

# 'THE ASCENT OF MAN' *WOMAN*: DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND PERCEPTIONS OF FEMALE YOUTH SOCCER PLAYERS



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## Importance



Popularity and participation rates in female soccer are increasing exponentially on a **global scale**, yet there is a paucity of knowledge regarding development of talented female players.



Due to developmental differences between **males and females**, applying conclusions drawn from male data may be erroneous, therefore gender-specific enquiry is merited.

Recent **changes** to female soccer in England (mixed-gender soccer limit raised to 18; introduction of Women's Super League (WSL) academy programme) intensify the need for exploratory research.

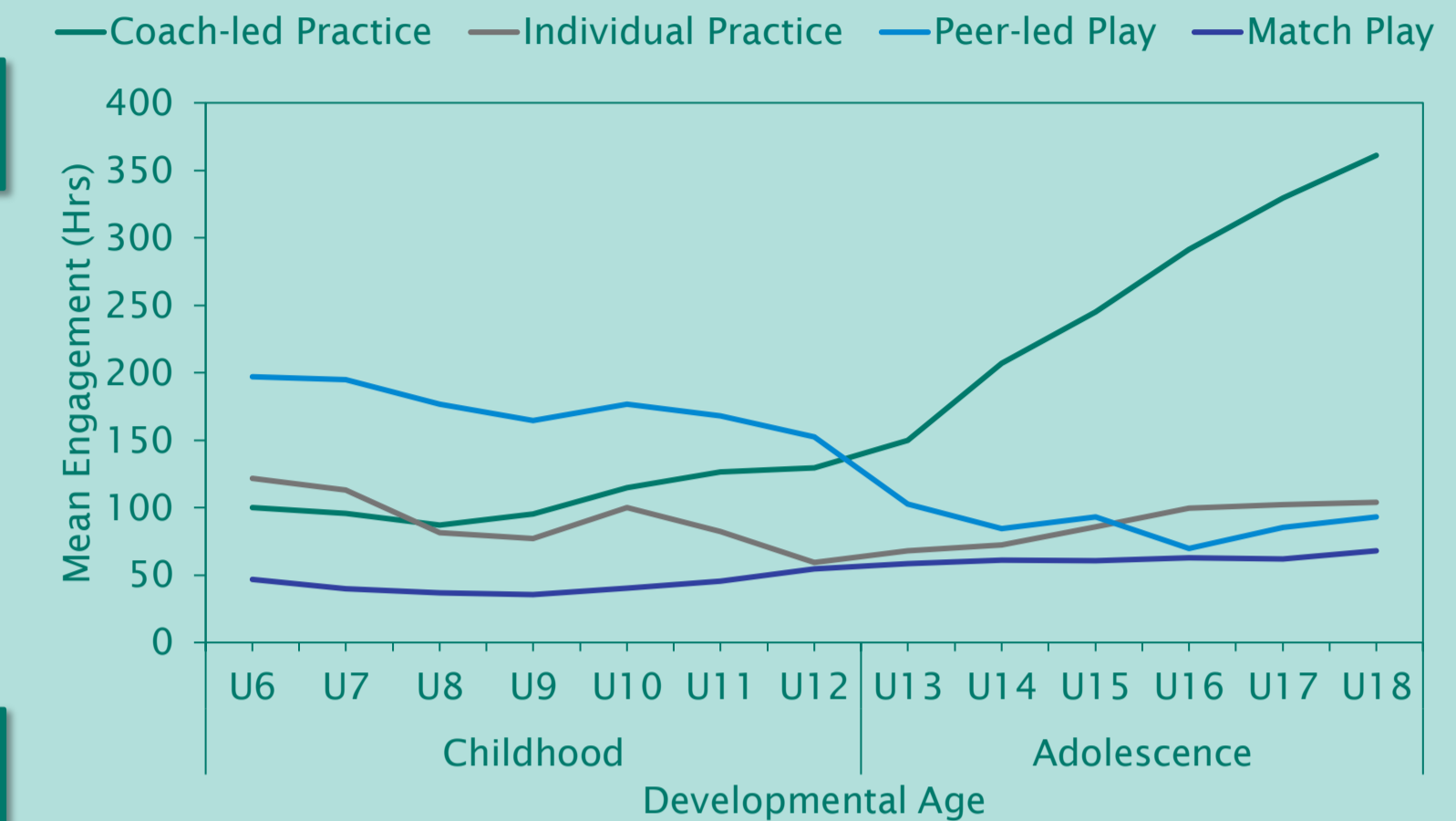
The present research will highlight the current engagement levels and perceptions of youth players for the first time, which can provide English clubs with contemporary information to continually advance their **talent development** systems and procedures.

## Research Aim

To explore the developmental activities and perceptions of female youth soccer players

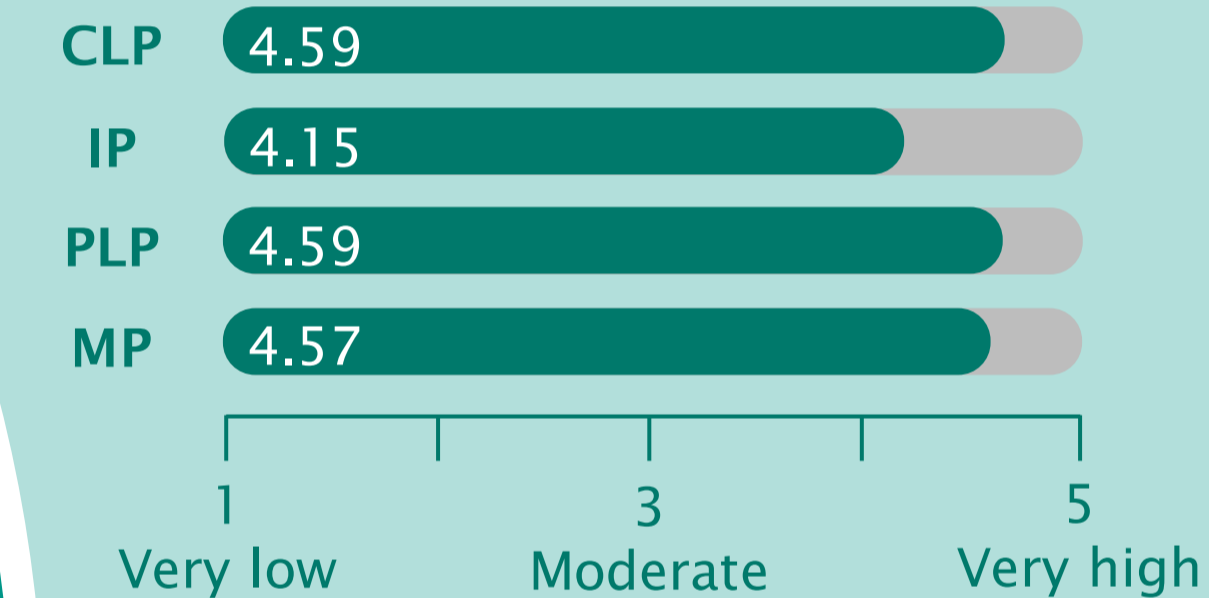
## Findings

## Engagement

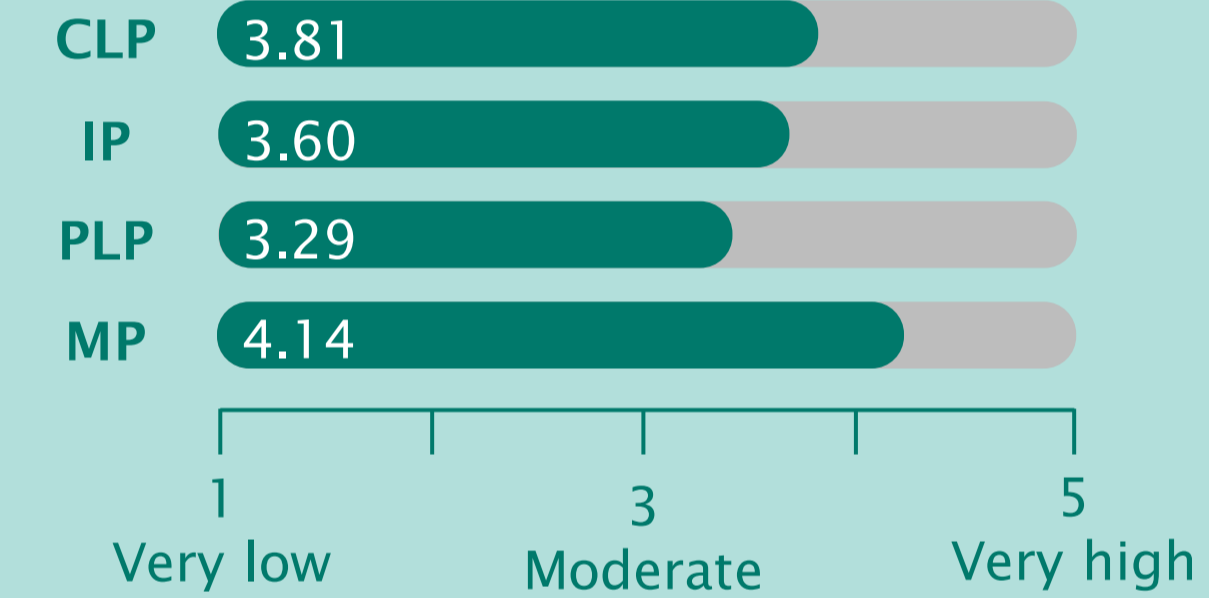


## Perceptions

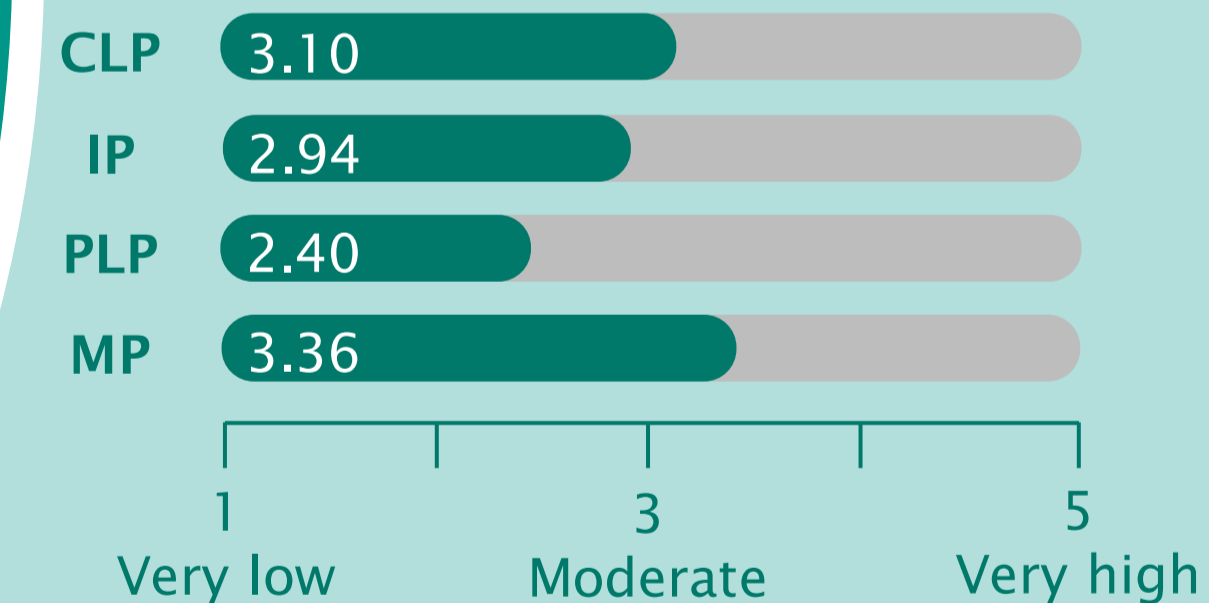
### Enjoyment



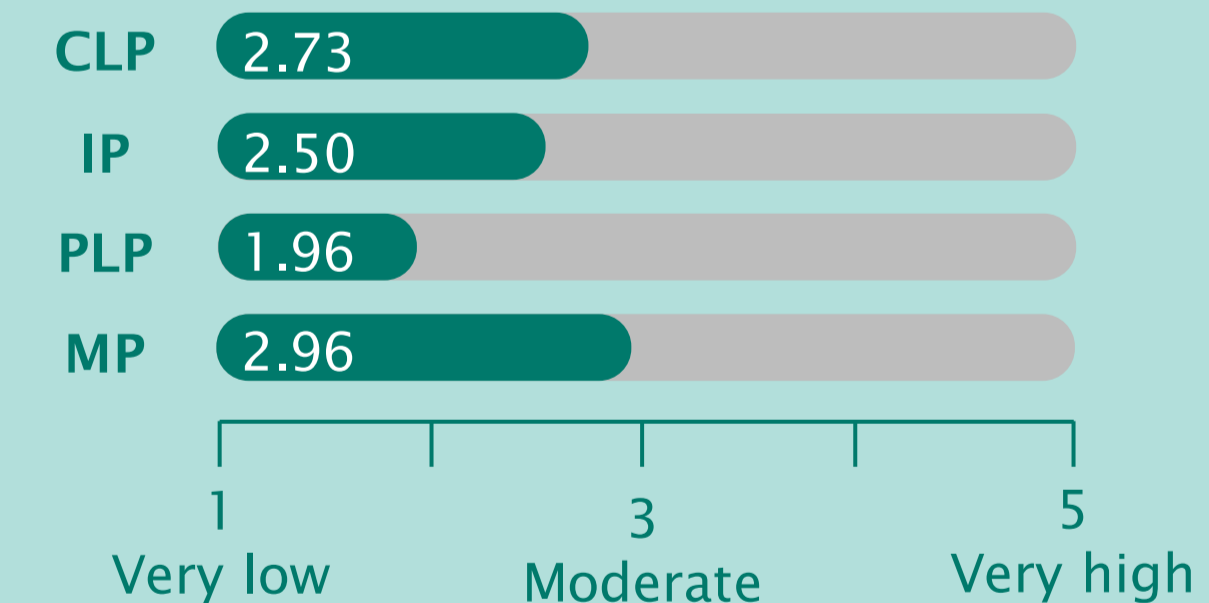
### Motivation



### Physical Challenge



### Mental Challenge



## Conclusions

- Engagement in coach-led practice activities increased significantly over development.
- Engagement in peer-led play activities decreased over development
- Players generally perceived all soccer activities to be motivating and highly enjoyable throughout their development.
- Both physical and mental challenge levels were low to moderate across all activities throughout development – are players being challenged enough?

## Methodology



### Participants

19 female youth soccer players from top-tier academies in England

Mean Age: 17.72 yrs



### Study Design

Retrospective Participation History Questionnaires (PHQ) gathered data on 5 specific variables:



In four unique soccer activities:



...across development (Age 6-18)

Abstract and references

