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Review article

Adult attachment measures: A 25-year review

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Abstract

Objective

Over the past 25 years, attachment research has extended beyond infant “parent bonds to examine dyadic relationships in children, adolescents, and adults. Attachment has been shown to influence a wide array of biopsychosocial phenomena, including social functioning, coping, stress response, psychological well-being, health behavior, and morbidity, and has thus emerged as an important focus of psychosomatic research. This article reviews the measurement of adult attachment, highlighting instruments of relevance to or with potential use in psychosomatic research.

Methods

Following a literature search of articles that were related to the scales and measurement methods of attachment in adult populations, 29 instruments were examined with respect to their utility for psychosomatic researchers.

Results

Validity, reliability, and feasibility were tabulated on 29 instruments. Eleven of the instruments with strong psychometric properties, wide use, or use in psychosomatic research are described. These include the following: Adult Attachment Interview (George, Kaplan, and Main); Adult Attachment Projective (George and West); Adult Attachment Questionnaire (Simpson, Rholes, and Phillips); Adult Attachment Scale (and Revised Adult Attachment Scale) (Collins and Read); Attachment Style Questionnaire (Feeney); Current Relationship Interview (Crowell and Owens); Experiences in Close Relationships (Brennan, Clark, and Shaver) and Revised Experiences in Close Relationships (Fraley, Waller, and Brennan); Parental Bonding Instrument (Parker, Tupling, and Brown); Reciprocal Attachment Questionnaire (West and Sheldon-Keller); Relationship Questionnaire (Bartholomew and Horowitz); and Relationship Scales Questionnaire (Griffin and Bartholomew).

Conclusion

In addition to reliability and validity, investigators need to consider relationship focus, attachment constructs, dimensions or categories of interest, and the time required for training, administration, and scoring. Further considerations regarding attachment measurement in the context of psychosomatic research are discussed.



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Keywords

Attachment; Adulthood; Relationships; Psychosomatic; Psychometrics; Validity

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