Does the relationship between the BNSS and the PANSS negative factor score differ between negative symptom and acute exacerbation schizophrenia studies?

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SUBMISSION DETAILS

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Methodological Issue Being Addressed Is there a difference in the relationship between the BNSS and PANSS negative factor score in acutely exacerbated vs. negative symptom clinical trials

Introduction Negative symptoms of schizophrenia are a major source of psychiatric morbidity and disability with no currently approved treatment available. Negative symptom rating scales address and weigh domains of negative symptoms differently, and the impact on scoring may be influenced by the characteristics of schizophrenic patients studied (e.g., acutely exacerbated vs. stable, predominantly negative symptoms). We have previously reported on the relationship between the BNSS (which was prospectively designed to address five domains of negative symptoms) and the PANSS negative factor score (NSFS) in a sample of 518 subjects randomized in a mixed sample of schizophrenia trials. In the current analysis, we wanted to explore whether the relationship between the BNSS and PANSS negative factor score differs in acutely exacerbated vs. stable, predominantly negative symptom clinical trial contexts.

Methods 1,643 baseline visits collected from 1,228 and 423 subjects participating in either acute exacerbation or negative symptom trials, respectively, were included in the analysis. Due to missing data 9 subjects were excluded. Demographic data were not available for analysis. A generalized linear regression model was fitted to the data with the BNSS score as the dependent variable and study type (acute vs negative) and negative factor scores entered as quadratic terms as the predictors.

Results The mean(SD) PANSS score was 101.0(9.9) in the acute and 77.9(11.7) in the negative trials. The NSFS score was 23.9(4.6) and 24.9(4.4), respectively. Finally, the BNSS score was 36.4 (12.9) and 46.3(9.5), respectively. The GLM model identified a statistically significant difference in the relationship between the BNSS and the NSFS in acute vs. negative symptom trials ($p<0.001$). The predicted BNSS scores were significantly higher by 14.7 points in the negative symptom trials than in acute trials but the difference decreased with increasing NSFS score.

Conclusion Our analysis identified significant differences in the relationship between the assessment of negative symptoms by the BNSS and the NSFS in acute vs. negative symptom schizophrenia clinical trials. This was evident despite a negligible but statistically significant difference of -1.1 points in severity of negative symptoms at baseline in the acute vs. negative studies as assessed by the NSFS. The findings are compatible with the notion that the BNSS is more sensitive to negative symptoms and is better in differentiating subjects with predominant negative symptoms than the NSFS.

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Keywords

Keywords
Brief Negative Symptom Scale
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Schizophrenia
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Guidelines I have read and understand the Poster Guidelines

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