowed an investigation of variations in coaching philosophy, methods, and access to equipment and facilities. The coaches were chosen strategically to balance beginner through the overall coaching infrastructure (ITF Coaches Interviews, 2025).

The interviews ranged from questions about coaches' experiences, coaching practices, conditions for talent development, constraints and recommendations for improving tennis development in Seychelles. The semi-structured interview schedule allowed for flexibility, enabling the subject of emergent issues to be further investigated while categorizing questions for purposes of comparison. Interviews were conducted to explore coaching philosophies, methods, challenges faced in player development and available resources such as court space

and equipment. The qualitative approach enabled the gaining of insight into actual coaching issues and how they are solved by the coaches. Interviews responses were systematically categorized and analyzed for thematic content to identify major trends and patterns, providing more precise insights into the coaching practices. The semi-structured interviews enable the discovery of new ideas, ensuring that important aspects of the coaching experience are thoroughly explored.

3.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews with Administrators

Simultaneously, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight Sports Administrators from different organizations, namely the Botswana Tennis Association, Mozambique Tennis Federation, Tennis Australia, Tennis Canada, International Tennis Federation, Seychelles National Sports Council, Seychelles Athletics Federation and Seychelles Table Tennis Association to seek their perceptions about governance, policy development, financial resources and organizational collaboration significant for the sustainable development of tennis in Seychelles. The interviewees held strategic roles in governance, finance, coaching education and designing Grassroots Development Programmes. Questionnaires were framed based on the international TID literature and Seychelles-specific issues found in previous STA reports. Their geographical diversity ensured comparisons of best practices and common challenges with small nations and resource-constrained settings with those from larger, more developed countries. The semi-structured questions covered governance, policy application, resource management, and coordination among organizations impacting tennis growth. The interviews focused on the challenges and opportunities in promoting the sustainable development of tennis in Seychelles, with an emphasis on how TID strategies must be resourced within the confines of available resources. Their experience provided lessons on how to scale up tennis development in resource-constrained environments. Credibility was boosted through member-checking, in which interview summaries were

returned to interviewees to be confirmed. The outputs of the interviews were then complemented by those of the coaches, providing a broader interpretation of the TID ecosystem and an overall picture of the policy and governance dimensions involved in tennis development.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The survey data (statistical information) collected from the questionnaire was analyzed using SurveyMonkey software. The researcher aimed to illuminate patterns of participation and the issues faced by junior players in the development of tennis. By comparing responses across demographic segments (e.g., male/female), the research identified key disparities and contextual factors influencing youth involvement in tennis. This step enabled the identification of specific areas where interventions can be introduced to enhance the TID framework.

3.3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative interview data from the coaches and administrators were coded in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-stage thematic analysis guideline: (1) becoming familiar with the data, (2) generating the codes, (3) seeking themes, (4) returning to the themes, (5) defining and naming the themes, and (6) writing up the report. Inductive coding was used to seek the pattern of thinking generated from accounts by participants, specifically in regard to the key issues of coaching behaviors, limits on resources, and motivational influences. To support ensuring rigor, two independent coders coded the transcripts, and intercoder reliability was examined using Cohen's Kappa, with a view to achieving agreement at level 0.80. Adequacy of data was determined when no additional new themes emerged from follow-on interviews. The qualitative data not only provided richness in contextualizing Seychelles' deterrents on successful TID but also allowed for the interpretation of the quantitative survey findings. With the combination of the two, it was possible to facilitate

findings to be subject to triangulation such that personal accounts by coaches and administrators could be inductively connected to statistical trends already established through the quantitative component of the study.

3.3.3 Data Integration Strategy

Findings from the qualitative and quantitative data were synthesized through a convergent mixed-methods design which permitted comparison of quantitative findings with participants' stories. The process provided a comprehensive overview of the current state of the TID system in Seychelles, illustrating both quantitative trends and qualitative results. The merging of these data will aid in formulating actionable suggestions to further improve the TID framework, considering resource limitations and the socio-cultural context of Seychelles. The merger of the two strands of data will enhance the validity and reliability of the results, thereby ensuring that the statistical findings and qualitative insights from participants are aligned in meaning (Pereira et al., 2024). The results of both approaches will synergize to provide a comprehensive and evidence-based plan for developing tennis in Seychelles.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations took precedence in this research to ensure the protection and respect of all research participants. Informed consent procedures were implemented for all participants and for those under 18 years of age, parental or guardian consent was also obtained. They were informed that they were free to withdraw without any negative effect at any time. They were reassured that all responses were kept in the strictest of confidence; all identifying information was stripped or anonymized from transcripts and examined data in an effort to conceal respondents' identities. Data were stored securely on password-protected electronic devices, with access restricted to the researcher to prevent unauthorized dissemination. Additionally, care was taken in the interview procedures and survey item creation to remove sensitive or upsetting questions, ensuring that participants felt comfortable and safe

participating. Athlete protection protocols (Galagan et al. 2019) existed during the time of physical testing, including the availability of first aid trained personnel, sufficient warm-up/cool-down time, and fatigue/distress monitoring.

According to the continuing collaboration between Tennis Canada and the Seychelles Tennis Association under the ITF's Advantage All Twinning Initiative, the research adhered to mutually agreed-upon standards for transparency and ethical sharing of information. In such an environment, aggregate statistics and anonymous data can be reported to Tennis Canada and the ITF in the areas of overall program impact evaluations, with confidentiality measures guaranteed.

We carefully monitored ethical compliance during data collection and adapted as necessary to ensure participant protection and data integrity.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Junior Players' Demographics and Practice Patterns

A total of 50 junior tennis players aged 8 to 16 years, who participated in the Junior Tennis Initiative, STA School programs, and the national training programs, completed the survey. The gender distribution was fairly balanced, with 56% male and 44% female participants. Thirty percent (30%) of players completed the survey at the multipurpose court (15 players), while 70% completed it at the tennis court (35 players). Regarding age distribution, the sample was relatively evenly spread across different age groups. The largest segment was 8-year-olds, making up 18% of the sample, followed by 10-year-olds at 16%. Of these 50 participants, 28% were aged 8–9, 30% were aged 10–11, 28% were aged 12–13, and 14% were aged 14–16. This indicates a broad range of developmental stages among the juniors, though the teenage group (14–16) was somewhat underrepresented.

In terms of years of tennis participation, the majority are recent entrants. Specifically, 42% are beginners with less than one year of experience, and 18% have been involved for 1–2 years. In comparison, 12% have participated for 3–4 years, while 28% have been playing for five or more years. This suggests that although many juniors are still in the early stages of tennis participation, there is also a stable group with longer-term involvement, which is valuable for establishing ongoing competition pathways. When asked how often they practice, 44% of juniors reported practicing once a week, 34% practiced 2–3 times a week, and 14% trained 4–5 times weekly. Only 2% practiced at a high level, 6–7 times a week. These findings suggest a reliance on limited practice time, with relatively few juniors engaging in higher-intensity training.

Influences from friends or family (8%) had the least motivating factor to junior players. This would imply that there is minimal external social pressure in motivating junior development, with emphasis on the provision of formal training centres and career planning to ensure maintenance of motivation and to propel continuous development, particularly as competitors develop competence in the skilled areas.

4.1.1 Challenges Identified by Junior Players

The junior survey results also highlighted some of the major challenges for the junior players in Seychelles. 47% of the juniors indicated that the primary challenge was the difficulty in mastering specific skills as a player. This issue was exacerbated by the lack of availability of practice courts and sessions, which further restricts players from practicing regularly. 33% of the juniors identified the non-availability of training resources as another major obstacle to regular practice. With only five public courts at the Roche Caiman Sports Complex opened exclusively from 10am to 7pm, there tends to be more demand than availability, thus preventing juniors from additional practice and development their skills. This observation is consistent with coaching data presented in Table 4.3, where limited court access was also

highlighted as a high-impact constraint. These logistics issues underscore the need for more convenient and regular practice sessions to facilitate skill development.

Additionally, 39% of juniors recognized lack of support from family or friends as another key concern. Not having support from family or friends is particularly threatening as there is a greater demand for quality motivational support, mentorship for the juniors to strive towards their targeted goal.

Another significant 35% of the junior players reported the expense of playing tennis as the chief discourager to playing and future advancement. This was an issue in every category of demographics. Financial factors listed included costs beyond coach and court, such as travel to competitions, purchase of rackets, and clothing. In 2024, Annual junior membership fee for players below 18 years of age was SCR 500 (~USD 35), and per-term junior tuition class fees were SCR 600 (~USD 42) once weekly, SCR 1,200 (~USD 84) twice weekly, and SCR 1,800 (~USD 126) thrice-per-week.

STA had newly upgraded its five existing tennis courts to ITF Standards in 2024, to encourage players to the sport, and has lowered most of the tuition fees in 2025: Annual junior membership remained the same at SCR 500 (~USD 35), and per-term class fees reduced to SCR 300 (~USD 21) once weekly, SCR 600 (~USD 42) twice weekly, and SCR 900 (~USD 53) thrice per week. With 66% of the players reporting a strong desire to compete in tournament; reducing these financial barriers is expected to increase both participation rates and improve overall player performance (Junior Survey, 2025).

Table 4.1: Junior Players' Practice Frequency

Practice Frequency			% of Players
Practice	once	per	44%
	week		

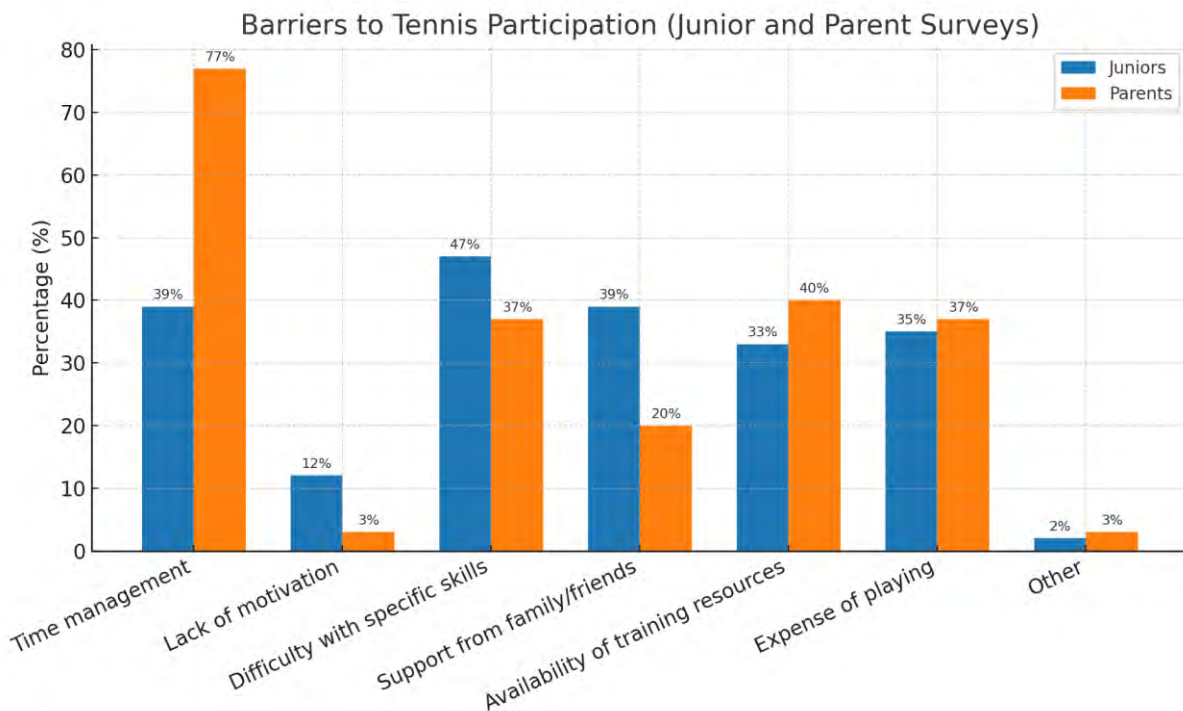
Practice times/week	2–3	34%
Practice times/week	≥4	16%
Practice < once per week		6%

4.1.2 Practice Facilities, Frequency, and Motivational Drivers

The Junior Survey reported that the availability of good-quality practice facilities and equipment remains a significant constraint on player development. Twenty percent (20%) of juniors mentioned access to better facilities, while 30% replied that a lack of access to proper sports equipment restricted practice. These constraints, along with existing problems such as request for better coaching (48%), and low practice frequency with 44% reporting once a week, and only 16% trained four or-more times a week. Players who practiced less frequently routinely mentioned logistical constraints, facility size limitations and equipment shortages as main reasons for their reduced participation.

Motivational forces identified performance-based and intrinsic factors as influencing participation. Love for the sport was the most commonly reported of these forces (74%), followed by the desire to compete in tournaments, leagues (66%), potential to become a professional player (46%). The recent initiatives by the Seychelles Tennis Association, such as arranging players' transportation from schools like Cascade Primary and Perseverance Primary to the Roche Caiman tennis courts, have boosted attendance and have significantly helped reduce transportation as a barrier for players the burden of players (STA Internal Communication, 2025). Equipment and facility shortages, in addition to the aforementioned operational enhancements, would bring significant improvements to intervals of practice time and overall player progression.

Figure 4.1: Barriers to Tennis Participation (Junior and Parent Surveys)



4.2 Comparison of Junior and Parent Data

Parent-junior survey comparison, presented in Figure 4.1, highlights overlap and disparity between perceived participation barriers in tennis. Parents reported lack of time management significantly more often (77%) compared to juniors (39%), possibly because they might be more sensitive to scheduling requirements and other obligations. Juniors reported more trouble learning specific skills more frequently (47%) than parents (37%), citing player-oriented attitudes first on the lists of skill learning problems.

Attitudes to facilities and resources also revealed inequality. 33% of the juniors reported lack of access to resources as a hindrance, as did 40% of the parents, which would lead one to suggest that perhaps parents perceive the structural hindrance more than the players. The same trend was found with encouragement from friends and family, with 39% of the juniors reporting the issue and only 20% of the parents. This would indicate that juniors are more highly sensitized to the absence of encouragement than the parents.

On costs, the two groups also concurred: 35% of the juniors and 37% of the parents' listed expense of playing as a big deterrent. Agreement on that validates that the issue of costs is universal and urgent. Lastly, lack of motivation proved more of a factor among juniors (12%) than it did among the parents (3%), and again, "other issues" were low among both groups.

In balance, these comparisons indicate that whereas at one level parents are inclined to emphasize time and time constraints, juniors are more focused on learning skills, encouragement, and self-motivation. This comparison underscores the need for the Seychelles Tennis Association to implement interventions that simultaneously address parental logistical challenges and junior player development needs.

Table 4.2: Comparison of Junior vs Parents' Motivations

Motivation Category	Junior Survey (%)	Parent Survey (%)
Desire to compete (tournaments, leagues)	66%	73%
Love for the sport	74%	90%
Potential to become a professional athlete	46%	57%
Influences from friends or family	8%	7%
Personal health and fitness	42%	50%
Other	14%	23%

4.3 Coaches' Perspectives from Interviews

4.3.1 Challenges in Coaching

The interviews with coaches provided evidence of several key impediments faced in developing tennis in Seychelles. The notable 17% of coaches identified unavailable court time as one of the principal hindrances for practice as well as for the progression of players.

In a 2025 interview with four ITF Level One coaches (2025), when asked about the challenges of training young tennis players in Seychelles, one coach noted that limited court availability significantly hinders training opportunities. This scarcity is due to factors such as major regional games, closures imposed by sports authorities, renovations, and occasional disruptions.

Another 50% of the coaches reported not enough advanced coaching sessions, particularly for more experienced players who need advanced levels of progression. Coaches explained that advanced programs are usually unavailable, restricting the progression of those who have attained more advanced levels of coaching. Resource deficiencies featured prominently, with 17% of the coaches reporting inadequate complete equipment as a hindrance in the provision of maximum levels of experience in training. Resource shortages did not dampen the passion of both coaches and players, with several coaches reporting how passion and commitment continue to drive tennis participation in Seychelles, despite the minor impediments.

4.3.2 Positive Developments and Opportunities

Despite continuing restrictions, a number of positive trends during the survey and interviews were noted by the interviewers. Most praised the overt dedication of the STA leadership, players, and coaches to saving the sport's existence despite restricted financial resources. School and community outreach programs, too, were praised by coaches for increasing grassroots coverage, providing children who could not afford it without such programs with the opportunity to play tennis. Such programs, as well as lower fee rates, were seen as critical in reducing cost hurdles and providing the game with greater inclusivity. Surprisingly, the commentary reflects the junior and parent survey data in that cost and accessibility were identified as major barriers but it suggests that the policy changes are already on the right track in terms of long-standing issues of concern.

Professional development workshops were also a cause for hope. Coaches mentioned workshop sessions, however infrequent, as being significantly instrumental in increasing coaching standards and taking up the cause of newer training practices. A few respondents credited such sessions with better preparation of players in competitive games, as well, with the observation that there was still scope for more frequent delivery. In passing, proof of increased retention among the youth—especially by institutionalized school programs and recreational "fun camps"—was mentioned as a promise of future growth of the sport in the appropriate directions. These observations lend themselves to the further reinforcement that, despite system-wide challenges, interventions are already giving dividends on access, quality of instruction, and grassroots-level participation.

Table 4.3: Coaches' Reported Challenges

Challenge	Description	Frequency/Impact
Limited Court Access	Insufficient number of courts restricts practice time and scheduling flexibility	Moderate — 27% of the coaches cited that they must share facilities due to limited court access
Coaching Certification Levels	Most coaches hold ITF Play Tennis and ITF Level 1 certifications, which limits their advanced training capabilities.	Moderate — 18% of coaches cited the need for proper training with more qualified coaches.
Workload and Retention Issues	Coaches often face difficulties balancing their coaching	Moderate- 36% of the coaches cited

	responsibilities with other professional commitments.	tennis as not a popular sport v/s other sports.
Limited Access to Mental Skills Training	Limited access to formal mental skills workshops for players and coaches	Moderate-9% of coaches cited Offering a psychology clinic
Resource Constraints	Limited funding impacts equipment availability and facility maintenance	High- 55% of coaches cited limited equipment/court space or sponsorships

4.4 Administrator Survey Results

Out of the total of eight Administrators interviewed, all agreed to participate, resulting in a 100% response rate. Interviews provided insight into their own country's tennis concerns and Seychelles' governance, coordination and strategy for tennis development. Administrators were quick to state that lack of coordination among stakeholders led to duplicity of effort and inefficient allocation of scarce resources. One of the Seychelles Tennis Association's administrators mentioned, "We need a central system to manage activities and finances to avoid overlap and make the most impact" (STA Interview, 2025). The issue of not enough funding was also mentioned as one of the key problems. Short-term-based programs, most of which are those of the Seychelles, are primarily funded through short-term grants, which hinders sustainability and reduces capacity for longer-term planning. Administrators alluded to it as an endemic problem with tennis programs around the world. According to the Botswana Tennis Association, it is their belief that this reliance on sporadic funding undermines the maintenance

of facilities, provision of coaching and education programs and the necessary support for players' development (Botswana Tennis Association Interview, 2025). This is one of the Seychelles' learning areas for its tennis development programs. Speaking of global learning, Administrators from various countries, including Botswana, emphasized the need for longer-term planning and stable funding of tennis programs to achieve sustainable development. Seychelles can borrow from these global lessons, enhancing local programs, infrastructure creation and provision of ongoing support for coaches and players.

Another finding drawn from interviews with the administrators is the realization of the growing prospects for tennis in Seychelles, particularly among young people. Many administrators expressed optimism about the impact of school and grassroots programs on long-term involvement in tennis. In the words of one administrator, "There is a real sense of opportunity to attract young players early on through school partnerships, which will form the basis for continuing growth in the sport" (STA Administrator Interview, 2025). This is indicative of the fact that, despite current difficulties with infrastructure and finance, a quantifiable trend towards the creation of a strong tennis culture in Seychelles is now taking shape. The commitment from tennis officials, coupled with increased involvement from families and communities, has Seychelles well-positioned for further expansion in the coming years.

Table 4.4: Administrators' Key Themes and Recommendations

Theme	Description	Recommendations
Enhanced- Program Coordination	Lack of centralized oversight leads to inconsistent program delivery and limited progress tracking.	Establish a centralized monitoring system to improve coordination, track progress, and ensure consistent implementation across all programs.

Theme	Description	Recommendations
Funding Stability	Reliance on short-term grants threatens program sustainability	Diversify funding sources; engage the government and private sector
Infrastructure Limitations	Insufficient courts limit player development	Invest in more courts and facility upgrades and continued maintenance
Coaching Development	Need for enhanced coach education and professional development opportunities.	Expand coach training and certification programs.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Interpreting the Findings

The findings offer key observations on the state of Seychelles' tennis development, providing insight into the optimization of Talent Identification and Development (TID) systems. The demographic trends and participation patterns reveal, on the one hand, a healthy youth popularity, but on the other, the inability to ensure continuity of the provision of training and extensive accessibility to quality coaches continues to be an issue. This is consistent with similar problems faced by small nations in the literature (Jones & Smith, 2019). There is also a stark disparity evident between the motivational drive of young players centred on the sport's competitions and parents centred on child fitness and public perceptions of their child's sports success. This reveals the complex socio-cultural processes involved in retaining players and their further development, as well as the necessity for a system-wide approach to Talent Identification and Development (TID). The optimum system must address not only

performance enhancement but also utilize community support and involvement mechanisms accordingly. In line with the literature review, executives and coaches identified resource limitations and governance and infrastructure issues, citing that these limitations contribute to the fragmentation of tennis programs in Seychelles (Pereira et al., 2024). In line with the literature, the survey and interview feedback indicate an immediate need for a more integrated, multi-stakeholder design that consolidates separate components such as coaching, facility provision, competitions and mental skill support. The integrated pathway would enable more orderly and sustainable approaches to talent development and the progression of players.

The qualitative results expand understanding of how these issues concerning players relate to grassroots development. Shortages of professional opportunities to develop and hone mental skills, key to building athlete resilience and match play strategy, are lamented by coaches who utilize international best practices (Gould et al., 2002). Limited competitions and infrastructure limit exposure to competitive match play, which is key to developing skills and moving towards psychological adaptation to pressure. The dissonance between parent goals and players' goals also serves to inhibit sustained participation, especially among adolescents where drop outs peak, confirming the value placed on stakeholder education and alignment to program goals. Administrators' call for more effective governance and more secure funding highlights the advantage to be gained through institutional commitment and planning for program sustainability. The results, therefore, emphasize that Seychelles' tennis development is not simply one of physical resource delivery, but one of institutional capacity building and psychosocial welfare structures.

However, it is also necessary to acknowledge that increasing investment cannot necessarily happen in the short term. In those conditions, maximizing what is presently available—whatever that entails, from using existing facilities to capacity, expanding volunteer coach schemes, or shunting limited grants to priority investments like youth mental skills or

grassroots tournaments—is all that matters. Flexibility, rather than dependence on new investment, must drive interim policy and program shifts.

The Ministry of Youth, Sports and Family, together with the Ministry of Education, can step forward to integrate tennis into the curricula of formal education, co-finance interschool competitions and introduce physical education teachers trained in TID models. Ministries can also implement monitoring and evaluation policies for sport programs to allow evidence-based changes to be carried out at regular intervals. Legislative support for land provision for courts and tax exemption for the importation of sporting gear can also help sustain programs.

The stakes for Seychelles' tennis development are very high. Lacking concerted, accelerated effort aimed at coaching levels, infrastructure and systems of competitions, the country risks losing young talents who cannot realize their potential for success. The report highlights the inexorable need for scalable, Seychelles-tailored TID programs matched against the particular socio-economic and geographical contexts of Seychelles. Parent support and engagement, often overlooked but essential for participant commitment and competitiveness, are one of the key determinants in the report. Parents contribute funding and infrastructure support while also playing a key role in shaping their child's commitment and motivation to excel. The involvement of parents in the organizational pathway structure, along with other key drivers such as the acquisition of mental skills, provides a sound basis for sustainable excellence. Regional and international membership, in alignment with countries such as Botswana and Australia, can complement Seychelles' programs through environment-tailored application of best practices. Overall, the findings provide a compelling reason for strategic investment and holistic design to elevate Seychelles tennis to regional and international excellence.

From a gender equity standpoint, the virtual equality of boys' and girls' participation in junior tennis is encouraging news. However, lasting equity will require conscious policy-making—such as gender balance in coaching staff, female role models in outreach programs, and improved retention rates for teenage girls, who often drop out of the sport due to peer and cultural expectations currently we have in our database 14 female coaches and 14 male coaches (50% each) as at April 2025. Gender-sensitive programming and mentorship are needed to ensure inclusive excellence.

Similarly, integrating individuals with disabilities among the youth is an untapped resource within Seychelles' tennis infrastructure. Integration with special schools, adaptive coach instructor training and modifying court structures to be accessible can ensure the integration of differently abled youth. Pilot programs can be initiated in collaboration with disability advocacy organizations, mirroring the conviction that ability lies in every body.

5.2 Proposed TID Strategies for Seychelles

The reduction of court sizes, equipment and facilities for juniors to create initial success and continued involvement forms part of this. Mental skill module training, such as goal setting, concentration and stress management, through qualified coaches, would bridge gaps in psychological preparation. Attendance at community education workshops, which offer matched stimuli and support structures, should be included to ensure coordinated development. Integration with school schemes such as the Junior Tennis Initiative (JTI) and scope enlargement with formal progression criteria need to be included. Clearly defined benchmarks and regular talent development camps would enable follow-up and produce future talent. An integrated pathway would enable a seamless transition between grassroots and elite classes, ensuring continued athlete development.

In addition, the use of technology in the TID model has the capacity to redefine and enhance developmental pathways. Software for monitoring players' performance, video

analysis software, and virtual coaching systems would augment court training by giving coaches and players precise information on technique, development, and match performance. Technology-based scheduling and communication systems would also enhance coordination between the Seychelles Tennis Association, schools, parents, and players, lowering logistical obstacles. In the long term, an online management system would provide a centralized database of player profiles where evidence-based monitoring, selection, and support can be applied at each level of development.

A key complementary strategy is the formalization and expansion of logistical support, specifically transport support, to reduce barriers to engagement. The Seychelles Tennis Association's ongoing effort to introduce juniors from schools such as Cascade Primary and Perseverance Primary to the tennis grounds has already increased attendance and engagement (STA Internal Communication, 2025). Expanding the program to more schools and regions will remove a key operational barrier that currently limits regular practice and exposure to competitive development opportunities. By ensuring access to practice venues, this strategy complements talent identification programs by maximizing opportunities for junior players to hone their skills. Additionally, the integration of transportation planning into the talent development pathway system supports the holistic development ethos of addressing both accessibility and the quality of practice. Institutionalizing coordination with schools and local authorities for transportation can have the potential to improve the coverage and resilience of the program. Logistical support through the provision of transport is, therefore, the key facilitator for talent development to be productive and inclusive for Seychelles.

Nevertheless, capacity building and coach education must be supported by investment to enhance the consistency and quality of training. Having a tiered certification structure that utilizes open advanced programs and mentorship would enable national-level coaches to employ evidence-informed practices, incorporating psychological and physical conditioning

components. Collaborating with regional organizations and the ITF can provide scholarships and grants for ongoing development. Concurrently, establishing a knowledge-sharing and peer-support model for coaches would build community and retention.

Formal participation by coaches in the planning and delivery of mental skills training would provide athletes with practical support. This measure directly addresses the reported constraints from the findings and literature. Coach development is an ongoing multiplier effect, facilitating more player experience and success at the higher levels.

Furthermore, organizing and formalizing a structured, tiered calendar of competitions is essential for providing meaningful match play opportunities for juniors. These competitions should include inter-island, regional and international events, tailored to different age groups and skill levels, ensuring players have access to appropriate and challenging tournaments. Coordination among national federations and schools would enable easy scheduling and resource planning. The implementation of points-based ranking and a digital management system to track participation and points can potentially enhance incentives among players and allow the quantitative measurement of progress in development.

To guard against implementation risks, contingencies for all budget deficiency plans (e.g., trimming activities to within available funds), weather disruption (e.g., reserving indoor venues in the wet season), and deficiencies in human resources (e.g., having in reserve a pool of volunteer coaches to be called upon) would be incorporated. A sustainability plan would be an integral part, aligning recurrent operational costs with a set of funding arrangements diversified to encompass appropriations from governments, corporate sponsorships, tourism levies, and sport development grants from overseas. Annual stakeholder reports would be part of the process to facilitate adaptive management of programs.

A Feasibility and Implementation Plan with Budget Considerations is provided in Appendix A and specific recommendations listed below.

Table 5.1: From Recommendations to Actions

Recommendation	Key Action	Lead	Resources Required	Estimated Budget (USD)	Progress Benchmark	Completion Date	Evidence of Success
Establish a centralized monitoring system.	Implement a digital project management platform.	Program Director/Data Analyst	Software license (5,000 USD/year x 3 years), data analysis software (2,000 USD one-time), training for staff (500 USD/person x 5 people), IT support (2,000 USD/year x 3 years), integration with player database (3,000 USD)	26,500 USD	Platform operational, data entry complete, reports generated, data-driven insights informing talent ID.	Q4 2025	Consistent program implementation across all initiatives, Improved coordination, Evidence of data-driven talent identification and development.
Diversify funding sources.	Develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy targeting businesses.	Fundraising Manager/Partnership Officer	Staff time (10,000 USD/year x 3 years), marketing materials (5,000 USD), grant writing software (1,000 USD/year x 3 years), relationship management database (2,000 USD)	41,000 USD	Applications submitted, new corporate donors secured, funding increased.	Q2 2026	Increased funding from diverse sources, improved corporate partnerships, sustained talent development initiatives.
Invest in more courts and facility upgrades	Secure funding and construct two new courts with player development equipment	Infrastructure Coordinator/Talent Development Coach	Funding (grants, donations, corporate sponsorships), contractor (50,000 USD), materials (30,000 USD), permits (2,000 USD), high-performance training equipment (20,000 USD)	102,000 USD	Funding secured, construction started, courts completed. Improved equipment.	Q4 2027	Increased court availability, enhanced player development environment, improved player performance metrics (e.g., rankings, competition results).
Expand coach and training	Organize three coach certification	Coach Development Officer/High-	Certified trainers (3,000 USD/workshop x	34,000 USD	Workshops held, coaches	ongoing	Improved coaching quality,

certification programs.	workshops per year. Focus talent ID.	perf Dev. Manager	9 workshops), training materials with focus on talent identification methods (2,000 USD), venue (500 USD/workshop x 9 workshops), marketing to attract coaches (1,000 USD)		certified in new talent ID/High-Performance methods.		increased number of certified coaches, improved ability to identify and nurture talent.
Coaching Mentorship program with Sr.Coach	Establish a mentorship program connecting experienced and new coaches.	Senior Coach/Development Coordinator	Time commitment from senior coaches (5,000 USD/year x 3 years in stipends), matching platform (1,000 USD one-time), program oversight (2,000 USD/year x 3 years), resources to support mentor-mentee meetings and skill development (2,000 USD)	23,000 USD	Mentorship pairs established, regular meetings.	Q2 2026	Enhanced skill transfer, improved coaching consistency and more effective implementation of talent ID programs across all levels.

Table 5.2: Feasibility and Implementation Plan with Budget Considerations

Total Estimated Budget (SCR): 2,570.000, (USD \$ _177,622.26) __

Phase	Key Activities	Timeline	Estimated Budget (SCR)	Main Funding Sources
Pilot Phase	Launch TID programs, coach training workshops, digital player management system	2025 (Q1–Q4)	400,000	Government grants, international sports development funds

Expansion Phase	Extend to Praslin & La Digue, expand coach development, increase competitions	2025–2026	600,000	Private sponsorships, international and local grants
	Build 5 new hard courts: 3 new ones on Mahe, 1 on Praslin and 1 on La Digue (14,000USD per court *= 70,000USD	2026-2027	870,000	Private Sector, Sponsors, Grants and Government funding
Consolidation Phase	Nationwide integration, continuous coach development, transport/logistics scaling	2027 (Q1–Q4)	700,000	Government support, sponsors, grants

Budget Summary by Category

Budget Item	Estimated Cost (SCR)	Description
Facility Maintenance	350,000	Clubhouse Renovations, maintenance of facility and equipment
Coach Development	300,000	Certifications, workshops, mental skills programs
Transportation Program	200,000	Vehicles, fuel, logistics
Digital Management Systems	90,000	Software development, licenses, maintenance
Competitions and Events	200,000	Organizing regional and national tournaments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Zonals (ITF/CAT Eastern 14 and 16 Tennis Championship) in 2026/2027 - AdvantageAll Seminar for female and male in 2026 - ITF/CAT J30 in 2026
Administration and M&E	300,000	Staff salaries, reporting, evaluation

See Appendix A1 for detailed budget breakdown and KPIs.

5.3 Addressing Key Barriers

The proposed TID interventions specifically address infrastructural and resource constraints, which pose extreme challenges to Seychelles' development in tennis. These include the construction and development of new tennis facilities on Mahe (3 new courts at a total of 42,000usd, at Roche Caiman, meaning more courts, hence allowing STA to be able to host big

ITF/CAT Tournaments, which is not the case now with only 5 courts. Additionally, one new court will be established on La Digue, bringing the total to 2 public courts, and 1 on Praslin, with new constructions and the modernization of existing facilities planned between 2026 and 2027 to help cater to the growing demand. This will help increase the available space for training and prevent discrepancies in scheduling among trainees and trainers. With enhanced facilities and a number of other tennis facilities, Seychelles will be capable of providing increased opportunities for training and competitions to adults and juniors. Incorporating one to two mental skill programs per month for the kids and for the kids and their coaches for growth and parent participation along the pathway to talent, sociocultural motivational mismatches that are presently stifling, and acknowledging those mismatches that are currently hindering ongoing support practices. Robust education and mentoring networks among coaches eliminate the constraint on coach capacity, whereby high-quality staff are empowered to deliver holistic training and psychosocial supporting practices. All these intensive interventions establish the environment where players, coaches and families become resourced and aligned to undertake tennis excellence.

In order to achieve optimal program coordination, an overall talent track and identification system should be developed. The system will be utilized to facilitate data-driven decision-making, and it will allow players' development to be monitored easily and ongoing program development to be improved. Well-defined articulation of associations', federations', schools', and government departments' roles and responsibilities shall facilitate avoiding duplication of efforts while ensuring coordination. Frequent organization of stakeholder forums should be achieved in order to allow openness in planning together and in communication. Achievement of diversification and stabilization of national sports policy funds and extraneous grants should reinforce program sustainability as well. These actions respond to administrators' demands for more effective institutional arrangements and

organization capacity-building to conduct and sustain effective talent development and identification programs for tennis.

5.4 Feasibility and Implementation

The three phases of implementing the Talent Identification and Development (TID) programs have been designed with the aim of overcoming the financial and logistical constraints of Seychelles while ensuring long-term sustainability.

The first phase, TID Year 1, will focus on launching the TID program on Mahé. This phase will cover key activities like the development of coaching skills (currently we have 28 ITF Certified level coaches from play and stay tennis to ITF level 3 and by 2026 we want to achieve two ITF Certified level 2 and 1 ITF Certified Level 3 by 2026), facilitation of workshop certifications, provision of transport support for student-athletes and the establishment of a computerized management system for players. The expected monetary spend for the phase is SCR 400,000, which will be covered through a combination of government grants, STA funding and sponsorships.

The Expansion Stage (Years 1-2) will seek to extend the program's scope to Praslin and La Digue, with an emphasis on developing coaching qualifications, enhancing participation in competitions and consolidating parental and community engagement. The expected expense for this phase is SCR 600,000, financed mainly through private sponsorships and overseas grants. The consolidation stage, in Year 3, is expected to see the full national rollout of the TID system, the continuous development of the coaches, and improved transport and logistical support. The final phase, expected to cost SCR 700,000, will be reliant on government support, sponsorship avenues and foreign funding contributions. For the overall financial analysis, refer to Table 5.1, which outlines projected expenses for all stages of implementation. The costs include facility improvements, coaches' training, transport programs, electronic management systems, competitions and administrative costs.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This research provides an extensive review of best practices in Talent Identification and Development (TID) systems in Africa and globally and the current situation in Seychelles. Studies revealed high junior interest and participation levels, yet low training frequencies and a lack of good-quality coaches at a higher level (such as ITF levels 2, 3, and higher), which hindered maximum talent growth. Shortages in infrastructure and the need for more competition were revealed to be significant issues that restrain players' development and motivational levels. Coaches indicated a need for more professional training and mental skills development to optimize their role for the players. Parent perceptions revealed socio-cultural mismatches where participation motivations often contradicted each other among players and their parents. Administrators specified concerns regarding governance and the pivotal role played by sustainable finance and strategic partnerships. As a whole they suggest that tennis development in Seychelles requires, on multiple levels, multifaceted interventions that integrate infrastructure, coaches, competitions and stakeholders. Without targeted intervention, Seychelles risks underutilizing its emerging tennis talent pathway.

6.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This is an important contribution to the nation's knowledge base of tennis development issues and solutions. The research highlights the necessity for the integration of mental skills and community participation into TID frameworks, factors that are often minimized in such a small island environment. It then provides an accessible, evidence-based, scalable model pathway to the talent that is contextualized to the infrastructural and socio-economic realities of Seychelles. These solutions are transmissible to other sports and offer relevance to other sports wishing to achieve sustainable growth in small island and resource-scarce environments.

The research bridges a knowledge gap by addressing localized issues and proposing solutions driven by international best practices. This study also outlines a coordinated model for multi-agency and school collaboration that can inform policy integration between sports and education Ministries. This research provides the foundation on which future policy, programs and policy design can be based to facilitate sports excellence in such an environment.

6.3 Limitations

Despite the usefulness of this study, several important limitations must be noted to affect the interpretation and generalizability of the findings. Firstly, while the sample size was sufficient for exploratory purposes, it was relatively small, even in the qualitative subsample. The eight Administrators and eleven coaches interviewed might not be fully representative of the range of experience and perceptions across all stakeholders in tennis in Seychelles. Second, collecting data through self-reported surveys may introduce biases, especially social desirability bias and recall bias, which can affect the accuracy of participants' reported reasons for playing and the challenges they faced.

Geographic considerations ruled out participation by more distant, harder-to-reach island communities that would likely have distinctive environmental and challenge profiles not sampled herein. These factors cumulatively limit the extent to which the findings can be generalizable to the entire population of Seychellois tennis players and to other sports.

Additionally, time constraints precluded a longitudinal study design. Hence, there was no scope to observe how the career paths of junior players transform over time or how interventions shape retention and performance in the long term. A cross-sectional study is merely a snapshot and is unable to establish causality or demonstrate the impact of a program or policy change on an outcome. Identifying these flaws is crucial to putting the findings into proper perspective and facilitating the reasoned application of proposals while highlighting areas for more detailed follow-up studies.

6.4 Future Research Directions

Future research should aim to generalize findings to larger, more heterogeneous samples, including distant and underrepresented groups to achieve a more comprehensive national picture. Multi-year longitudinal studies of junior players would provide valuable outcome data on the effectiveness of TID interventions and drivers of retention. More investigations into mental skills training and its effects on resilience and on-court performance in the Seychellois setting are warranted. Comparative analyses against other small island developing states or low-income nations or other small African nations could clarify transmittable best practices and idiosyncratic issues. Investigations of gender-specific facilitators and purported obstacles to participation in tennis would further guide inclusivity initiatives. Investigations into the application of technology, such as virtual coaches and tracking software, could provide innovative solutions. Piloting the proposed TID strategy using control and test groups—e.g., in two different districts—would allow researchers to measure tangible outcomes of intervention designs and build evidence for scaling. Finally, this approach would serve as a bridge between theoretical framework and real-world implementation.

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Appendices

Appendix A1: Feasibility and Implementation Plan with Budget Considerations

Phase	Activities	Timeline & Quarterly Milestones	Responsible Parties	Estimated Budget (SCR)	% of Total Budget	Funding Sources	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Risk Mitigation & Sustainability Actions
Pilot Phase (Year 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch TID programs - Coach training & certification workshops - Develop digital player management system 	Q1: Program launch readiness & facility prep Q2: Initial player enrolment & coach training Q3: Mid-year evaluation & adjustments Q4: Year-end performance review & stakeholder meeting	STA, Local Schools, Coaches	400,000	23.5%	Government grants, international sports development funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100 players enrolled - 20 coaches certified - System tested 	Budget scaling if grants delayed; use volunteer coaches if staff shortfalls; ensure local sponsorships secured for Year 2 activities
Expansion Phase (Years 1-2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend program to Praslin & La Digue - Expand coaching development - Increase competition opportunities 	Q1: Identify regional hubs & local coordinators Q2: Launch inter-island training camps Q3: Host 2+ competitions Q4: Evaluate regional performance & participation	STA, Schools, Coaches, Communities	600,000	35.3%	Private sponsorships, international grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programs running in 3 islands - 3+ local competitions held - 30 coaches certified 	Develop transport-sharing agreements with schools; introduce community fundraising events to offset costs; weather-proof scheduling for rainy season
Consolidation Phase (Year 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full integration of TID nationwide - Continuous coach development - Regular monitoring & evaluation cycles - Scale transport & logistical support 	Q1: National TID rollout Q2: Mid-year national tournament Q3: Final certification cycle Q4: Year-end M&E & long-term funding review	STA, Schools, Coaches, Government	700,000	41.2%	Government support, sponsors, grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National coverage achieved - M&E implemented - 75% transportation satisfaction rate 	Shift operating costs to domestic revenue streams (membership fees, event ticketing, sports tourism); establish reserve fund to buffer economic shocks

Appendix A2: Junior Survey Questionnaire

Description: The April 2025 survey of 50 junior players (8–16) covered training frequency, barriers to, motivations for, and aspirations. It consisted of 13 Likert and open-ended questions and was distributed to schools in English, achieving a 100% response rate. Piloted with 10 juniors, the results revealed that 44% train at least once a week, 76% enjoy competing in matches, 39% face time management challenges, and 8% are 14–16 years old.

Sample Questions:

Q1 - Age

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q2 - Gender

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q3 - How many years have you been playing tennis?

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q4 - How often do you practice tennis per week?

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q5 - What do you enjoy most about playing tennis? (Select up to 3)

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q6 - How do you feel about your current tennis skill level?

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q7 - Select the top three things that could help you improve your tennis skills?

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q8 - Are there any specific challenges you face in your tennis training? (Select three top challenges)

98.33% of juniors responded to this question (49/50 answered).

Q9 - What motivates you the most to play tennis? (Select up to 3)

100% of juniors responded to this question (50/50 answered).

Q10 - What are your short-term goals in tennis?

58.33% of juniors responded to this question (35/50 answered)

Q11 - What are your long-term aspirations in tennis?

53.33% of juniors responded to this question (32/50 answered).

Q12 - What would you change about your current training or development program?

48.33% of juniors responded to this question (29/50 answered).

Q13 - Any additional comments or suggestions for improving tennis in the Seychelles?

25% of juniors responded to this question (15/50 answered).

Appendix B: Parent Survey Questionnaire

Description: The April 2025 parents' survey of 30 parents measured support, barriers, and incentives. Consisting of 13 questions (including Likert scales and open-ended questions), the survey was distributed in English in person and through schools, achieving a 100% response rate for the first 9 questions. Open-ended questions had a lower participation, ranging from 20% to 33%. The survey highlighted that 44% of children practice at least once a week and 54% enjoy socializing.

Sample Questions:**Q1 - Age of your child**

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q2 - Gender of your child

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q3 - How many years has your child been playing tennis?

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q4 - How often does your child practice tennis per week?

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q5 - What do you feel your child enjoys most about playing tennis? (Select up to 3)

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q6 - How does your child feel about his/her current tennis skill level?

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q7 - Select the top three things that could help your child improve his/her tennis skills?

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q8 - Are there any specific challenges your child faces in his/her tennis training? (Select three top challenges)

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q9 - As a parent, what motivates you to support your child's tennis journey? (Select up to 3)

100% of parents responded to this question.

Q10 - What are your short-term goals for your child in tennis?

33.33% of parents responded to this question (10 out of 30 answered).

Q11 - What are your long-term aspirations for your child's involvement in tennis?

26.67% of parents responded to this question (8 out of 30 answered).

Q12 - What changes would you like to see in your child's current training or development program?

20% of parents responded to this question (6 out of 30 answered).

Q13 - Any additional comments or suggestions for improving tennis in the Seychelles?

30% of parents responded to this question (9 out of 30 answered).

Appendix C: Interview with Administrators

Description: Semi-structured interviews with eight administrators from around the world in April to May 2025 to identify successful coaching strategies and limitations to youth tennis talent development. The 15 questions aimed to understand the current state and strategic approach of the organizations involved in tennis development in Seychelles and other individual sports. Specifically, through the interviews with administrators, the researcher sought to gather insights on their roles, organizational goals, initiatives for youth engagement, coach support, partnerships, infrastructure plans, challenges faced, resource needs, evaluation methods, future objectives, and potential collaborations. Overall, the goal was to identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities within Seychelles' tennis development framework to inform future strategies for talent identification and player development.

Sample Questions

Q1- Can you describe your role and responsibilities within your organization related to athlete identification and development?

Q2- What is your organization's vision for enhancing tennis excellence in the Seychelles?

Q3- What initiatives has your organization implemented to promote youth participation in tennis?

Q4- How does your organization support coaches in developing their training methods and improving their skills?

Q5- What partnerships have you established with other nations or organizations to enhance tennis development?

Q6- What is the timeline for the construction of tennis courts in your country?

Q7- What are the key challenges your organization faces in implementing effective tennis development strategies?

Q8- In your opinion, what resources or support are most urgently needed to improve youth tennis programs in the Seychelles?

Q9- How do you evaluate the success of existing tennis talent identification and development programs?

Q10- What goals do you have for the next 3-5 years to enhance tennis talent identification and player development in the Seychelles?

Q11- How can collaboration among different sports associations benefit tennis development?

Q12- What role do you see international collaborations playing in the growth of tennis in Seychelles?

Q13- Are there any successful examples or best practices from other countries that you believe could be adapted for Seychelles?

Q14- Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations for improving the tennis landscape in the Seychelles?

Q15- Do you have any Talent Identification and Development (TID) strategies in place in Seychelles? If yes, is it available? Where can I access this document?

[Appendix D: Interview with Coaches](#)

Description: Semi-structured interviews with eleven certified Seychelles tennis coaches in April 2025 aimed to identify successful coaching strategies and limitations to youth tennis talent development. The 14 questions covered background, strategy, difficulties, and intentions, with a 100% response rate. Key findings are that all of the coaches would avail

themselves of the 'Play and Stay' tennis (Q4), and 67% (9/11) considered an age of 6–10 years beneficial (Q5), while 83% (10/11) identified few facilities or apparatus as an overarching limitation (Q8). National initiatives, scholarships, and interschool competition were recommended by coaches to enhance talent recognition (Q13).

Sample Questions

Q1 - Can you briefly describe your coaching background and experience in tennis? (# of years)

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q2 - What coaching certifications (e.g., Play Tennis, ITF Levels: 1 to 3) do you hold and how have they influenced your training methods?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q3 - What specific training methods do you apply in your coaching, and how do you know if they are effective?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q4 - How do you incorporate the 'Play and Stay' initiative into your training programs?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q5 - In your experience, what age groups benefit most from the 'Play and Stay' approach, and why?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q6 - Can you discuss how you assess and identify talent among young tennis players? What criteria do you use?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q7 - How do you customize your training programs to cater to different skill levels among junior players?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q8 - What are the primary challenges you face in training young tennis players in the Seychelles?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q9 - How do you address issues related to resource limitations, such as equipment and facilities?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q10 - Have you encountered any challenges specific to the different ITF levels? If so, can you elaborate?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q11 - In your opinion, what role does player motivation play in training and how do you foster it?

100% of coaches responded to this question (6/6 answered).

Q12 - If you identify a player who has strong skill sets and motivation, what do you suggest for this player to continue to develop?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q13 - What changes or improvements would you recommend for talent identification and development strategies in Seychelles?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

Q14 - How can collaboration among coaches enhance training practices and player development?

100% of coaches responded to this question (11/11 answered).

[Appendix E: Survey Data Summary](#)

Description: Survey responses of 50 juniors and 30 parent respondents (April 2025), analyzed using SurveyMonkey, in STA Survey Analysis in April-May 2025 PowerPoint (slides 5–8).

Sample Data Table:

Metric	Juniors (n=50)	Parents (n=30)
Competition focus	66% (33)	73% (22)
Facility Shortages	33% (16)	40% (12)
Coaching Dissatisfaction	48% (24)	43% (13)
Other	14% (7)	23% (7)

Appendix F: STA Program Overview

Description: Summarizes Seychelles Tennis Association's (STA) tennis programs, drawn from the STA 2024 Annual Report and April to May 2025 survey. Programs reach over 500 junior players (8–16) through school-based programs, with an 88% participation rate. STA sessions are conducted at the Roche Caiman Sports Complex on Mondays to Fridays from 3:00pm to 5:00pm and on Saturdays from 9am to 1pm. Everyone is given access to the facility. However, 44% of the juniors who answered the survey questionnaire mentioned that they could only attend training once weekly due to scheduling conflicts with their extracurricular activities (34% reported facility shortages). Programs have one full-time certified coach and certified part-time coaches, and there are equipment shortages to distribute to all schools. However, there is a reasonable amount of equipment at the tennis court for use whenever the STA coaches conduct their classes (33% report parental cost factor).

Program Structure:

- **Age Groups:** Among those who answered the questionnaire, the age groups were 8–10 (grassroots, 48%), 11–13 (intermediate, 44%), and 14–16 (advanced, 8%).
- **Session Frequency:** 1–2 hours weekly, 44% once weekly, 16% 4+ times.
- **Locations:** Five tennis courts (Roche Caiman Sports Complex, Roche Caiman).
- **Activities:** School clinics (500+ juniors), ad-hoc tournaments (46% junior demand).

Note: Data from *STA Association (2024 to 2025)* and PowerPoint (slides 5–8).

