Decolonising Psychological Assessment in African Contexts: a Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Psychological assessments in Africa face significant challenges due to the cultural mismatch between Western-developed tools and the local contexts. Tools like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory and Beck Depression Inventory, while valuable in Western settings, are increasingly questioned for their applicability in Africa, as they overlook indigenous knowledge, community values, and spiritual dimensions essential for understanding mental health. This qualitative study revealed that community-based evaluations, narrative techniques, and holistic frameworks hold promise for addressing psychological issues. It was noted that capacity-building initiatives, policy reforms, and culturally sensitive educational curricula are crucial. The study also concluded that traditional Western tools often fail to capture the cultural and social realities of local communities, highlighting the need for context-specific assessment methods. Therefore, embracing indigenous knowledge and participatory approaches were seen as vital for equitable mental health care and sustainable mental health systems across Africa.

Keywords: Decolonisation, Western Psychological Tools, Psychological Assessment, African Context, Indigenous Knowledge.

Introduction and Background

Psychological assessment is fundamental to mental health diagnosis, treatment planning, and intervention efficacy. In Africa, the importance of culturally sensitive assessment practices has gained increasing recognition as the continent's diverse cultural, social, and spiritual landscapes pose unique challenges to the application of Western psychological tools[1]. Historically, the development and dissemination of psychological assessment tools have been dominated by Western paradigms, rooted in individualism, rationality, and standardised testing[2]. While these tools have contributed valuable knowledge within their original contexts, their transfer to African settings has been oppressed with limitations, primarily due to cultural incongruences. The application of Western tools such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), and Wechsler scales often results in misinterpretations of behaviours, misdiagnoses, and ineffective interventions within African communities[3]. These instruments tend to emphasise individual achievement and rational decision-making, neglecting the communal, spiritual, and holistic dimensions central to many African cultures[4]. Consequently, assessments may fail to capture the nuanced expressions of distress and well-being, undermining the accuracy and relevance of mental health diagnoses [1, 3].

This disconnect underscores a broader movement towards the decolonisation of psychology, a deliberate effort to challenge the epistemic dominance of Western paradigms and promote indigenous, contextually grounded knowledge systems[5]. Decolonisation involves critically examining existing assessment tools, advocating for the integration of indigenous worldviews,

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and developing alternative frameworks that are culturally congruent[6]. Such initiatives aim to empower local practitioners, validate indigenous expressions of mental health, and foster community ownership of psychological practices [4, 5].

Historical Background of Psychological Assessments in Africa
The history of psychological assessment in Africa is deeply intertwined with the colonial legacy, which imposed Western conceptualisations of mental health and standardised testing on diverse African populations[7]. During colonial rule, psychological research and assessment tools such as intelligence tests, personality inventories, and diagnostic manuals were imported into African countries, often with little adaptation to local context[8]. These tools were designed within Western paradigms emphasising individualism, rationality, and standardised measures, rooted in epistemologies that neglected communal, spiritual, and relational aspects of African societies[9]. The colonial administrators and psychologists often viewed indigenous knowledge and practices as inferior, framing Western psychological models as superior and universally applicable[10]. [11]Consequently, assessments tools developed in Western contexts were applied uncritically to African populations, leading to cultural misfits and validity concerns. Post-independence, efforts surfaced to adapt or develop assessment tools appropriate for African contexts[12]. However, many of these initiatives remain limited, sporadic, or under-resourced, with practitioners still relying heavily on Western instruments, often with minimal cultural adaptation[13]. This legacy continues to influence mental health praxis, underscoring the urgency for decolonial approaches in assessment practices [6, 7].

Limitations of Western-based Psychological Assessment Tools
Western assessment tools, including tools such as the MMPI, BDI, and Wechsler scales, are predicated on assumptions that often do not align with African cultural realities14. These tools emphasise individual achievement, rational cognition, and behaviour that conform to Western norms, neglecting the significant role of community, spirituality, and relational harmony in African life[15].

Several Limitations Have Been Identified:
- **Cultural insensitivity:** Western tools frequently encode cultural biases, leading to misdiagnoses or over-patholo-

gising culturally normative behaviours16. For example, expressions of distress through spiritual or communal language are often overlooked or misunderstood.
- **Language and translation issues:** Many assessment instruments lack validated translations in indigenous languages, resulting in loss of nuance and potential misinterpretations[17].
- **Validity and reliability concerns:** The constructs measured in Western assessments may not hold culturally, compromising their psychometric properties within African samples[18].
- **Lack of cultural contextualisation:** These frameworks often ignore the social, spiritual, and communal considerations shaping mental health in African societies, leading to incomplete or misleading evaluations.

Such limitations hinder effective diagnosis, treatment planning, and the development of culturally congruent interventions, highlighting the need for culturally adapted or indigenous assessment tools.

Indigenous knowledge Systems and their Relevance
Indigenous knowledge systems in Africa encompass holistic understandings of mental health that integrate social, spiritual, emotional, and environmental domains[19]. These systems are rooted in traditional beliefs, practices, and community-based support networks that have been passed down through generations[20]. For example, Ubuntu philosophy emphasises interconnectedness, compassion, and communal well-being, which significantly informs indigenous approaches to mental health[21]. The relevance of indigenous knowledge systems in assessment includes:
- Resonance with lived experiences: Indigenous frameworks articulate distress and resilience in culturally meaningful ways, capturing expressions unseen in Western assessments[22].
- Holistic approaches: They emphasise interconnectedness of mental, spiritual, social, and physical health, promoting more comprehensive evaluation models[23].
- Validation of indigenous expressions: Integrating local idioms, metaphors, and narratives enhances assessment validity and community acceptance[24].
- Promotion of empowerment: Recognition and respect for

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indigenous knowledge foster community trust, reduce stigma, and strengthen culturally relevant intervention strategies[25].

In particular, indigenous healing practices such as ritual ceremonies, spiritual consultations, and community support are integral to understanding mental health within African contexts and should inform assessment procedures [8-10].

Existing Culturally Adapted Assessment Tools
Efforts to develop culturally relevant assessment tools have gained momentum in recent years. Examples include:

- Ubuntu assessment framework: This framework is based on the Ugandan philosophical value of Ubuntu, emphasising interconnectedness, community, and compassion. It assesses mental health holistically, incorporating social and spiritual dimensions alongside psychological symptoms[26].
- Traditional healing integration: Some tools integrate indigenous practices like ritual analysis or spiritual consultations, blending them with psychological measures[27].
- Narrative-based assessment tools: These tools prioritise storytelling and oral histories, recognising the oral tradition's centrality in many African cultures[28].
- Community-based participatory approaches (CBPA): These involve community members and leaders in developing assessment criteria, ensuring relevance and acceptability[29].

While these tools demonstrate promising progress, widespread adoption remains limited due to issues of standardisation, validation, and resource availability.

Challenges in Current Practices
Several systemic challenges impede the widespread integration of culturally relevant assessments:

- **Institutional resistance:** Many educational and health institutions still prioritise Western assessment models as the standard, often citing a lack of validated indigenous tools or scepticism about non-Western approaches[30].
- **Policy gaps:** Absence of clear policies promoting the decolonisation of assessment practices hampers institutional change. This leads to reliance on imported tools, with insufficient emphasis on cultural adaptation or indigenous methodologies[31].
- **Resource limitations:** Developing, validating, and disseminating indigenous assessment tools require considerable resources, financial, human, and infrastructural, that are often scarce[32].
- **Practitioner training:** Limited training opportunities are available to equip psychologists with skills in culturally responsive assessment, including local language proficiency and cultural competence[33].
- **Cultural diversity:** Africa's immense diversity complicates the creation of standardised indigenous tools, necessitating context-specific adaptations rather than universal frameworks[34].

Therefore, this study seeks to explore the current landscape of psychological assessment within African contexts, critically analysing limitations of Western based tools and highlighting innovative approaches that prioritise local knowledge in developing these psychological assessment tools. Its major objective is to provide a roadmap for advancing culturally relevant assessment tools, emphasising their importance not only for diagnostic accuracy but also for advancing decolonial efforts in psychology.

Methodology
The study employed a qualitative research design emphasising community engagement and cultural relevance in psychological assessment practices within African contexts. The research methodology comprises a desk review of existing literature alongside in-depth semi-structured interviews with educational, counselling, and community psychologists. All participants were members of teaching staff at Midlands State University psychology department. Only those psychologists registered with the Allied Health Practitioners of Zimbabwe were included in the study, and all those who were not registered practitioners were excluded. A total of 2-4 practitioners were selected from each category, namely educational, counselling, and community psychologists. The desk review aims to identify gaps and highlight innovative assessment approaches developed within African settings, focusing on culturally responsive methodologies.

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Data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's[35] six stages, namely data familiarisation, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, integration of sub-themes into broader themes, defining themes, and production of a write-up that accurately reflects participants' viewpoints and experiences. This approach facilitates an understanding of the opportunities and obstacles in adopting culturally relevant and indigenous assessment methods, informing strategies for practice, policy, and capacity building. The methodology emphasises participatory and culturally grounded techniques, aligning with the study's aim to promote validation, community ownership, and cultural appropriateness in psychological assessments across African contexts [11-14].

Results

Findings of this study highlight several vital aspects of integrating indigenous knowledge systems into psychological assessment practices within African contexts. Practitioners emphasise that traditional Western tools often fail to capture the nuanced cultural, spiritual, and social realities of local communities, underscoring the need for assessments that are culturally relevant and context- sensitive. Successful interventions, such as community-based participatory assessments and storytelling approaches, demonstrate how incorporating local idioms, oral traditions, and community involvement were noted as key measures that can lead to more accurate and meaningful psychological assessments in Africa. These innovative practices not only enhance the validity of assessments but also foster trust, respect, and cultural identity, ultimately contributing to more effective and inclusive mental health services. The overarching consensus advocates for viewing indigenous knowledge as integral to reimagining assessment paradigms and promoting the decolonisation of psychological evaluation in Africa, ensuring that mental health interventions resonate authentically with the lived experiences of diverse communities in Africa [15, 16].

Practitioner Perspectives and Innovative Practices
Insights from Practitioners on Indigenous Knowledge Integration

Participants' perspectives underscore the critical importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems into existing western-based psychological assessment practices borrowed from European countries. Many participants noted that even though the currently used traditional Western tools have yielded some positive results, they often fail to capture the nuanced realities of African communities, primarily because they overlook cultural, spiritual, and social dimensions that are central to local understandings of mental health. This was in line with what was discovered from the literature reviewed, for example, [36]Alemu et al., who highlighted that practitioners should advocate for assessments that reflect local beliefs and values, as well as emphasising the need for cultural relevance and contextual sensitivity. Participants also postulate that incorporating indigenous concepts and practices facilitates a more holistic understanding of mental health, allowing assessments to resonate more authentically with clients lived experiences. This approach not only

enhances the validity and reliability of assessments but also promotes a sense of empowerment among community members, validating their cultural identities and worldviews. Furthermore, it was also revealed that the indigenous knowledge should not be viewed as a supplementary or alternative model but as an integral component that fundamentally redefines assessment paradigms. This perspective advocates for the decolonisation of psychological assessment by challenging the dominance of Western-based tools and not eradicating them, but elevating indigenous epistemologies as primary sources of knowledge. This can be reinforced by scholars like[37] Mokgolodi, who emphasised that reclaiming and reimagining assessment practices in alignment with African cultural paradigms are pivotal steps toward fostering respect, relevance, and inclusivity in mental health services. However, participants noted that there is still a persistent challenge in African psychological assessment is the inherent cultural mismatch of Western- developed tools. Participants stated that instruments, such as the BDI or MMPI, are rooted in individualistic and rationalist paradigms that may not align with communal and holistic African worldviews. Therefore, assessments based on Western paradigms risk misinterpreting culturally specific expressions of distress, leading to false positives, negatives, or misdiagnoses. Moreover, it was also noted that reliance on translated Western tools often results in linguistic inaccuracies and cultural nuances being lost or misunderstood. Slight variations in idiomatic expressions or social norms can significantly impact the validity of these assessments. [38]Mokgolodi underscores that these inadequacies perpetuate a cycle of misrepresentation, marginalise indigenous perspectives, and diminish community trust in psychological services [17-19].

The Role of Community Involvement and oral Traditions

The role of community involvement and oral traditions also emerged as another sub-theme from the views of participants. Participants noted that community involvement is foundational to culturally responsive assessment practices in African contexts. Recognising that community networks, connection ties, and spiritual practices shape individual well-being, participants advocate for participatory assessment models that incorporate local stakeholders at every stage. They mentioned oral traditions such as storytelling, proverbs, and communal narratives as powerful tools for understanding mental health within these communities. It was also revealed that by employing oral methods, practitioners will be respecting the cultural centrality of the spoken word and tradition, thereby enabling individuals to express their psychological experiences in culturally meaningful ways. These approaches facilitate trust-building, foster cultural resonance, and often elicit nuanced information that standard questionnaires from the Western world usually overlook. For example, one of the participants mentioned that in some areas in the rural Ugandan communities, mental health practitioners have already integrated storytelling as a core element of assessment, which allows individuals to narrate their experiences related to grief, trauma, and resilience. This process not only provided comprehensive insights but also reinforced cultural identity and community bonds, which are vital for recovery and well-being

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in our African communities [20-22].

Examples of Znterventions and Assessments
The reviewed literature also revealed several successful interventions and assessments from an African perspective. It was discovered that innovative assessment strategies rooted in African cultural contexts have demonstrated promising outcomes. The use of community-based participatory approaches exemplifies a shift toward more inclusive and culturally aligned assessments. For instance, a notable project in Kenya employed community based participatory assessment methods to develop a depression assessment tool tailored to local expressions of distress. By engaging community leaders, local health workers, and residents in the design process, these practitioners created an instrument that incorporated culturally specific idioms, expressions, and support systems. The assessment prioritised culturally relevant expressions of distress, such as "thinking too much" and "feeling heavy in the heart," aligning diagnostic criteria with local language and understanding. This tool proved more accurate and acceptable within the community, leading to increased help-seeking behaviours and better treatment adherence. Moreover, this collaborative approach fostered ownership, ensured cultural relevance, and improved the accuracy of diagnoses. Another successful intervention involves storytelling and oral narratives as assessment tools. For example, in South Africa, storytelling workshops conducted with adolescents provided a safe space for participants to share their experiences and coping strategies. Participants shared personal narratives surrounding experiences of trauma, peer relationships, and identity. Facilitators used thematic analysis of stories to identify common mental health challenges, which informed tailored community programs. This method capitalised on oral traditions intrinsic to many African cultures, emphasising the expressive power of stories to reveal underlying mental health issues that may remain hidden in conventional assessments [23, 24].

Hindrances to Decolonising Efforts
Apart from putting maximum effort into achieving meaningful progress in decolonising assessment tools, African practitioners still face obstacles. These include insufficient training and unavailability of resources and institutional resistance and policy gaps.

Insufficient Training, Stigma and Unavailability of Financial and Human Resources
Both data collected through interviews and from the reviewed literature revealed that effective culturally responsive assessment requires specialised training on indigenous knowledge, community engagement, and alternative methodologies. However, many practitioners lack access to such resources. [39]Mokgolodi points out that existing training programs are predominantly Western-centric, leaving psychologists ill-prepared to adapt or develop assessments that resonate with local contexts. Additionally, interviewed paricipants highlighted that financial constraints limit the availability of culturally appropriate tools, which are often underfunded or unavailable due to intellectual property issues and a lack of local capacity for tool development. It was further reiterated that this resource scarcity undermines ongoing efforts to decolonise assessment practices and

hampers the scalability of innovative approaches. The issue of stigma was also noted as another major challenge to the decolonisation of assessment tools. It was revealed that stigma surrounding mental health remains prevalent across many African communities, discouraging individuals from seeking assessment or treatment. Combining this with resource limitations like inadequate and compatible mental health infrastructure and qualified workforce shortages, these challenges hinder the implementation of effective assessment practices. These resource gaps perpetuate cycles of neglect, misdiagnosis, and worsening mental health outcomes.

Institutional Resistance and Policy Gaps
This is another sub-theme that emanated from hindrances to decolonising efforts. Most participants agreed that institutional inertia remains a formidable barrier. It was revealed that many educational, health, and psychological institutions uphold Western assessment standards due to historical legacies and entrenched paradigms. There is often resistance to change stemming from scepticism about indigenous approaches, perceived risks to professional credibility, or infrastructural constraints in these institutions. Furthermore, participants also noted that policy gaps exacerbate the issue, with few national or regional guidelines advocating for culturally grounded assessment methods. The absence of supportive policies limits funding, research, and training initiatives, preventing the systematic adoption and institutionalisation of culturally responsive practices.

How can these Challenges be Handled
Data collected through both interviews and reviewing of literature revealed a number of measures that can be taken to address decolonisation of psychological assessment tools issues in Africa. Views from both the reviewed literature and participants emphasised the importance of policy reforms and institutional advocacy. It was noted that addressing institutional resistance requires the implementation of robust policies that foreground the decolonisation agenda, including the development and endorsement of guidelines that promote the integration of indigenous knowledge. Participants further highlighted that advocacy efforts should actively engage government bodies, professional associations, and educational institutions to establish national standards that legitimise culturally adapted assessment tools, thereby facilitating resource allocation and fostering broader acceptance. Moreover, the reviewed literature revealed that policies that incentivise research into indigenous assessment methodologies can stimulate innovation and support the professional community in adopting culturally relevant practices. Another crucial strategy mentioned involves creating culturally sensitive standards and guidelines that outline best practices for community engagement, adaptation of existing instruments, and the development of new tools rooted in African epistemologies. Such standards should be co-created through a collaborative approach involving practitioners, community leaders, policymakers, and indigenous knowledge holders to ensure relevance, ethical integrity, and practical applicability. Furthermore, embedding indigenous assessment practices into formal education was also noted as pivotal. Curricula must incorporate modules on local cultural concepts, oral traditions, spiritual practices, and community-based evaluation methods. This educational reform

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should aim to cultivate a new generation of practitioners capable of confidently and competently applying culturally grounded assessments. Experiential learning through fieldwork and community engagement can further reinforce this capacity. Additionally, participants postulate that building local capacity for assessment development and implementation is fundamental. They went on to note that supporting collaborations between academia, industry, and communities, along with targeted funding, research grants, and technical assistance from international partners aligned with local priorities, can enhance the creation, validation, and dissemination of indigenous assessment tools. Therefore, establishing platforms for knowledge exchange and mentorship networks can nurture sustainable expertise within African contexts, ensuring that decolonised assessment practices are actively developed, implemented, and sustained at the local level [25, 26].

Discussions

Findings underscore the critical need for a paradigm shift in psychological assessment practices across African contexts. The results highlight that Western-developed assessment tools, such as the MMPI, Wechsler scales and BDI, often fail to capture the nuanced cultural, social, and spiritual realities of African populations. This misalignment can compromise the validity and reliability of assessments, leading to potential misdiagnoses and a reinforcement of stereotypes rooted in the colonial legacy. In response to these challenges, innovative approaches developed within African settings, including CBPA, narrative and storytelling techniques, and holistic frameworks, have shown promise in fostering culturally relevant evaluations. These methods emphasise community involvement and indigenous knowledge, aligning assessments more closely with local values and lived realities. For instance, CBPA actively engages community members and leaders, fostering ownership and contextual accuracy in assessment tools, enhancing their relevance and acceptance. Furthermore, the recognition of indigenous knowledge as vital by practitioners reinforces the importance of integrating traditional beliefs and practices into assessment processes. Such integration not only enhances cultural appropriateness but also promotes community trust and mental health literacy, vital for help-seeking behaviours. Nonetheless, substantial barriers persist, including institutional resistance to change, policy gaps, and the scarcity of culturally tailored instruments and training resources. Addressing these obstacles requires a multifaceted strategy involving capacity building, policy reform, and the development of indigenous assessment tools that reflect African worldviews. Additionally, training programs that focus on culturally responsive assessment practices and indigenous methodologies are paramount for equipping practitioners to develop and utilise locally relevant tools. Moreover, institutional policies must evolve to support the adoption of indigenous and culturally sensitive assessment methods, thereby decolonising psychological evaluation.

Ultimately, this study emphasises that decolonising psychological assessment is not merely about adapting existing tools but about fundamentally rethinking assessment paradigms to respect and incorporate. By prioritising community involvement, indigenous knowledge, and innovative methodologies, mental health practitioners can foster more equitable, valid, and impactful psychological evaluations across the continent. Future research

should continue to expand on these approaches, aiming for scalable models that uphold cultural dignity and enhance mental health outcomes throughout Africa.

Recommendations

To advance the decolonisation of psychological assessment within African contexts and ensure practices are culturally relevant and equitable, it is imperative to adopt holistic, collaborative, and sustainable strategies. The following recommendations outline key avenues for integrating indigenous knowledge systems into assessment processes, fostering cross-disciplinary partnerships, and securing the necessary policy and funding support to institutionalise culturally responsive practices.

(a) Emphasising culturally embedded research processes
Future research should prioritise participatory methodologies that involve communities from inception to dissemination. Emphasising indigenous paradigms and storytelling-based data collection can produce richer, more relevant insights into mental health phenomena. In this vein, adopting mixed-methods approaches combining quantitative assessments with qualitative narratives can capture the complexity and diversity of African lived experiences more effectively.

(b) Cross-disciplinary collaborations
Synthesising insights from anthropology, sociology, linguistics, and indigenous studies with psychology can foster more holistic assessment frameworks. Cross-disciplinary collaborations enable the development of innovative, culturally sensitive tools that respect and integrate multifaceted knowledge systems. Establishing regional and international networks dedicated to decolonising psychology can facilitate shared learning, resource pooling, and advocacy efforts.

(c) Funding and policy initiatives
Securing sustained funding from governmental and international sources is crucial for scaling up culturally responsive assessment practices. Policy initiatives should promote capacity development, research, and dissemination of best practices in indigenous and culturally relevant assessment methodologies. Allocating resources toward training programs, development of localised assessment tools, and institutional reforms can facilitate the mainstreaming of decolonised assessment practices. Additionally, establishing policies that prioritise culturally sensitive approaches will provide a supportive framework for practitioners to innovate and adapt assessment techniques aligned with African cultural contexts. Such policy support is vital for overcoming resistance rooted in traditional Western paradigms and for institutionalising practices that respect indigenous knowledge systems, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective mental health infrastructure across the continent.

Conclusions

This study underscores the critical need to decolonise psychological assessment practices within African contexts by critically examining the dominance of Western paradigms that often overlook or marginalise indigenous knowledge and cultural realities. Historically rooted in colonial legacies, many assessment tools and methodologies have been imported into Africa without sufficient adaptation to local cultural, social, and spiritual contexts. Consequently, these tools frequently fail to accurately reflect

the lived experiences of African individuals and communities, leading to misdiagnoses, the perpetuation of stereotypes, and the reinforcement of power imbalances rooted in colonial histories. A key insight from this study emphasises the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems into assessment practices. Information gathered recognised that assessments aligned with local belief systems, social norms, and expressions of distress are more valid, reliable, and meaningful. Innovations such as CBPA, storytelling, narrative approaches, and holistic frameworks demonstrate promising ways to contextualise assessment processes effectively. These methods foster community involvement, validate local expressions of mental health, and uphold cultural dignity, thereby enhancing both engagement and therapeutic outcomes. Despite these promising approaches, significant barriers remain, including institutional resistance to change, policy gaps, inadequate training resources, and limited availability of culturally adapted tools. Overcoming these obstacles requires a multifaceted effort involving capacity building, policy reform, and sustainable funding initiatives. Training programs that focus on culturally responsive assessment practices are essential for equipping practitioners with the skills to develop and implement indigenous and contextually relevant tools. Equally important is the establishment of policies that promote and institutionalise decolonised assessment approaches, ensuring that indigenous knowledge is respected and integrated into standard practice.

It should therefore be noted that the importance of decolonising psychological assessment extends beyond methodological adjustments; it is a matter of ethical responsibility and social justice. Decolonisation fosters respect for cultural diversity and empowers communities by validating their worldviews and healing practices. It also enhances the accuracy and effectiveness of mental health services, promoting well-being and social inclusion. For meaningful change to occur, stakeholders across multiple domains government agencies, policymakers, educational institutions, mental health practitioners, researchers, and community leaders, must collaborate. Governments should prioritise policies that support capacity building and the creation of indigenous assessment tools. Funding agencies, both governmental and international, must commit resources for research, training, and the dissemination of culturally relevant practices. Educational institutions should integrate culturally responsive curricula and training modules focused on indigenous methodologies. Additionally, practitioners need ongoing professional development opportunities to incorporate decolonised practices into their work. Moreover, communities should be active participants, guiding assessment practices to ensure they reflect local needs and values.

Subsequently, decolonising psychological assessment is a vital step toward creating equitable, culturally relevant mental health services in Africa. It requires a collective effort to challenge existing paradigms, revalue indigenous knowledge, and redesign assessment frameworks that honour cultural diversity. By doing so, we can foster a more inclusive and effective mental health landscape that truly serves the needs of African individuals and communities. The time to act is now, stakeholders must seize this opportunity to reshape psychological assessment into a tool that empowers rather than marginalises, respects rather than erases, and uplifts the rich cultural tapestry of Africa.

Declarations
All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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