RSQ

Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ)

The RSQ is a self-report questionnaire assessing sensitivity to interpersonal rejection. It presents 18 hypothetical situations involving significant or relationally relevant people (for example friends, parents, a teacher, a romantic partner, an acquaintance) and jointly measures anxiety about possible rejection and the expectation of acceptance. Initially developed with students and young adults, it helps the psychologist identify a relational vulnerability marked by the anxious anticipation of rejection, which is useful in exploring attachment difficulties, relationship conflicts and certain mixed anxiety-depressive complaints.

Number of questions	18 questions
Estimated duration	7 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire
Target audience	Young adults
Authors	Geraldine Downey, Scott I. Feldman (1996)
Category	Emotional dependency, Interpersonal issues, Anxiety

Preview of the 18 questions

How concerned or anxious would you be over how the other person(s) would respond to your request?

You ask someone in class if you can borrow his/her notes.

Each situation is also rated for the expectancy of acceptance: from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely) that the other person(s) would respond in an accepting way.

1 - Very unconcerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 - Very concerned

How concerned or anxious would you be over how the other person(s) would respond to your request?

You ask your boyfriend/girlfriend to move in with you.

Each situation is also rated for the expectancy of acceptance: from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely) that the other person(s) would respond in an accepting way.

1 - Very unconcerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 - Very concerned

How concerned or anxious would you be over how the other person(s) would respond to your request?

You ask your parents for help in deciding what programs to apply to.

Each situation is also rated for the expectancy of acceptance: from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely) that the other person(s) would respond in an accepting way.

1 - Very unconcerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 - Very concerned

How concerned or anxious would you be over how the other person(s) would respond to your request?

You ask someone you don't know well out on a date.

Each situation is also rated for the expectancy of acceptance: from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely) that the other person(s) would respond in an accepting way.

1 - Very unconcerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 - Very concerned

How concerned or anxious would you be over how the other person(s) would respond to your request?

Your boyfriend/girlfriend has plans to go out with friends tonight, but you really want to spend the evening with him/her, and you tell him/her so.

Each situation is also rated for the expectancy of acceptance: from 1 (very unlikely) to 6 (very likely) that the other person(s) would respond in an accepting way.

1 - Very unconcerned | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 - Very concerned

Administer your questionnaires online

Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

For each situation, score two responses on scales from 1 to 6:

(a) the degree of concern/anxiety about the outcome and (b) the likelihood of an accepting response.

Reverse the acceptance score to obtain the expectation of rejection using the formula 7 - acceptance score, then multiply this result by the concern/anxiety score for each situation.

Then calculate the mean of the 18 situation scores.

The overall score theoretically ranges from 1 to 36; the higher it is, the greater the rejection sensitivity. Interpretation is dimensional, taking the clinical context into account.

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