INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the MASC is to classify anxiety symptoms prevalent amongst individuals of 8-19 years of age. The MASC is one of the most widely used self-report measures created to assess anxiety.

The MASC measures 4 major scales (6 subscales): physical symptoms, harm avoidance, social anxiety, and separation/panic. Approximately 39 items are used in this assessment.

The items used in this assessment were all based on a 4-point Likert scale (ranging from “never true about me” to “often true about me”) and were set at a 4th grade reading level.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The objective of this paper is to critically evaluate the Multidimensional Anxiety Scale for Children (MASC).

Four major areas of the assessment were evaluated: test development, norm development, test reliability, and test validity.

APPROACH

The Mental Measurement Yearbook was used to gather data about various criticisms of the MASC.

In addition, the MASC Test Manual was used to as a primary source to gather information about validity and reliability coefficients.

FINDINGS

Test Development - The item-wording of the MASC could be more female-oriented, thus males may be reluctant to circle a higher point on the Likert scale.

Norm Development - The MASC inaccurately sampled the Hispanic population according to the national census.

Reliability - The test-retest reliability was excellent. The MASC (interclass correlation coefficient) yielded a score of 0.785 (3 week interval) and 0.933 (three month interval).

Validity - The MASC was able to create a distinction between clinical respondents and non-clinical respondents with correlations ranging from 84-90 for all 7 major scales.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the MASC has proved itself to be a valid and reliable tool to screen for childhood anxiety compared to other self-report measures.

Overall, even though more research in regards to reliability is required for the MASC, it has proven itself to be a sufficient tool to assess anxiety in children and adolescence.