ADOLESCENT GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED
INTERPERSONAL MATTERING

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ADOLESCENT GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVED INTERPERSONAL MATTERING

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The purpose of this thesis was to determine the relationship between gender and perceived interpersonal mattering for adolescents in relation to their teachers, friends, mother, and father. A sample of 94 adolescent students between the ages of 15 and 17 years of age (34 males and 60 females) were administered the Mattering to Others Questionnaire to determine the extent to which they believe they matter to specific others. The results indicated that there was a significant gender difference in interpersonal mattering when considering the extent to which adolescents matter to their friends. Females perceived that they mattered more to their friends when compared to their male counterparts. Conversely, there were no gender differences when referring to the extent to which adolescents matter to their mother, father, and teachers.
DEDICATION

To my family and friends who have provided support and encouragement throughout the course of this research
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of my committee whose expertise, guidance, and patience, added considerably to my research experience.
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Introduction

In 1981, Rosenberg and McCullough developed and began exploring a concept called mattering. Mattering has been defined as the feeling that one is significant to others (Marcus, 1991a; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Shieman & Taylor, 2001). Over the years, studies have shown that adolescents who perceive they matter generally demonstrate a greater sense of psychosocial well-being (Dixon Rayle, 2005; Marshall, 2001; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Rosenberg, 1985). These studies explored how individuals perceived that they mattered to others. According to Marshall (2001), perceived mattering is the psychological tendency to assess the extent to which an individual feels he or she is important to a specific other.

Lack of mattering has been associated with increased dropout rates, lowered academic success, and greater levels of academic stress (Schlossberg, 1989; Dixon Rayle, 2005). Because mattering has an impact on academic achievement, it is important that researchers obtain more information regarding situations where mattering tends to be the lowest (Dixon Rayle, 2005). In this study, the differences in perceived mattering were examined between male and female adolescents.

Improvement of academic performance is one of three strategic goals that have been set by the United States Department of Education [DOE] (2007). United States statistics have shown that females are outperforming their male counterparts in most
school subjects at the elementary, secondary, and college levels (DOE, 2004; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). Furthermore, these statistics also indicate that high school females have higher educational aspirations, lower high school dropout rates, and are less likely to be retained when compared to males (DOE, 2004). One study also reports that females are more involved in school activities and less involved in high-risk behaviors (Clark, Lee, Goodman, Yacco, 2008). In that same study, males more than females, are said to struggle in areas such as organization, work completion, and motivation (Clark et al., 2008).

In recent studies, gender has been considered as one aspect that might influence perceived mattering (Dixon Rayle, 2005; Dixon Rayle & Chung, 2007; Marshall, 2001; Rosenberg, 1985; Schieman & Taylor, 2001). Among these studies, the results have been inconsistent. Specifically, Rosenberg (1985) indicated that there were no gender differences, while Marshall (2001), Dixon Rayle (2005), Dixon Rayle and Chung (2007), and Schieman and Taylor (2001) indicated that gender differences were evident in their studies.

The way that students perceive they matter to their friends, parents, and teachers can have a huge impact in their lives. In fact, one study suggests that adolescents who feel they do not matter are often more vulnerable to serious thoughts of self-destruction (Elliot, Colangelo, & Gelles, 2005). In the past, research on adolescence and mattering has been understudied (Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004). Although individuals who are significant in the lives of adolescents may offer support and care, often times they tend to forget to show how important they are or how much they are needed, which may be what
they need the most. An understanding of the perceptions of mattering is important in obtaining a greater understanding of human development and social behavior.

The purpose of this research was to determine if there were gender differences in perceived interpersonal mattering. The Mattering to Others Questionnaire (MTOQ) was used to test the hypothesis that there are gender differences in mattering (Marshall, 2001).

Results of this study will be meaningful to school educators and parents, as they may obtain a greater understanding of mattering when considering gender differences. Consequently, this might help promote the need for educational services tailored for a specific gender
Literature Review

The following literature review consists of four sections. The first section defines mattering and explains the three components needed for people to feel that they matter. The second section reviews the effect that mattering has on mental health. The third section divides demographic areas when concerning mattering. Finally, the last section refers to the positive and negative aspects that mattering can have on employment and education.

Defining Mattering

Over the years, two specific types of mattering have been identified: general mattering and interpersonal mattering. General or societal mattering refers to the feelings that one makes a difference in a broader sense, such as in society or in the community at large (Fromm, 1941: Marcus, 1991a). The extent to which a person perceives they matter to a specific individual is known as interpersonal mattering (Marcus, 1991a: Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). According to Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), people believe that they matter to specific individuals when they sense that they are the focus of that individual’s attention, that they are important to that individual, and that the individual depends on them. Specifically, interpersonal mattering refers to the individual’s subjective interpretation of significance to another person (Rosenberg, 1985).
Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) identify the term “attention” as the belief that one is being noticed and that other individuals would find them interesting. They suggest that people often strive for attention whether positive or negative. In a study conducted by Marshall (2001), high school students were asked to indicate the degree to which their parents and peers pay attention to them. The results showed that there was a significant association between the way that these students perceive they matter to others and the attention they feel they receive from parents and peers. It was suggested that the existence or lack of attention might contribute to the belief that one is significant to others.

The feeling that one is important is also linked to the concept of interpersonal mattering (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Individuals with a strong sense of mattering often feel that others notice them and that these individuals care about their wants, thoughts, actions, and destiny. Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) use the term “ego-extension” as a way to identify whether one is important to another. Ego-extension refers to an individual feeling that he or she is a part of or an extension of someone. For example, an adolescent who knows his or her parents will feel successful when they graduate high school would likely feel as if they are part of their parents’ ego-extension or that they are important to their parents.

The need for others to be dependent upon them is also related to individuals feeling they matter to specific others (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). A mother who cares for her infant by feeding, bathing, and providing shelter is motivated by the belief that this infant is dependent upon her. In this case, the mother may sense a feeling of mattering. Similarly, a supervisor who believes his department would suffer without him
might feel a sense of obligation and pressure, but might also feel that he matters to others due to the awareness that others are depending on him. Conversely, Elliot, Kao, and Grant (2004) emphasized that not all components of mattering will ensure that the individual feels that they matter. For example, although an individual in an authority position might feel needed and noticed, if they treat their employees poorly, they may not feel that sense of mattering. They suggest that relating to the individual with sincerity and appreciation will indicate the feeling of mattering.

*Mental Health*

Although it has been often overlooked, the need to matter or to be wanted is fundamental to the human condition (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). According to Rosenberg (1985), interpersonal mattering is particularly important to psychological well-being. Studies have shown that individuals who perceive they matter to others typically demonstrate lower levels of depression and academic stress; increased academic motivation and job satisfaction; greater psychosocial well-being and overall wellness; and higher levels of self-esteem, self-concept, and social support (Dixon Rayle, 2005; Dixon Rayle & Chung, 2007; Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004; Marshall, 2001; Schieman & Taylor, 2001; Taylor & Turner, 2001). Baumeister and Leary (1995) also provide evidence which suggests that emotion and cognition are shaped by the need to belong. Consequently, studies have shown that the absence of mattering is related to higher levels of depression, unhappiness, anxiety, tension, negative affective states, job-related stress, delinquency, and academic stress (Dixon-Rayle, 2005; Dixon Rayle & Myers, 2004; Marshall, 2001; Rosenberg, 1985; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Adolescents with low levels of
mattering are also more likely to express feelings of resentment, hostility, embitterment, and disenchantment (Rosenberg, 1985).

In a study of 462 adolescents attending a public high school, Dixon Rayle and Myers (2004) sought to determine the influence of mattering on wellness. Their results showed that a perceived sense of mattering was a strong predictor of overall wellness in areas such as spirituality, self-direction, schoolwork, leisure, love, and friendship. Specifically, the strongest predictions of mattering were found in self-direction, schoolwork, and friendship.

According to Marcus (1991b), mattering has often been overlooked because of its similarities with social support. For example, in a meta-analysis conducted by Baumeister and Leary (1995), forming social bonds creates positive emotional states, while the lack of social bonds produces negative emotions. Furthermore, individuals who do not have social attachments generally exhibit more psychological and physical health problems than those who have these attachments. They noted that existence or lack of social bonds directly affects a change in belongingness. In other words, individuals feel a sense of belongingness when a social bond is intact; however, any potential threat to a social bond generates deficits in belongingness. Evidence has suggested that having a few close relationships are essential to obtain the benefits of a social attachment; however, any additional bond beyond the few close relationships creates less of an impact. This indicates why those in intimate relationships tend to be much less active in seeking additional relationships than those who are not intimately connected to a partner.

Although it is reasonable to assume that mattering and social support go hand in hand, some research has indicated that this is not always true (Marcus, 1991a). According
to Marcus (1991a), social support is based on what one believes he or she receives, whereas perceived mattering is based on the belief that one has something to offer or give. Often times, individuals perceive they are significant to others when those others are significant to the individual. However, there are times when this construct does not coincide. For example, a child may not feel significant to his foster parents although they are supporting him. Conversely, a parent may feel significant to a child even though that child does not offer support for the parent. After testing the independence of Bachman, Kahn, Mednick, Davidson, and Johnston’s (1972) measure of social support with the General Mattering Scale (GMS) a low correlation of 0.17 was found, indicating that social support and mattering are two separate constructs. Thus, mattering is an important concept and should not be confused with social support.

Demographic Differences

Although Rosenberg (1985) did not find any significant differences in gender, several other studies have indicated that there are differences when considering the degree to which males and females perceive they matter to others (Dixon Rayle & Chung, 2007; Marshall, 2001; Schieman & Taylor, 2001). For example, Dixon Rayle and Chung (2007) reported that compared to males, females had a greater sense of perceived mattering to friends and they also perceived they mattered more to the college they were attending. Furthermore, in an assessment of mattering and well-being, Schieman and Taylor (2001) proposed that females felt a stronger sense of mattering to others.

Marshall (2001) was yet another researcher who found significant gender differences and concluded that females perceived themselves as mattering more to others than their male counterparts. Specifically, these gender differences were noticed when
looking at perceived mattering to mother and friends. Both genders indicated that they mattered more to their mother than to their father, yet females had much higher results. In addition, when compared to males, females viewed themselves as mattering more to their friends. Conversely, there were no gender differences when focusing on perceived mattering to father.

Previous research indicates that there have been significant differences when comparing whether adolescents matter more to their friends, mothers, or fathers (Marshall, 2001). In a study conducted by Dixon Rayle (2005), participants were asked to rate the Mattering to Others Questionnaire (MTOQ) by indicating their perceived sense of mattering with reference to their “family” rather than referring to the three individual variables: friends, mothers, and fathers. However, Marshall (2001) indicated that there were gender differences when referring to perceived mattering of mother and friends, but not when referring to the father. Although Dixon Rayle’s study (2005) resulted in gender differences, the results could have been affected by the combined variables if the participants were referring to one parent over the other when answering the questionnaire. Thus, distinguishing the differences between these variables as opposed to combining them into one questionnaire is essential.

Age group differences and mattering is yet another demographic difference that seems to vary across research. There were no differences found between ages when Rosenberg (1985) examined adolescent boys’ perceived mattering to parents, yet he indicated that girls in early adolescence were more likely to experience low levels of mattering when compared to other ages. Similarly, Marshall (2001) concluded that older individuals perceive themselves as mattering more than younger individuals when
looking at their mother and their father. Evidence from prior research indicates that differences in age groups might depend on whether or not the mother and father are assessed separately.

Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) suggest that mattering is likely higher among children and adults, yet lower among adolescents and the elderly. Children typically have much of the attention focused around them, while adults often feel needed by their children or significant other. According to Schieman and Taylor (2001) being a parent is positively associated with mattering. In addition, when compared to single individuals, married people often report a somewhat higher sense of mattering.

Adolescents and elderly individuals generally do not receive the amount of attention that a young child would receive. Further, they would not feel that others are depending on them as much as a parent would feel their young child was depending on them. Consequently, adolescents may receive more attention and a sense of dependency from their peers, which may indicate why they tend to be more attached to them (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Moreover, a youth acting out in a socially undesirable manner may be partially motivated by the desire to receive attention and feel a sense of mattering to significant others. Similarly, the idea of mattering could possibly help explain the desire for teenage pregnancies, as these adolescents will likely feel that they matter to their newborn child (Elliot et al., 2004).

One study also indicated that socioeconomic status could play a role in perceiving how much one matters to his or her parents. Specifically, results from a study conducted by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) looked at the differences in perceived mattering when considering three different social classes: high class, middle class, and low class.
Their findings indicate that adolescents in the highest class consistently feel that they matter more to their parents than those who are in the middle and low social classes.

Racial differences are one demographic area that has been consistent across studies. One study conducted by Gossett, Cuyjet, and Cockriel (1996) sought to compare perceptions of mattering and marginality for African American and non-African American undergraduate students at four predominantly white institutions. In order to do this an instrument called *Perceptions on Community / Environment of Undergraduate Students in Higher Education* was used to determine how the students felt that specific components of the institution care about them (Cuyjet, 1994). Questions were related to six general areas including academic and personal advising, interaction with members of the administration, classroom climate, interactions with faculty, interactions with peers, and the delivery of campus services. The results indicated that there were considerable significant differences between African American and non-African American students on issues of mattering and marginality across all six subscales. Specifically, it supports the idea that African American students in a college environment typically feel that they matter less than their non-African American peers.

*Employment and Education*

Some studies have focused on how mattering effects an individual’s ability to succeed in life through areas such as employment and education (Connelly & Meyers, 2003; Dixon Rayle & Chung, 2007; Philips, 2005; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Schieman & Taylor, 2001; Schlossberg, 1989, 1997). For example, Schlossberg (1997) suggested that when employees perceive they matter to their organization, supervisor, and other aspects of working, they may generate higher levels of job satisfaction and
increased productivity rates. Moreover, Connelly and Meyers (2003) tested this theory by conducting research with a group of 82 employees. The results showed that job satisfaction was significantly related to mattering. In addition, another study proposed by Schieman and Taylor (2001) indicated that greater autonomy, complexity, and supervision duties promote a sense of mattering within various occupations; however, there were no gender differences.

In a study of first-year college students, Schlossberg (1989) concluded that these individuals often feel marginalized. Specifically they feel that they do not make a difference and that they do not matter to their colleges. This feeling of being marginal is especially evident in the African-American population (Philips, 2005). According to Dixon Rayle and Chung (2007), when students feel supported by family and friends in addition to feeling that they matter to friends and the college they attend, they are able to handle academic stress more effectively and they also experience less academic stress.

Delinquency in school has also been related to parental mattering (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981). Delinquent behavior in this study refers to various acts such as getting into fights at school, hitting a teacher, getting suspended or expelled from school, and damaging school property. Researchers suggest that the type of matter, positive or negative, was not important. The reaction that this child receives from parents, teachers, or the police indicates that they are receiving attention and that they make a difference.

Although some studies document mattering as having positive associations with gender differences, there have been no studies that have examined gender differences by considering interpersonal mattering across four specific others: mother, father, teacher,
and friends. Thus, using data from the MTOQ from a representative sample of adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17 might yield further information.
Methodology

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were gender differences in the way that adolescents perceive interpersonal mattering. Further, the researcher examined gender differences between the four interpersonal mattering questionnaires: father, mother, teacher, and friends. The hypothesis was that there would be a difference in the way that adolescent males and females perceived interpersonal mattering.

Participants

The research was conducted within a suburban school district at West Carrollton High School. West Carrollton High School is located in Ohio and serves approximately 1,100 students in grades 9 through 12. The district has a total population of approximately 3,605 students. The school is composed of 1.9% Asian or Pacific Islander, 11.7% Black / Non-Hispanic, 3.1% Hispanic, 4.2% Multi-Racial, and 75% White / Non-Hispanic students. The researcher obtained 94 participants between the ages of 15 to 17 years old for this study (34 males and 60 females). Each of the students was required to sign and return a student assent and a parent consent form in order to participate in the study.

Design

A quasi-experimental design was used to identify the extent of differences across gender for mattering. The independent variable in this study was gender, and the
dependent variables were the scores on the Mattering to Others Questionnaire (MTOQ) (Marshall, 2001).

**Instrument**

Marshall (2001) developed a tool to determine how much adolescents perceive they matter to significant others; it became known as The Mattering to Others Questionnaire (MTOQ). Specifically, this instrument evaluates mattering across three components: (a) mattering to mother, (b) mattering to father, and (c) mattering to friends. The questionnaire is geared toward the adolescent population between the ages of 13 and 18 years old. The scale consists of 11 questions, each seeking to measure global perceived mattering to others. The respondents were instructed to answer the questions based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a lot*). The total scores could range from 11 to 55; higher scores indicating higher perceptions of mattering.

According to Marshall (2001), the MTOQ met both the theoretical and empirical criteria. These criteria were tested by using Loevinger’s (1957) three-component model for construct validation. Specifically, this model sought to examine the substantive, structural, and external components of the questionnaire (Marshall, 2001). There were 22 professionals who assessed the items on the MTOQ followed by 12 adolescent raters. After few alterations, it was concluded that the items and instructions on the questionnaire were appropriate.

Several studies were conducted in order to establish the reliability and validity of the MTOQ scale (Marshall, 2001). One study consisting of 110 social science students from a Canadian university, found a high correlation across all three versions (mother, father, and friends) of the MTOQ with reported Cronbach’s alphas of 0.89, 0.95, and
0.93. Similarly, Cronbach’s alphas of 0.93, 0.95, and 0.93 were also found in a study consisting of 532 adolescents at a suburban area high school in British Columbia.

The instrument used in this study to measure interpersonal mattering was the MTOQ (Marshall, 2001). Each student in the study received four different MTOQ’s. Specifically, each MTOQ identified a specific other: (a) mother, (b) father, (c) teacher, and (d) friend. The students were instructed to complete a total of four surveys.

Procedures

The primary investigator contacted the principal at West Carrollton High School. After obtaining permission to conduct the study at WCHS, the researcher went on the morning announcements to explain the purpose of the study and to discuss the procedures for participation to all high school students between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. The researcher then distributed student assent and parent consent forms in each high school classroom and answered any questions regarding to the study. The students were given approximately two weeks to return these forms. Throughout the two weeks, the researcher periodically went on the afternoon announcements to remind students to return these forms. Students who returned both forms within the two week time period were given the opportunity to win a $25.00 Visa gift card by entering their names into a drawing. Following the two week time period, the researcher began administering questionnaires to only those students who had returned both forms. All of these students were given a pass and were called to the high school cafeteria at one time to complete the questionnaires. In addition to the questionnaires, students were also asked to complete a brief demographic sheet indicating their gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. A set of code numbers were used on each of the questionnaires as well as the
demographic sheet to ensure that confidentiality was maintained. Students were also instructed to complete the questionnaires and demographic sheet anonymously. There was no record of the participating students.

Because of the limited number of initial participants (33 students), the researcher provided a second opportunity for students to participate in this study. In effort to obtain more participants during the second round, the researcher distributed an e-mail to all high school staff members asking for assistance in encouraging their students to return the student assent and parent consent forms. Two of the high school teachers offered to provide their students with bonus points for returning these forms. Students were once again given approximately two weeks to return the forms. Following these two weeks, the researcher had obtained a total of 94 participants. Students were called to the library to complete the questionnaires, which took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Data Analysis

The researcher conducted an independent-samples t-test for each of the subscales to determine whether there were significant differences between genders and the way that they perceive they matter to specific others. The level of data was framed as interval due to the Likert-type response format on the surveys. The alpha level was set at 0.05. Furthermore, $d$ values of .2, .5, and .8, regardless of sign, were interpreted as small, medium, and large effect sizes.
Results

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that there would be gender differences in the way that males and females perceive they matter to others. Based on these results there was a significant difference for interpersonal mattering when considering perceptions of mattering to their friends $t(92) = 1.99, p = .049$. Specifically, females reported significantly higher levels of interpersonal mattering ($M = 43.98, SD = 8.59$) when compared to males ($M = 40.18, SD = 9.39$) with a small effect size ($d = .42$). On the contrary, there was not a significant gender difference for interpersonal mattering when referring to perceptions of mattering to their mothers $t(92) = -1.25, p = .22$, fathers $t(92) = -1.37, p = .17$, and teachers $t(92) = -1.43, p = .15$. Effect sizes were small, ranging from -0.25 to -0.3.
Discussion

This study revisited the idea that there are gender differences in perceived interpersonal mattering. It was suspected that males would perceive they mattered less than their female counterparts across all four variables: mattering to mother, father, friends, and teachers. Results indicated that males do perceive that they matter less than females when considering their friends; however, there were no significant differences when considering how much they perceive they matter to their mother, father, and teachers. These results were somewhat inconsistent with past research indicating there was a significant gender difference when referring to how much adolescents perceive they matter to their mother and father (Dixon Rayle, 2005; Marshall, 2001; Schieman & Taylor, 2001).

Because perceived mattering can impact academic stress and academic motivation, the findings from this study can be especially beneficial for school personnel. Schools should institute programs that will assist students in increasing their sense of mattering. Social skill groups specifically geared toward male relationships might be one opportunity to begin assisting adolescent males in engaging in more effective and meaningful friendships; ultimately increasing that sense of mattering. Research has shown that a program such as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has proven to be effective in significantly improving social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, social interactions, and many other aspects (Collaborative for Academic, 2003).
School personnel could also encourage individual counseling or participation in extracurricular activities. Individual counseling could give students an opportunity to express their feelings in regards to mattering to their friends. In addition, extracurricular activities can promote mattering by spending time discussing how one matters to his teammates and within friendships. Allowing opportunities for discussions such as these might help adolescents become more aware of how much they actually matter to their friends. By creating more opportunities to enhance perceived mattering for males, school personnel can begin ensuring that males have an equal opportunity to succeed academically.

These findings can also be particularly useful information for parents. Helping parents of male adolescents understand that their children could display a low sense of perceived mattering when considering friendships, might persuade them to encourage socialization and more effective communication at an early age. Research provided by Maltz and Border (1982) showed that games played during childhood can impact socialization behaviors. For example, playing house promotes more personal and expressive relations, while playing competitive sports encourages less communication. Becoming more aware of these factors might encourage parents to practice socialization and communication with their male children in alternate ways. It might also provoke them to encourage their children to participate in programs such as the Teen Outreach Program (TOP), an intervention designed to help youth with personal and social developmental growth, communication, relationships, community service learning, understanding oneself and others, and many other life skills (Allen & Philliber, 2001).
Limitations

One limitation to the study is that the subjects were taken from only one suburban school district. Because the participants were taken from one geographic region in the United States, it is not representative to the overall population and therefore limits generalizability. According to Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) adolescents in a higher socioeconomic class perceive they matter more to parents than lower classes. Therefore, it is possible that these results might have been affected by taking a sample from a group of adolescent students who are predominantly from high and middle classes. In addition, the sample size was low and results may have been more accurate with a larger sample size. Controlling for extraneous variables such as racial background might also yield more accurate results based on past research indicating that there are significant differences in mattering when comparing African American’s perceptions to non-African Americans (Gossett et al., 1996).

Second, the results should be interpreted with caution due to the findings being determined by the participants’ self-reports. Response bias such as social desirability must always be considered when individuals are self-reporting their results. Maturation must also be considered, as the participants might have grown tired of completing surveys and therefore completed the surveys with less accuracy. Finally, this research did not capture the subjective experience of each student like an interview would. In spite of these limitations, these results did yield some important findings.

Future Research

Because male students in this study are questioning whether or not they matter to their friends, it is important to determine how this impacts their lives.
It would be interesting to delve further into the concept of males perceiving that they matter less to their friends than females. Specifically, do males who experience lower levels of mattering tend to participate in more delinquent acts? Although Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) suggested that delinquency is related to parental mattering, it would be beneficial to determine whether or not it is related to mattering to friends.

To yield more accurate results in future research on interpersonal mattering it might also be beneficial to control for extraneous variables such as racial background and socioeconomic status. Because the sample for this study was very similar in race and socioeconomic status, the researcher chose not to control for these variables. However, in the future it would be advantageous to seek a larger sample size which might make it easier to control for these variables.
References


Dear Parent:

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. The study includes being asked to complete four specific questionnaires that will measure how much your child perceives that they matter to their mother, father, teacher, and friends. Students will also be asked to complete a brief demographic sheet indicating their gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The goal is to determine whether or not there are gender differences within adolescence when concerning perceived interpersonal mattering.

Participation is strictly voluntary and may be discontinued at anytime with no penalty to your child. Your child’s name will be kept temporarily on a list of participants, but will not be associated with any specific questionnaire. Potential risks involved in the study are minimal. Students may experience unwanted thoughts or possibly have negative thoughts provoked by completing a survey about how much they matter to others. Results of this study will be meaningful to society, as individuals may obtain a greater understanding of how males and females perceive that they matter to others. Consequently, the results of these questionnaires may help educators discriminate their services based on gender perceptions.

To give your consent for your child’s participation in the research study, complete the information below. Thank you for allowing your child to participate in this important research.

Volunteer Child Name:

________________________________________________________________________

Name                  Date

Parent Signature:

________________________________________________________________________

Name                 Date

Should you have questions please feel free to contact:

Rachel Paputsakis          Dr. Sawyer Hunley          Dr. Susan Gfroerer
Graduate Student           Program Director           Academic Advisor
University of Dayton       University of Dayton       University of Dayton
937-859-5929, ext. 8883     937-229-3624             937-229-3652
Dear Student:

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The study includes being asked to complete four specific questionnaires that will measure how much you perceive that you matter to your mother, father, teacher, and friends. You will also be asked to complete a brief demographic sheet indicating your gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. The goal is to determine whether or not there are gender differences within adolescence when concerning perceived interpersonal mattering.

Participation is strictly voluntary and may be discontinued at anytime with no penalty. Your name will be kept temporarily on a list of participants, but will not be associated with any specific questionnaire. Potential risks involved in the study are minimal. Students may experience unwanted thoughts or possibly have negative thoughts provoked by completing a survey about how much they matter to others. Results of this study will be meaningful to society, as individuals may obtain a greater understanding of how males and females perceive they matter to others. Consequently, the results of these questionnaires may help educators discriminate their services based on gender perceptions.

To give your assent for participation in the research study, complete the information below. Thank you for participating in this important research.

Volunteer Student Name:

__________________________________________________________________________

Name                       Date

Student Signature:

__________________________________________________________________________

Name                       Date

Should you have questions please feel free to contact:

Rachel Paputsakis          Dr. Sawyer Hunley          Dr. Susan Gfroerer
Graduate Student           Program Director           Academic Advisor
University of Dayton       University of Dayton       University of Dayton
937-859-5929, ext.8883     937-229-3624              937-229-3652
Please do not write your name on this form. This information will allow the researcher to provide an accurate description of the sample.

For the following items, please indicate the one response that is most descriptive of you or fill in the blank as appropriate.

**Gender:**  
Female [ ]  Male [ ]

**Age:** _________

**Ethnicity:**
- Asian or Pacific Islander [ ]
- Asian Indian [ ]
- Black / African American (Non-Hispanic) [ ]
- Caucasian / White [ ]
- Native American [ ]
- Latino / Hispanic [ ]
- Puerto Rican [ ]

More than one race (specify): ___________________________

**Socioeconomic Status:**

Do you receive free or reduced lunch at school?  
Yes [ ]  No [ ]
APPENDIX D

MATTERING TO OTHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Each person has ideas or feelings about how other people see them. I am interested in how you think people think about you. Choose the rating you feel is best for you and circle the number provided. When answering the questions below, refer to the individual who YOU consider to be your mother.

1. I feel special to my MOTHER.
2. I am needed by my MOTHER.
3. I am missed by my MOTHER when I am away.
4. When I talk, my MOTHER tries to understand what I am saying.
5. I am interesting to my MOTHER.
6. My MOTHER notices my feelings.
7. My MOTHER gives me credit when I do well.
8. My MOTHER notices when I need help.
9. I matter to my MOTHER.
10. People have many things to think about. If your MOTHER made a list of all the things she thinks about where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. If your MOTHER made a list of all the things she cares about, where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
APPENDIX E

MATTERING TO OTHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Each person has ideas or feelings about how other people see them. I am interested in how you think people think about you. Choose the rating you feel is best for you and circle the number provided. When answering the questions below, refer to the individual who YOU consider to be your father.

1. I feel special to my FATHER.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not much</th>
<th>somewhat</th>
<th>a lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. I am needed by my FATHER.

1  2  3  4  5

3. I am missed by my FATHER when I am away.

1  2  3  4  5

4. When I talk, my FATHER tries to understand what I am saying.

1  2  3  4  5

5. I am interesting to my FATHER.

1  2  3  4  5


1  2  3  4  5

7. My FATHER gives me credit when I do well.

1  2  3  4  5

8. My FATHER notices when I need help.

1  2  3  4  5

9. I matter to my FATHER.

1  2  3  4  5

10. People have many things to think about. If your FATHER made a list of all the things he thinks about where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If your FATHER made a list of all the things he cares about, where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

MATTERING TO OTHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Each person has ideas or feelings about how other people see them. I am interested in how you think people think about you. Choose the rating you feel is best for you and circle the number provided.

1. I feel special to my **TEACHERS**.

2. I am needed by my **TEACHERS**.

3. I am missed by my **TEACHERS** when I am away.

4. When I talk, my **TEACHERS** try to understand what I am saying.

5. I am interesting to my **TEACHERS**.

6. My **TEACHERS** notice my feelings.

7. My **TEACHERS** give me credit when I do well.

8. My **TEACHERS** notice when I need help.

9. I matter to my **TEACHERS**.

10. People have many things to think about. If your **TEACHERS** made a list of all the things they think about where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. If your **TEACHERS** made a list of all the things they care about, where do you think you’d be on the list?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not much 1 2 3 4 5 somewhat 1 2 3 4 5 a lot 1 2 3 4 5
APPENDIX G

MATTERING TO OTHERS QUESTIONNAIRE

Each person has ideas or feelings about how other people see them. I am interested in how you think people think about you. Choose the rating you feel is best for you and circle the number provided.

1. I feel special to my FRIENDS. Not much 1 2 somewhat 3 a lot 4 5

2. I am needed by my FRIENDS. 1 2 3 4 5

3. I am missed by my FRIENDS when I am away. 1 2 3 4 5

4. When I talk, my FRIENDS try to understand what I am saying. 1 2 3 4 5

5. I am interesting to my FRIENDS. 1 2 3 4 5

6. My FRIENDS notice my feelings. 1 2 3 4 5

7. My FRIENDS give me credit when I do well. 1 2 3 4 5

8. My FRIENDS notice when I need help. 1 2 3 4 5

9. I matter to my FRIENDS. 1 2 3 4 5

10. People have many things to think about. If your FRIENDS made a list of all the things they think about where do you think you’d be on the list?

   Top
   5 4 3 2 1

   Bottom

11. If your FRIENDS made a list of all the things they care about, where do you think you’d be on the list?

   Top
   5 4 3 2 1

   Bottom