Reviewer’s report

Title: A Comparison of Depression Prevalence Estimates in Meta-Analyses based on Screening Tools and Rating Scales versus Diagnostic Interviews: A Meta-research Review

Version: 0 Date: 27 Nov 2018

Reviewer: Michael Roerecke

Reviewer’s report:

I only have a few albeit major comments.

I know the authors state in the Discussion that their goal was not to compare actual magnitude of prevalence rates. However, the very basis of their overall conclusions is that these are different depending on the assessment method (objective 2). When I read through the description of the primary studies included, I noticed that many different populations (also age) and settings were included. Just for example, in Table 1a, one MA included children and adolescents in the welfare system, and another one Post-stroke patients in Sub-saharan Africa. Overall, the primary studies (MAs) seem to come from very different settings and it is not clear whether it was appropriate to compare their prevalence to begin with or what effect these different settings had on the differences in pooled prevalence rates.

In the same line, please provide forest plots to get a sense of the variation of the prevalence rates across MAs, in particular for the mean differences reported for objective 2 (I assume these mean differences are within comparisons, please correct me if I am wrong). Not weighting them seems appropriate in the given context, but a stronger case could be made for doing so. Perhaps a sensitivity analysis using weights could be considered.

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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