

Youth Mentoring Survey

Subscale Descriptions and Reliability Information



The current version of the Youth Mentoring Survey (YMS)ⁱ complements the Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ)ⁱⁱ by measuring relational and instrumental (growth-focused) aspects of match relationship quality (MRQ). Briefer than the MCQ, the YMS measures positive and negative perspectives on MRQ between a matched adult and youth; it does not measure the influence of the program, parents, logistics, etc. on the match. The survey's development and subsequent revisions have been informed by the existing literature, factor analyses of a large set of original items, and subsequent factor analyses of data that has been collected on the YMS over time. It has been enhanced and revised with insight gained from in-depth interviews conducted by the authors with mentors, matched youth, and their parents. The subscales of the YMS have reliability alphas ranging from .51 (Mentor's Dependability) to .83 (Relational Satisfaction); the alphas for reported broadscales are .81 (Relating Broadscale) and .76 (Instrumental Broadscale). The YMS includes scales to measure activities focus and an optional written section that yields deeper insight on activities and potential problems in the match.

The YMS contains: six subscales and two broadscales measuring internal MRQ, plus three subscales measure the youth's perception of the focus various types of activities receive in the match. The internal and activities focus sections of the YMS present statements that students read and answer by indicating their response on a four-point (internal) or five-point (activities focus) Likert-style scale. 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. Our recent research showed that differences in mentees' YMS ratings of their matches correlated significantly with mentors' ratings and with changes in the students' academic achievement over the course of the match.

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

- Relational Satisfaction (.83), the degree to which the youth feels satisfied with the relational aspects of the match;

- Intimacy (.71), the degree to which the youth perceives there is sharing and reciprocity in the match;
- Instrumental Satisfaction (.75), the degree to which the youth feels that he/she is benefiting from and growing through the match;
- Availability to Support (.69), the degree to which the youth desires and is receptive to a mentor's help;
- Dissatisfaction (.59), the degree to which the youth does *not* feel frustrated by or disappointed with the mentor's approach to the match;
- Mentor's Dependability (.51), the degree to which the youth feels that the mentor shows up on time and does what he/she promises;
- Relating Broadscale (.81), the combination of the Relational Satisfaction, Intimacy, Dissatisfaction, and Mentor's Dependability subscales; and,
- Growth Broadscale (.76), the combination of the Instrumental Satisfaction and Availability to Support subscales.

The elements of Activities Focus measured by the YMS (with reliability alphas) include:

- Fun Focus (.70), the degree of focus on activities that are simply about hanging out and having fun;
- Growth Focus (.75), the degree of focus on activities that are related to school, outlook, or character development; and,
- Relationship Focus (.70), the degree of focus on sharing about things like experiences, hopes/worries, problems, etc.

ⁱ Harris, J. T., & Nakkula, M. J. (2004b). Youth Mentoring Survey (YMS). Unpublished measure, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

ⁱⁱ Harris, J. T., & Nakkula, M. J. (2004a). Match Characteristics Questionnaire v 2.0 (MCQ). Unpublished measure, Harvard Graduate School of Education.