

Instrument Title: Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire (VASQ)
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Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire (VASQ) scoring

Introduction

This 22 item questionnaire, validated against the Attachment Style Interview, was originally used to screen for vulnerable and insecure attachment scores in relation to clinical depression in adults or adolescents.

It utilises a **total** score of insecure attachment style and two subscales reflecting **insecurity/mistrust** and **degree of proximity/distance** in relating. Cut-offs have been derived based on median ratings in high risk community women. The VASQ does not derive attachment styles, but the insecurity/mistrust dimension was highly correlated to both Fearful and Angry-dismissive attachment styles and high proximity seeking to Enmeshed styles.

Analysis shows the total score and the insecurity/mistrust scale relate to depression in a study of 262 adolescents and adults. VASQ scores are highly correlated with the RQ scores and have good test-retest reliability.

Higher cut-off scores can be used in different samples to optimise disorder risk. Higher vulnerability in style can be derived from combining insecurity and proximity seeking dimensions (Anxious) and insecurity and low proximity seeking (Avoidant).

Reference

Bifulco, A, Mahon J, Kwon J-H, Moran PM & Jacobs C (2003). The Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire: An interview-derived measure of relationship styles predictive of depression. Psychological Medicine, 33, 1099-1110

Scoring

The items below represent the insecurity/mistrust items (non-highlighted/italicised) and the proximity-seeking items (highlighted and italicised).

All are rated 5: strongly agree, 4:agree, 3:unsure, 2:disagree or 1: strongly disagree.

Apart from 14 and 15 which are reversed:

5: Strongly disagree, 4: disagree, 3: unsure 2: agree, 1: strongly agree (see overleaf)

Step 1 - reversed scoring (items 14 and 15): change the scoring so that 1=Strongly agree and 5=strong disagree.

Step 2 - Total scale (vulnerable) attachment style = sum of all items, Add up the individual scores for each questionnaire (number 1-22), making sure first you reverse the scoring for question 14 and 15.

The total score gives you vulnerability of attachment style - **cut-off 57¹** or more indicates a high level of vulnerable attachment style.

¹ Note, there is an error on table 3 (pg 1106) of published paper.. The correct cut-off should be ≥ 57 as indicated on table 2.

Step 3 – Level of insecurity/mistrust of style (Fearful or Angry-dismissive)

Sum items (non shaded/italicised above) 1,3,5,8,9,10,12,17,18,19,20 & 22). Here the **cut-off is 30** or higher. This means high insecurity of attachment.

Step 4: Degree of proximity seeking (Enmeshed)

Sum the shaded/yellow items above (2,4,6,7,11,13,14,15,16,21). Here the **cut-off is 27** or more for high level of proximity seeking.

Step 5: Higher levels and type of insecure style

Insecure anxious style: both high insecurity score and high proximity score

Insecure avoidant style: both high insecurity score and low proximity score

Vulnerable Attachment Style Questionnaire	5→ Strongly agree → 1 Strongly disagree
1. I take my time getting to know people <i>2. I rely on others to help me make decisions</i> 3. People let me down a lot. <i>4. I miss the company of others when I am alone.</i> 5. It's best not to get too emotionally close to other people <i>6. I worry a lot if people I live with arrive back later than expected</i> <i>7. I usually rely on advice from others when I've got a problem</i> 8. I feel uncomfortable when people get too close to me 9. People close to me often get on my nerves 10. I feel people are against me <i>11. I worry about things happening to close family and friends</i> 12. I often get into arguments. <i>13. I am clingy with others.</i> <i>14. I look forward to spending time on my own (Reverse score)</i> <i>15. I like making decisions on my own. (Reverse score))</i> <i>16. I get anxious when people close to me are away</i> 17. I feel uneasy when others confide in me. 18. I find it hard to trust others. 19. Having people around me can be a nuisance. 20. I feel people haven't done enough for me. <i>21. It's important to have people around me.</i> 22. I find it difficult to confide in people.	