**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** The validity of the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 to screen for depression in patients with type-2 diabetes mellitus in non-communicable diseases clinics in Malawi

**Version:** 0  **Date:** 14 Jan 2019

**Reviewer:** Phillip Tully

**Reviewer's report:**

BPSY-D-18-00795

Good succinct abstract and clear rationale in introduction - a generally nicely written paper and validation study.

Acknowledgment of similar PHQ studies in other African countries.

Independent back translation.

Perhaps the diagnoses of major and minor depression with SCID could be moved from the analyses section. No reference is given for the SCID.

Was the study under-powered based on the calculation of 80% sensitivity versus actual sensitivity?

What method was used to determine optimal cut-off's (e.g. Youden index?). Some mention is made in the results and should be described in the methods "gave the best combination of sensitivity and specificity in detecting either minor or major depression."

The OCC is not described in the methods.

No flow chart is provided regarding how many persons were approached and ineligible or unavailable for the study.

The depression prevalence by SCID is high, even for a diabetes sample. Could the authors provide a comparison of their prevalence data against other diabetes samples from LMIC's?

The qualifications of the research assistants was not stated.
Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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