

Match Characteristics Questionnaire

Subscale Descriptions and Reliability Information



The current version of the MCQ is a revised version of the original Match Characteristics Questionnaireⁱ that is the only measure of the adult's perspective on match relationship quality (MRQ) within adult-youth mentoring matches that is supported by published validity evidenceⁱⁱ. The MCQ also is unique in the range of MRQ indicators it measures, including: positive and negative perceptions of the relationship; the mentor's focus on different types of activities; and, the effects of external influences on the match. The survey's development and subsequent revisions have been informed by the existing literature and by factor analyses of a large set of original items and subsequent analyses of data that has been collected on the MCQ over time. It has been enhanced and revised with insight gained from in-depth interviews conducted by the authors with mentors, mentees, and parents involved in YBBBS' and other mentoring programs. An optional written section provides deeper insight on match activities and the mentor's goals for the match.

The MCQ has strong reliability and validity evidence. The subscales of the MCQ used in analyses for this report have reliability alphas ranging from .61 (Risk-Related Compatibility) to .92 (Academic Support-Seeking); the alphas for reported broadscales all range between .81 (Relating Focus broadscale) and .95 (Overall Internal MRQ). These scales include revised measurements of activities focus previously measured by the survey formerly known as the Match Activities Trackerⁱⁱⁱ. Our recent research showed that differences in mentors' approaches that were measured by the MCQ correlated significantly with mentees' ratings of their matches and with changes in mentees' academic achievement over the course of the match.

The MCQ contains: seven subscales and four broadscales measuring internal MRQ; two subscales measuring external MRQ; and, five subscales and two broadscales measuring mentors' focus on different types of activities. The internal, external, and activities focus sections of the MCQ present statements that mentors read and answer by indicating their response on a six-point Likert-style rating. Scores are generated on a scale of 0-100, with higher scores indicating more positive ratings. For each survey,

scores on subscales and broadscales are reported only if the respondent answered 75% of the questions.

The elements of Internal MRQ measured by the MCQ (with reliability alphas) include:

- Closeness (.83), the degree to which adults felt close with the youth;
- Not Distant (.81), the degree to which adults felt that the youth pushed them away (higher scores reflecting less distance);
- Academic Support Seeking (.92), the degree to which adults felt the youth actively sought help with schoolwork;
- Nonacademic Support Seeking (.88), the degree to which adults felt the youth actively sought help related to personal issues;
- Satisfaction (.87), the mentor's sense of fulfillment in the relationship;
- General Compatibility (.78), the degree to which adults felt they were generally well-matched with their mentees;
- Risk-related Compatibility (.61), the degree to which the adults felt prepared to handle the students' behavior;
- Closeness Broadscale (.87), a combined score comprising the Closeness, Distance, and Satisfaction subscales;
- Compatibility Broadscale (.83), a combined score comprising the General and Risk-Related Compatibility subscales
- Availability to Support Broadscale (.87), a combined score comprising the Academic and Nonacademic Availability Support Seeking subscales; and,
- Overall Internal MRQ (.95), the total score of items in the scales described above.

The elements of External MRQ measured by the MCQ include:

- Programmatic Support (.82), the degree to which adults felt supported by the program; and,
- Parental Support (.63), the degree to which adults felt the parents had a positive effect on the match;

The elements of Activities Focus measured by the MCQ include:

- Sharing/Relating (.68), the degree to which mentors' focused on activities designed to forge a reciprocal bond with their mentees;
- Fun (.79), the degree to which mentors focused on simply hanging out and having a good time with their mentees;
- Character Development (.81), the degree to which mentors focused on character and related facets of mentees' maturation and psychosocial development;
- Mental/Academic Growth (.80), the degree to which mentors focused on school-related and mentally stimulating activities;
- Outlook (.77), the degree to which mentors focused on activities related to mentees' planning and preparing for their futures;
- Relating Broadscale (.81), a combined score comprising the Sharing/Relating and Fun subscales; and,
- Growth Broadscale (.89), a combined score comprising the Character Development, Mental/Academic Growth, and Outlook subscales.

ⁱ Harris, J. T., & Nakkula, M. J. (1999). Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ). Unpublished measure, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

ⁱⁱ Karcher, M. J., Nakkula, M. J., & Harris, J. T. (2005). Developmental Mentoring Match Characteristics: Correspondence between mentors' and mentees' assessments of relationship quality. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 26 (2), 93-110.

ⁱⁱⁱ Harris, J. T., & Nakkula, M. J. (2001). Match Activities Tracker (MAT) Unpublished measure, Harvard Graduate School of Education.