

Applicability of the Chinese Beck Depression Inventory (1988)

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Author's Purpose, Methods, Results & Conclusions

Purpose: Evaluate whether the Chinese-translated Beck Depression Inventory (CBDI) was reliable and valid for use with Chinese patients and whether semantic translation alone produces a clinically accurate instrument.

Methods: sampled 329 clinically depressed patients from 24 psychiatric hospitals across China. All participants diagnosed using DSM-III via the ADIS-P computerized diagnostic interview. Patients completed both CBDI (self-report) and Chinese Hamilton Depression Scale (CHDS) (clinician-rated). Data was analyzed by total correlations of items, Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, and PCA for factor structure.

Results: Overall reliability is good. Cronbach $\alpha = 0.846$, but many items did not match Chinese cultural idioms of depression.

Conclusion: CBDI is not adequate for clinical use without culturally grounded reconstruction.

Relevance to my research

- My research examines translation accuracy and cultural fit of psychological assessments, and specifically compare human vs AI-generated translations of the BDI (by ChatGPT-4 vs DeepSeekAI)
- The article provides direct evidence that linguistic translation and cultural validity can mismatch, as CBDI was semantically accurate yet still unreliable, especially for culturally unfamiliar items (libido, crying spells, etc), which shows the exact vulnerabilities my study is testing AI's ability to translate.
- Several BDI items also failed to retain meaning when translated directly, showing why AI translations must be examined not only for linguistic fidelity, but for idiomatic, cultural, and clinical equivalence.
- Chinese patients also express depression somatically more than emotionally, so western AI outputs may miss these culturally patterned expressions, whereas DeepSeek (trained on Chinese media) might outperform ChatGPT.
- I will focus on specific test items the researchers identified as problematic (libido, punishment, crying spells). If AI translations struggle on the same items, this strengthens my study.
- I will categorize translation issues (semantic, idiomatic, cultural mismatch) inspired by the authors' findings and raise these concerns during my expert panel discussion.

APA citation

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