



Fear of Childbirth Assessment (WDEQ-10)

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Category

Content

Software & Content

Nursing Innovation/Scales,
Assessments, and Tools

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OVERVIEW

Simplified, reliable tool for assessing fear of childbirth in pregnant women.

- Easily readable, shorter, version of the WDEQ instrument with good validity, application to more diverse populations than original
- Useful in obstetrics, prenatal care, mental health assessment
- Includes the 10-question survey and scoring guide to aid in interpretation of results

BACKGROUND

Fear of childbirth is a significant concern for some pregnant people, often impacting both their mental and physical well-being. The Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire (WDEQ) has been the gold standard for measuring this fear. However, it faces several limitations including its lengthy format (i.e., 30 questions) which can be burdensome and it not being translatable to diverse U.S. populations. A need exists for a concise, reliable, and accessible instrument with good validity to support pregnant people and their fears around pregnancy and birth.

INNOVATION

Researchers have created the Fear of Childbirth Assessment (WDEQ-10), which is a revised, 10-question scale designed to overcome the limitations of the original WDEQ. It covers three subscales: fear of environmental factors, fear of death or injury, and fear of how the person will

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feel. This new tool is more easily readable and accessible, featuring good reliability and validity across diverse populations. Unlike the original, its concise format reduces respondent burden while still accurately measuring the complex concepts around pregnancy fears. Distributed via Creative Commons, its real-world applications extend to clinical care, research, and personal exploration, thereby enhancing care quality for diverse populations.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Based on the Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire (W-DEQ) © 1996 K. Wijma & B. Wijma, used with permission.

K. Wijma, B. Wijma & M. Zar (1998) Psychometric aspects of the W-DEQ; a new questionnaire for the measurement of fear of childbirth, *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 19:2, 84-97, DOI: 10.3109/01674829809048501

Available at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.3109/01674829809048501>, reused with permission.

LICENSING INFORMATION:

Select 'Order Now' to download the Fear of Childbirth Assessment (WDEQ-10).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We are extremely grateful for and want to recognize the previous research and work of the authors of the original Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire (WDEQ) - Klaas Wijma, Barbro Wijma, & Margareta Zar - which preceded the development of this WDEQ-10 Fear of Childbirth Assessment tool.

PUBLICATIONS:

Roosevelt, L., Zielinski, R., Seng, J., & Low, L. K. (2023). Measuring Fear of Childbirth Among a Diverse Population in the United States: A Revised Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Scale (WDEQ 10). *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*<https://doi.org/10.1111/jmwh.13514>

Roosevelt, L. K., & Low, L. K. (2021). Understanding fear of childbirth among underrepresented populations in the United States. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 26(14), 2811-2821.

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