Probability of Major Depression Classification Based on the SCID, CIDI and MINI Diagnostic Interviews: A Synthesis of Three Individual Participant Data Meta-Analyses

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Short title: Comparison of Diagnostic Interviews for Major Depression

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Keywords:
depressive disorders, diagnostic interviews, individual participant data meta-analysis, major depression, classification

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Three previous individual participant data meta-analyses (IPDMAs) reported that, compared to the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM (SCID), alternative reference standards, primarily the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) and Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI), tended to misclassify major depression status, controlling for depression symptom severity. However, there was important imprecision in results.

Objective: To compare odds of major depression classification based on the SCID, CIDI, and MINI.

Methods: We included and standardized data from three IPDMA databases. For each IPDMA, separately, we fit binomial generalized linear mixed models to compare adjusted odds ratios (aORs) of major depression classification, controlling for depression symptom severity and participant characteristics; and the interaction between interview and symptom severity. Next, we synthesized results using DerSimonian-Laird random-effects meta-analysis.

Results: In total, 69,405 participants (7,574 [11%] with major depression) from 212 studies were included. Controlling for symptom severity and participant characteristics, the MINI (74 studies; 25,749 participants) classified major depression more often than the SCID (108 studies; 21,953 participants; aOR [95% CI] = 1.46 [1.11-1.92]). Classification odds for the CIDI (30 studies; 21,703 participants) and SCID did not differ overall (aOR [95% CI] =1.19 [0.79, 1.75]), but as screening scores increased, aOR increased less for the CIDI than the SCID (interaction aOR [95% CI] = 0.64 [0.52-0.80]).

Conclusions: Compared to the SCID, the MINI classified major depression more often. Odds of depression classification with the CIDI increased less as symptom levels increased. Interpretation of research that uses diagnostic interviews to classify depression should consider interview characteristics.

INTRODUCTION

In mental health research, diagnostic interviews are used to classify disorders in a manner consistent with standard classification systems and replicable across studies [1-4]. There are important differences, however, in the designs of commonly used interviews. Semi-structured interviews are designed for administration by trained professionals with diagnostic experience; evaluators can interject queries and use their clinical judgment to determine whether symptoms are present and significant [1-3]. The Structured Clinical Interview for DSM (SCID) [4] is the most commonly used semi-structured interview in depression research [5-7]. Fully structured interviews, in contrast, are designed for lay interviewer administration to reduce the cost of clinician-administered interviews. They are completely scripted, and evaluators cannot provide additional explanations or rephrase questions; minimal judgment is involved. They are intended to maximize reliability but may reduce validity [8]. The Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) [8] is the most commonly used fully structured interview for depression research [5-7]. The Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI) [9,10], also common in depression research, is a very brief fully structured interview, originally described by its developers as a screening interview and intended to be over-inclusive [10].

Despite their differences, semi-structured interviews, fully structured interviews of conventional length, and abbreviated alternatives such as the MINI are usually treated as equivalent. For instance, meta-analyses of depression screening tool accuracy typically pool primary study results without consideration of reference standards [11-17]. Until recently, however, only several small studies, each with 61 depression cases or fewer, compared classification by different diagnostic interviews [2,18-23]. Recently, three individual participant data meta-analyses (IPDMA) compared odds of major depression classification between different diagnostic interviews, controlling for depression symptom severity scores and participant characteristics [5-7]. Those included an IPDMA with 17,158 participants from 57 primary studies that used the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) to control for depression symptom severity [5], 12,759 women

in pregnancy or postpartum from 46 studies that used the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) [6], and 15,856 participants from 73 studies that used the depression subscale of the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS-D) [7]. Results suggested that, compared to semi-structured interviews (e.g., SCID) [4], the CIDI may classify more people with relatively low-level symptoms as depressed but fewer people with higher symptom levels. The MINI appeared to classify major depression in more people across the symptom spectrum. There was important imprecision in results, however, including wide confidence intervals (CIs) around estimates.

Our objective was to synthesize results from three separate IPDMAs datasets to and compare the most commonly used diagnostic interviews for major depression, the SCID, CIDI, and MINI to determine (1) if odds ratios for major depression classification using the CIDI and MINI differ from the SCID, controlling for depression symptom severity and participant characteristics, and (2) if there is an interaction between the interview and depressive symptom level that would suggest that differences in classification odds are associated with symptom levels.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We conducted a two-stage evidence synthesis. We first conducted IPDMAs in the PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS datasets, separately, by fitting models with and without interaction terms for depressive symptom severity in each dataset, separately. Second, we pooled estimates from the results of the three IPDMAs.

Inclusion Criteria for the Included Datasets

For the PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS-D IPDMAs, datasets from articles in any language were eligible for inclusion if (1) they included diagnostic classification for current Major Depressive Disorder or Major Depressive Episode using Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders [24-27] or International Classification of Diseases [28] criteria based on a validated semi-structured or fully structured interview; (2) they included PHQ-9, EPDS, or HADS-D scores; (3) the diagnostic interview and depression screening test were administered within two weeks of each other; and (4) participants were ≥ 18 years, not recruited from

youth or college settings, and not recruited from psychiatric settings or because a screening test identified them as having symptoms of depression [29-31]. For the EPDS, participants were women in pregnancy or within 12 months postpartum [30]. In each IPDMA, datasets where not all participants were eligible were included if primary data allowed selection of eligible participants [29-31]. Over 90% of all included studies in the IPDMA databases used the SCID, CIDI, or MINI diagnostic interviews. Thus, for the present study, as we did in the published IPDMAs of the EDPS [6] and HADS-D [7], we restricted analyses to studies that used SCID, CIDI, or MINI.

Search Strategy, Study Selection, Data Acquisition, and Data Extraction

For more details on the search and selection processes, as well as data contribution, extraction, and synthesis, please see Supplementary Method 1. For information on how the IPDMA datasets and the analyses conducted in the present study deviated from our previous published IPDMAs on diagnostic interview performance using the PHQ-9 [5], EPDS [6], and HADS-D [7] IPDMA databases, please see Supplementary Method 2, Supplementary Method 3, and Supplementary Figure 1.

Statistical Analysis

IPDMAs of PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS-D Datasets:

We initially standardized symptom severity scores in each dataset. To do this, for each measure, we converted raw screening tool scores to standardized scores by Z-transformation (subtracting the mean and dividing by the standard deviation of raw scores). We then meta-analyzed the PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS datasets, separately. In each dataset, we fit binomial generalized linear mixed models with a logit link function to compare the adjusted odds ratio (aOR) of major depression classification for the CIDI versus the SCID, the MINI versus the SCID, and, as a supplementary analysis, the MINI versus the CIDI, controlling for depressive symptom levels and other participant characteristics. We adjusted for different covariates in the models for each dataset, based on relevant measures. For the PHQ-9 and HADS-D datasets, as in the previously published IPDMAs [5,7], we controlled for depressive symptom severity (continuous

standardized scores), age, sex, country Human Development Index (very high, high, or low-medium) [32], and patient care setting (PHQ-9: primary care, outpatient specialty care, inpatient specialty care, non-medical care [33]; HADS-D: outpatient care, inpatient care, non-medical care, mixed inpatient and outpatient [7]). For the EPDS, we did not control for sex or patient care settings but controlled for pregnancy versus postpartum status [6]. To account for the correlation between subjects within primary studies in each dataset, a random intercept was fit. Fixed slopes were estimated for all covariates in each model. We also fit additional models in each dataset, where we added an interaction term between interview and depressive symptom severity (continuous PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS-D standardized scores), to evaluate whether any differences in aOR of major depression classification were associated with depression symptom severity.

Synthesis of IPDMA Results:

To synthesize results from the three IPDMAs, we pooled estimates of the aOR for each comparison (CIDI versus SCID, MINI versus SCID, MINI versus CIDI) and the aOR for the interaction of interview and depression symptom severity in each comparison, along with 95% CIs. We used DerSimonian-Laird random effects meta-analysis to pool the aORs [34]. Heterogeneity was examined using the I^2 statistic based on log aORs [35]. Because some studies were included in both the PHQ-9 and HADS-D IPDMAs, as a sensitivity analysis, we re-analyzed results after removing those studies.

All analyses were conducted in R (R version R 3.5.1 and R Studio version 1.1.463) [36,37] using the glmer function within the lme4 package [38] and the rma function within the metafor package [39].

RESULTS

In total, 69,405 participants (7,574 [11%] with major depression) were included in the three individual IPDMAs (Table 1). Of the 212 included primary studies, the SCID was used in 108 studies (21,953 participants, 14% major depression), the CIDI in 30 studies (21,703 participants, 7% major depression), and the MINI in 74 studies (25,749 participants, 12% major depression). Mean (standard deviation) of raw

screening tool scores, prior to standardization, were 4.99 (5.26) for the PHQ-9, 6.98 (5.58) for the EPDS, and 5.16 (4.07) for the HADS-D. Characteristics of individual primary studies are available in Supplementary Table 1 with details for PHQ-9 update in Supplementary Method 1. There were 13 studies that were included in both the PHQ-9 and HADS-D datasets, including 2,383 (6%) participants in the PHQ-9 IPDMA and 2,349 participants (15%) in the HADS-D IPDMA. There was no overlap between the EPDS and the PHQ-9 or HADS-D IPDMAs.

Estimates of aORs of major depression classification by diagnostic interview, controlling for depressive symptom severity and other participant characteristics, individually and pooled, are reported in Table 2. Overall odds of major depression classification did not differ for the CIDI versus the SCID (aOR 1.19, 95% CI = 0.79 to 1.75) in the full model that included the interaction term, but there was a significant interaction between the CIDI and depressive symptom severity; as screening tool scores increased, odds of major depression classification increased less for the CIDI than for the SCID (interaction aOR = 0.64, 95% CI = 0.52 to 0.80). As shown in Figure 1, participants with lower depressive symptom severity were more likely to be classified with major depression with the CIDI compared to the SCID, but the opposite was true with greater symptom severity. Compared to the SCID, the MINI classified major depression more often (aOR 1.45; 95% CI = 1.08 to 1.93), controlling for depressive symptom severity and participant characteristics. There was no apparent interaction between symptom levels and odds of classification (interaction aOR = 0.95, 95% CI = 0.78 to 1.15). See Figure 2.

Trends of the probability of major depression classification by reference standards for individual IPDMAs are presented in Supplementary Figures 2-4. There was minimal between-IPDMA heterogeneity in overall aORs for the comparison of the CIDI versus the SCID and the MINI versus the SCID in models without the interaction term (I^2 = 11% and 0%, respectively) and including the interaction term (I^2 = 0% and 0%, respectively). However, there was substantial between-IPDMA heterogeneity of interaction aORs for both comparisons (I^2 = 82% and 82%). See Table 2.

In the comparison of the MINI versus the CIDI, the MINI was more likely to classify participants as having major depression than the CIDI (aOR = 2.05; 95% CI = 1.36 to 2.10), controlling for depressive symptom levels and other participant characteristics. As screening tool scores increased, the odds of major depression classification increased more for the MINI than for the CIDI (interaction aOR = 1.48, 95% CI = 1.36 to 1.60). Heterogeneity was low for aORs with and without the interaction term, and interaction aORs (I^2 = 0%, 0%, and 0%).

In the individual IPDMAs, some results from the EPDS dataset appeared to diverge from those generated in the PHQ-9 and HADS-D datasets. However, the number of studies and cases included in the EPDS dataset for the CIDI and MINI were smaller than any other combination of screening tool and diagnostic interview. See Table 1.

As a sensitivity analysis, we removed the 13 datasets that were included in both the PHQ-9 and HADS-D IPDMAs and re-ran all analyses. Results were similar (see Supplementary Table 2).

DISCUSSION

There were two main findings. First, overall odds of major depression classification did not differ between the fully structured CIDI and the semi-structured SCID. However, adjusting for depressive symptom levels and participant characteristics, odds of major depression classification with the CIDI increased significantly less than for the SCID as depressive symptom levels increased. This suggests that, compared to the SCID, the CIDI is relatively more likely to classify individuals with subthreshold or mild depressive symptoms and relatively less likely to classify people with more severe symptoms. Second, participants evaluated with the MINI were significantly more likely to be classified as having major depression compared to those assessed with the SCID, independent of symptom severity. Between-study heterogeneity was low for models without the interaction term, but higher for models with interaction terms. Estimates from the EPDS IPDMA appeared to diverge somewhat from the PHQ-9 and HADS-D IPDMAs.

This may have been related to the small numbers of studies and major depression cases for the CIDI and MINI among studies that used the EPDS.

Our findings appear to be consistent with characteristics of the different types of diagnostic interviews. The MINI was designed as a screening interview and described by its developers as over-inclusive in classifying psychiatric disorders [10]. For the CIDI, the lack of sensitivity to different levels of depressive symptoms severity may be because the CIDI assesses symptoms in the last 12 months and over the lifetime, then probes to determine if those symptoms are currently present using only a single question. In contrast, the SCID and the MINI specifically assess symptoms in the past two weeks. In addition, the CIDI is much more complicated than the MINI or the SCID. It includes complex branches and is scored using algorithms subject to calibration, which may influence how well diagnoses map onto DSM criteria. This could lead to error at all symptom levels, which would result in more people classified at lower symptom severity levels and fewer at higher levels.

Results were generally consistent with limited evidence from small studies that previously directly compared depression classification by administering semi- and fully structured diagnostic interviews to the same participants. In two studies that examined general population samples with low prevalence, fully structured interviews classified major depression substantially more frequently than semi-structured interviews [2,20]. On the other hand, in a study of participants in inpatient alcohol treatment, where symptom severity would be expected to be higher, depression classification likelihood was similar with semi-structured and fully structured interviews [22].

Our findings have important implications for research, including clinical trials, prognostic and risk factor studies, diagnostic accuracy studies, and prevalence studies. Concerns have been raised about the degree to which antidepressant trials are generalizable to real-world clinical practice [40]. Based on our findings, the method used to classify depression status is also an important consideration. If used to determine trial eligibility, the CIDI may not identify some participants who would be eligible based on the

SCID, whereas both CIDI and MINI may include some participants who would not be eligible based on the SCID, which could reduce the ability to detect treatment effects and further limit applicability to participants in practice who meet diagnostic criteria. Differences in classifying participants could similarly reduce the ability to identify potential associations between risk factors and depression. In diagnostic test accuracy studies, depression screening tool accuracy has been shown to differ across reference standards [33,41,42]. In studies of major depression prevalence, the MINI will overestimate compared to the SCID, whereas with the CIDI, relative prevalence will depend on the underlying distribution of depressive symptoms.

Our findings, which are contrary to the common belief that different reference standards can be treated equivalently in mental health research, provide evidence that different approaches are needed [43]. Ideally, researchers would use semi-structured interviews, such as the SCID, which are designed to replicate diagnostic procedures as closely as possible, to establish diagnostic status. However, this is not always feasible due to the resources required, including highly trained staff. Future studies are needed to develop models to calibrate weights of major depression classification based on different reference standards that could facilitate synthesis of results using different diagnostic interviews. Meanwhile, in selecting a diagnostic interview for use in research, investigators should consider advantages and disadvantages of different interviews, including performance characteristics and resources required. In published studies, authors should comment on potential implications of the type of diagnostic interview that was used. Users of research, including clinicians, should be aware that results from studies that use the CIDI or MINI may differ from what would be found using semi-structured interviews, which are designed to replicate diagnostic procedures as closely as possible. It is also important to underline that from a clinimetric perspective [44-46], assessment of diagnostic status alone is not sufficient, but that rating tools and self-report questionnaires are needed to characterize symptom severity and the specific nature of experienced symptoms.

A strength of the present study was the inclusion of 69,405 participants with 7,574 (11%) major depression cases from 212 studies. This allowed us to overcome limitations of previous IPDMAs and generate more precise estimates. A second strength was that data within each included dataset were standardized in terms of definitions of major depression classification, eligibility criteria, and variables. A limitation to consider is that for included IPDMAs, we could not obtain primary data for 28 of 117 eligible PHQ-9 studies (24% of eligible studies, 17% of eligible participants), 19 of 64 EPDS studies (30% of eligible studies, 30% of eligible participants), and 47 of 116 HADS-D studies (41% of eligible studies, 29% of eligible participants). A second is that we used standardized scores instead of raw depression symptom scores, which required making the assumption that a standard deviation change in scores was equivalent across different screening tools. Third, because only three estimates were pooled, our ability to estimate heterogeneity and explore possible causes was limited. Fourth, some studies were included in both the PHQ-9 and HADS-D IPDMAs. However, a sensitivity analysis showed that results were similar when these studies were removed. Fifth, we examined the SCID, CIDI, and MINI, because we did not have access to enough studies to include other diagnostic interviews. It is unclear to what degree our findings would generalize to other diagnostic interviews. Finally, our study did not include a head-to-head comparison of interviews from a randomized controlled trial or by administering different interviews to all participants. It is unlikely, however, that such as study would be feasible with a large enough sample to draw conclusions with confidence. Our study design, despite its limitations, overcame this barrier.

To conclude, the semi-structured SCID was designed to replicate diagnostic standards and procedures as closely as possible. By synthesizing results from three large IPDMAs, we found that the most commonly used fully structured diagnostic interviews to classify major depression, the CIDI and MINI, did not perform equivalently to the SCID. The CIDI is not as responsive as the SCID to different levels of reported depressive symptoms, and the MINI identifies more cases across the spectrum of depressive symptom levels. Researchers should carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of using these diagnostic

interviews, and findings from studies based on the CIDI or the MINI should be interpreted considering how their performance deviates from that of the SCID.

Acknowledgements: Not applicable

Statement of Ethics: This study involved analysis of previously collected de-identified data, and included studies were required to have obtained ethics approval and informed consent; thus, the Research Ethics Committee of the Jewish General Hospital determined that ethics approval was not required.

Conflict of Interest Statement: All authors have completed the ICJME uniform disclosure form and declare no support from any organization for the submitted work; no financial relationships with any organizations that might have an interest in the submitted work in the previous three years. All authors declare no other relationships or activities that could appear to have influenced the submitted work. No funder had any role in the design and conduct of the study; collection, management, analysis, and interpretation of the data; preparation, review, or approval of the manuscript; and decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

Funding Sources: This study was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (KRS-134297, PCG-155468, PJT-162206, KRS-140994, KRS-144045). Drs. Wu and Levis were supported by Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQS) Postdoctoral Training Fellowships. Dr. Benedetti was supported by a FRQS researcher salary award.

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review and approved the final manuscript. AB and BDT are the guarantors; they had full access to all the data in the study and take responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analyses.

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FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure 1. Comparison of major depression classification odds of the Composite International Diagnostic Interview (CIDI) versus the Structured Clinical Interview for DSM (SCID)

The figure presents the aOR of major depression classification for the CIDI compared to the SCID for primary studies based on the PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS-D and pooled estimates at standardized scores of -1, 0, 1, 2 and 3. The standardized scores of -1, 0, 1, 2 and 3 are approximately equal to scores of 0, 5, 10, 16 and 21 on the PHQ-9 (SD = 5.26); 1, 7, 13, 18 and 24 on the EPDS (SD = 5.58); and 1, 5, 9, 13 and 17 on the HADS-D (SD = 4.07). We present standardized scores from -1 to 3, because raw scores corresponding to standardized scores below -1 or above 3 would be negative or beyond the maximum scores of the included screening tools.

Abbreviations: EPDS: Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale; HADS-D: Depression subscale of Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale; META: Pooled estimates from the synthesis meta-analysis. PHQ-9: Patient Health Questionnaire-9.

Figure 2. Comparison of major depression classification odds of the Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (MINI) vs. the SCID considering the interaction between depressive symptom severity and the MINI

The figure presents the aOR of major depression classification for the MINI compared to the SCID for primary studies based on the PHQ-9, EPDS, and HADS-D and pooled estimates at standardized scores of -1, 0, 1, 2 and 3. The standardized scores of -1, 0, 1, 2 and 3 are approximately equal to scores of 0, 5, 10, 16 and 21 on the PHQ-9 (SD = 5.26); 1, 7, 13, 18 and 24 on the EPDS (SD = 5.58); and 1, 5, 9, 13 and 17 on the HADS-D (SD = 4.07). We present standardized scores from -1 to 3, because raw scores corresponding to standardized scores below -1 or above 3 would be negative or beyond the maximum scores of the included screening tools.

Abbreviations: EPDS: Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale; HADS-D: Depression subscale of Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale; META: Pooled estimates from the synthesis meta-analysis. PHQ-9: Patient Health Questionnaire-9.