



A review of psychological assessment techniques in Africa.

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Abstract

Psychological assessments determine cognitive, emotional, personality, behavioural and psychopathological functioning. In Africa, the practices can be best understood in terms of the continent's colonial heritage and democratisation of the education system adopted by the Black majority rule. Regulations for psychological practice and Western-oriented psychology guidelines inherited from the colonial era, are elements of continuity in the continent's many psychological assessment settings. This paper aimed to assess the use and relevance of psychological assessment techniques employed in Africa. A desk review of existing literature from a number of search engines was conducted. Emerging themes included that Westernised tools have been introduced in Africa overruling indigenous ways of psychological assessment; Africa inherited Western psychological assessment techniques from post-colonial African psychological assessment; the Eurocentric nature of many psychological assessment techniques compromises their relevance in Africa and Westernisation of Africa makes it difficult to utilise indigenous psychological assessments. Relevance of psychological assessments in Africa comes through adaptation of Western psychological assessment views in developing African-oriented techniques. Africa's multiculturalism and multi-lingual nature must be considered to develop contextualised techniques. African practitioners need further training in cross-cultural use, adaptation and interpretation. Henceforth, psychological assessment techniques can only become relevant in African if they become Afro-centric.

Keywords: *Psychological assessment, Multiculturalism, African contexts, Psychological techniques.*

1. Introduction

Comer (1999) defines assessment as the process of collecting and interpreting relevant information about an individual or subject. The results of the assessment contribute to the understanding of the concerned people or subject so that better-informed decisions are made about current problems or future choices. Psychological assessment techniques refer to the tools employed to determine cognitive, emotional, personality and behavioural factors and psychopathological functioning.

According to Shaakera (2009), psychological assessment and psychological testing are sometimes used interchangeably however it is important to make a distinction between the two. Assessment is the use of a standardised measure(s) to collect data that is combined with other data from other sources with the aim of providing a form of intervention (Sheppard & Spalding, 2003), while Cohen and Swedlik (2008), note that tests represent only the type of tool used by assessors. According to the South African Health Professions Act 56 of 1974, section 37(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (e), assessment refers to;

“.. the use of measures to assess mental, cognitive or behavioural processes and functioning, intellectual or cognitive ability or functioning, aptitude, interest, emotions, personality and physiological functioning or psychopathology”.

This definition reflects that assessment techniques should be developed to ensure adherence to fair and ethical practice. Practically assessment is in depth while testing does not incorporate the more integrated process which is more pronounced in assessment settings. The two practices have earned a fair progression in Africa especially in South Africa through the integration and implementation of multiple Acts and legislations however this progress has been and is still slowed down by some challenges. In most African settings of assessment, practices can be best understood in terms of the colonial heritage of the continent and the democratisation of the education system following black majority rule (Mpofu, 2004). Regulations for psychological practice and Western-oriented psychology guidelines inherited from the colonial era are elements of continuity in the continent's many psychological assessment settings. In view of the aforementioned a review of psychological assessment techniques in African contexts was done.

Research Problem

Full understanding of human behaviour and mental processes requires contextualised psychological assessment techniques. Psychological assessments were introduced in Africa,

time immemorial but up to date in many African countries psychological assessments are done using Westernised techniques which are not always applicable to different cultural backgrounds. This has prompted the researcher to review the psychological assessment techniques employed in African contexts with the aim of proposing ways that can lead to the contextualisation of these techniques.

Objective

The objective of this review was to trace the historical development of psychological assessment techniques in African contexts up to date with the aim of evaluating their current use highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and proposing recommendations for improvement where need be.

1. Literature review

The introduction of psychological assessment and testing can generally be traced back to the Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle who wrote about individual differences in abilities and temperament as well as the Chinese rulers who tested proficiency in different skills (Aiken & Marnat, 2009). The two practices can also be attributed to scientific and philosophical theories for example astrology, physiognomy and phrenology; though these are limited in exploring methods of measuring human attributes due to their lack of scientific methods (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2009). The emergence of psychology as a science led to scientific measurement of human attributes. Psychological assessments can also be traced back to the Second World War which called for improved methods of personnel selection thereby leading to the expansion of large-scale programs involving multiple methods of personality assessment. Psychological tests are greatly signified by psychologists because they provide them structure with clients, give room for in-depth feedback, reporting as well as give baseline insight of their clients (Foxcroft, Paterson, le Roux & Herbst, 2004). Psychological assessment is vital in various psychological fields as it offers practitioners essential frameworks which are valuable for practice.

In pre-colonial African contexts, psychological assessments were done but they were not documented hence the commencement of psychological assessment in this continent seems to have started with the coming in of Western people for example the missionaries, explorers and colonisers. Post-colonial period inherited the legacy of foreign psychological assessment techniques that were introduced during colonialism. Henceforth one can say that psychological assessment in African contexts has a long past but a very short history.

According to Kwate (2005), to understand psychological constructs of African people, one needs to use African centred theories for instance in the diagnosis of psychopathology he emphasised that the American Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual should not be used as the diagnostic foundation. Grills (2006) emphasised that for psychological practice to be effective in African contexts there must be deconstruction and deconditioning from Western ideological oppression as well as understanding that Africans value their culture hence their behaviour is shaped by their values, shared history, experience and language. According to the International Testing Commission Guidelines (2001) as quoted by Foxcroft (2002), ethical testing and assessment practises require the assessment practitioner to utilise the tests properly, professionally and ethically taking into cognisance the rights and needs of the test takers as well as of their context. Thus, the core ethical consideration for psychological practitioners making assessments in linguistically and culturally diverse African contexts, is to cater for that diversity maximally so as to be sensitive to the test takers' cultural backgrounds and values during the whole assessment process (Foxcroft, 2002). It is therefore against this background that the researcher sought to make a review of the techniques employed in making psychological assessments of African people in a bid to evaluate their relevance in such contexts.

2. Materials and Methods

Data Sources

This review was done basing on secondary data from different search engines where a number of journal articles were accessed. Some information was also obtained from published textbooks and some unpublished articles as well circulars on psychological assessment found in Zimbabwe government offices mainly from the Department of School Psychological Services. It was generally noted that there is a dearth of literature related to the topic of interest hence few articles were reviewed. Most of the reviewed articles focused on South Africa.

Procedure used for literature search and analysis

The literature search aimed to identify empirical research and position papers published from as early as the 1990s up to 2021 which use data from Africa or refer to psychological assessment in Africa. The reason being that the researcher wished to unearth the history of psychological assessment in African contexts and analyse the progress up to date. Databases were searched and these included Ebsco Host, JSTOR, Proquest, Psych INFO, Science Direct,

Wiley InterScience and others like Google Scholar were also searched to broaden the coverage. The databases were selected as they cover vast academic, peer-reviewed and research-based journals.

The search terms used were initially broad and were narrowed to improve the nature of the hits and to approach the issue from different dimensions using more selective search terms. All searching was done in English. The researcher employed a variety of search strategies utilising different combinations of root words and subsequently additional words to streamline or direct the outcome of the search. Searches included searching for individual words, word in combination and specific phrases. The search terms included 'psychological assessment', 'psychometric', 'psychological testing', 'bias' and these were used in combination with 'African contexts' in selecting the articles for the review process. Studies that focused on psychological assessment of Afro-Americans and other blacks originating from other continents other than Africa were excluded in the analysis as their backgrounds could not fit into the African origin of interest. Most of the articles selected centred on psychological assessment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Analysis of articles was conducted in the following manner. First they were divided into two key categories – those containing empirical primary data versus those that provided commentary or were conceptual or theoretical in nature. Second, the types of psychological assessments covered by the articles were noted. It is important to note that merely mentioning psychological assessment in the literature review of empirical articles was not regarded as being a sufficient indicator of the area of interest instead the information was to capture the essence of the review which focused on the evaluation of the use, relevance and development of psychological assessment tools in Africa.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the researcher interrogated this literature through the guidance of the following questions:

1. What types of assessments have been scrutinised in the literature? In other words, are we still focusing on psychological assessments or it's now human assessments from other dimensions?
2. What is the paradigmatic nature of theory and research on psychological assessment in Africa?
3. What psychological aspects are being assessed in Africa and how relevant are the tests?

Data analysis

Using thematic analysis, the following themes emerged;

Westernisation of psychological assessment techniques: Most psychological assessment techniques which have been used and which are still being used in Africa are Eurocentric and this questions their relevance in African contexts.

Effects of colonialism on psychological assessment in Africa: Colonialism left its remnants in psychological practice which portrayed psychological assessment as an elitist practice. This legacy retards the growth of psychological practice in many African states.

Neglect of indigenous ways of psychological assessment: Use of indigenous ways of assessing psychological aspects in Africa has been and is being affected by Westernisation.

Mystification of the field of Psychology: Psychology has been and is still being mystified in many African states leading to its poor practice. In many African states there are limited numbers of psychologists, hence undermining its practice.

Development of psychology practice in Africa: Psychological practice is still very minimal in Africa. South Africa is one African state whose psychological practice almost matches that of developed countries. It has also attempted greatly to adapt psychological assessment tests. Other African states, Zimbabwe included, mainly use outdated, Westernised tests of psychological assessments and have adapted a few. In some instances, proposals for adaptation are there but there is no implementation. It is also in South Africa where the development of community psychology and African psychology are at an advanced stage indicating a move towards indigenisation of psychological techniques

3. Findings and Discussion

Psychological assessments are done in Africa however the majority of the tests used are Westernised. In few instances, Africans have adapted Western tools of psychological assessments but in many cases psychologists in Africa utilise tests from the West without contextualising them. According to Abubakar et.al, (2009), there are a few psychological tools developed and standardised for use in Sub-Saharan Africa hence there is a need to consult target populations in developing and adapting measures for that population. This view has also been supported by Foxcroft and Roodt, (2009 and Mpofu, (2002b) who highlights that Sub-Saharan Africa lack psychological research which has significant implications for intervention and research. Other scholars also echoed that there is absence of culturally appropriate, reliable and valid psychometric measures (Holding, et.al., 2004; Kathuria & Serpell, 1998). According

to Greenfield (1997) and Van de Vijver, (2002), importation of Westernised measures seems to be an easy alternative however it is accompanied by test bias and limited validity. The possible causes of this bias include lack of familiarity with test demands (Mulenga, Ahonen & Aro, 2001), poor translation of test items (Van deVijver, 2002), stimulus unfamiliarity (Sigman, et.al., 1988; Sonke, Poortinga & de Kuijer, 1999) and incomplete coverage or poor sampling of behaviour associated with a construct (Sternberg, et.al., 2002; Van de Vijver & Tanzer, 2004). Two approaches can be useful in alleviating the shortage of assessment measures in Sub-Saharan Africa namely adaptation and assembly. According to Abubakar, (2013), adaptation comprises of retaining some and changing other features of a western instrument to increase the suitability of the instrument for the new context and assembly involves the construction of a new assessment measure.

A few notable psychological tools have been developed in Africa using different methods. Patel, et.al. (1997), utilised focus group discussions to develop an indigenous measure of mental illness namely the Shona Symptom Questionnaire (SSQ). In Kilifi, the translation and back translation method was used to produce a Kiswahili version of the Ten Questions Questionnaire (TQQ), a screening tool to identify children with neurological impairments. Holding and Kitsao-Wekulo, (2005), worked also in Kilifi to find substitute items and relevant probes in the adaptation of the Childhood Asthma Questionnaire (French & Christie, 1995). Ogunnaike and House, (2002) used material generated by Ana, Agiobu-Kemmer, Etta, Zeitlin and Setiolane (1993) to generate test items to be included in a measure of infant mental development termed Yoruba Mental Assessment Scale. Serpell (1993), utilised individual in-depth interviews with village heads to examine the conceptualisation of intelligence among the Chewa of Zambia. The data gathered was used to describe Chewa conceptualisation of intelligence. In Zimbabwe, written individual interviews were done with university students and lecturers to come up with a local definition of intelligence and giftedness among the Shona in Zimbabwe. Abubakar, (2009) cites that Bolton (2001) conducted in-depth interviews among the Rwandese to identify people suffering from *agahinda gakabili* referring to a locally described grief syndrome. The results have been reported to have concurred with the presence of depressive symptoms as described through the Hopkins symptoms (Derogatis et.al., 1974). The symptoms were similar to Westernised classification. This led to the conclusion that informants from the community can provide a means of assessing criterion validity.

The above-mentioned developments led Abubakar (2009) to note that participant consultation can provide salient information about both universal and culture-specific aspects of psychological constructs in a non-western context. In Malawi, Kambalametore et.al., (2000)

concluded that there is need to develop a culture-specific instrument to provide a contextually valid measure of child development since western instruments do not capture the aspect of Umunthu which means being cultured. Participant consultation contributed to different facets of the development and adaptation including identification of inappropriate items, generation of substitutes or additional items (Ogunnaike & House, 2002), and the evaluation of the clarity of expression used (Mung'ala-Odera, et.al., 2004). Thus, in some few cases involvement of the concerned target group was utilised to adapt Westernised psychological tools and it was successful.

The remnants of colonialism play a vital role in relation to the numerous facets in psychological assessment and testing. Different countries' political, economic and social history need consideration. According to Foxcroft, (2004), validity and reliability and cross bias studies need to be conducted for an effective adaptation of tests use in South Africa. Shakeera (2009), notes that apartheid in South Africa brought detrimental effects for psychological assessment and testing. Psychological assessment in South Africa developed under conditions of unequal distribution of resources based on racism (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2009) and this was the case in most African countries which had been colonised by the whites. Assessment practices in South Africa were used as a way of oppressing black people through labour exploitation and refusing them access to education and economic resources (Nzimande, 1995 as cited in Laher, 2010). They were also standardised for whites to give them better educational opportunities for example Frick Scale which was developed to distinguish people based on racial background (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2009). Thus, psychological assessment in South Africa in some instances show remnants of apartheid.

Ngara and Porath (2004) also note that the remnants of colonialism make it difficult to distinguish between intelligence and giftedness because intelligence tests in many African states still need contextualisation. Kathuria and Serpell, (1999), studied Zambian children using Panga Muntu (design a person) which is a local and standardised test which reliably measure intelligence among African children but is not related to school success. Studies on practical intelligence among the Luo children of Kenya (Sternberg et.al. 2001) revealed a high reliability but failed to correlate with academic intelligence as measured by Raven's Progressive Matrices. Grigorenko et.al. (2001), found that what was considered intelligent among the Luo adults of Kenya did not correlate with teachers' perceptions of intelligence which were Westernised. Ngara (2002), in the same sub-region, found that teachers' perceptions of giftedness among primary school children was academically based. School definitions of giftedness and intelligence are therefore limited in scope from the point of view of indigenous

perceptions of human potential. This has caused Mpofu (2002), to reiterate the need for indigenising the psychology of human intelligence with reference to the training of teachers and psychologists in Sub-Saharan African region. Zimbabwean teacher training still relies on Western psychological conceptions of human intelligence though these tests are vital in education and are related to job success and promotion, they lack contextualisation.

Multilingual and multicultural nature of Africa has been noted also as a challenge to psychological assessment and testing in those contexts. According to Foxcroft, (2009), apartheid has stopped, however psychological assessment largely leaves out diversity and cultural factors which blocks progression of fair and ethical test and assessment usage. In South Africa there are eleven official languages but most psychological tests are from United Kingdom and United States and are in English which becomes a challenge to those who use English as a second language or do not speak it at all (Shakeera, 2009). The same applies to many African states including Zimbabwe. In Zimbabwe, African students though in the majority face two competing cultures: indigenous African and Anglo-western values while the language of instruction is English which is their second language (Ngara & Porath, 2004). They are also victims of attempts to transport Western psychological notions and technologies and attempting to apply them without considering their eco-cultural validation as are many minority cultures elsewhere (Mpofu, 2004). Many psychological tests employed in African contexts have not been translated as yet due to the complexity and time-consuming nature of translation (Shakeera, 2009). Laher, (2010) emphasises the importance of conceptualising culture when doing psychological assessment and testing in multi-cultural contexts and when using tests developed in other states. The idea of different semantics for certain items is also a crucial aspect to consider thus items to be used for testing must be familiar to the context of whoever is being tested (Shakeera, 2004). Cultural contexts are a problem when it comes to certain assessment as different cultures view certain items differently (Foxcroft, 2004). Henceforth culture and language become important variables in understanding psychological constructs. Effort has been put towards adaptation and development of psychological assessment techniques in African contexts however certain challenges hindered progress. The critical challenge confronting the generation of psychologists in Africa is to move away from the limits of West psychology and grasp African understanding of psychology (Piper-Mandy & Rowe, 2010). African realities of the construction of self, others, the world and cosmos have survived and create the basis of African centred psychology. The Western view describes psychology basing on empirical methodologies while African view of psychology incorporates that psychology focuses on understanding both the human and non-human nature of people, thus

spirituality is also taken into cognisance in African psychology (Nobles, 1986). This points out that to assess Africans, one has to have a thorough understanding of African beliefs and systems as well.

Overall review of psychological assessment settings and purposes of assessment

Psychological assessment can be done in a number of settings which include educational, clinical, forensic and occupational for different reasons. Some of the purposes of psychological assessment include school readiness, psycho education, learning problems, intellectual potential, career or development, personality, employment selection, training in employment, neuropsychological, child custody and forensic. Most of these are from a Eurocentric view.

Types of Psychological Assessment Techniques

The West has devised a number of tools for psychological assessment. These include tests, interviews, observations and informal assessment which can further be divided depending with the aspect that one intends to measure. From an African point of view there is a rich indigenous knowledge system which had been employed by our ancestors in assessing different aspects for example observations, skills testing and interviews. The difference is that Africans did not assign names to their traditional ways of assessment. African ways were overruled by colonialism hence the dominance of Western psychological assessment techniques. Colonialism brought with it quite a lot of changes to African systems and even African mentality. They imposed their doctrines and ways of behaviour on Africans to an extent that currently psychological assessment is mainly Westernised and what is being done by Africans is just to change the methods to suite in Westernised African contexts.

Depth Analysis of Psychological Assessment Techniques in Each Setting

Educational Setting

Most of the techniques used in educational settings are Westernised educational tests. These tests are divided into the following: sample or sign test, standardised tests, teacher developed tests, traditional and authentic assessment, paper-pencil, performance, verbal, non-verbal, objective, subjective, power, speed, norm referenced and criterion referenced tests. From these tests, specific ones are administered as achievement tests, tests of aptitude and tests for assessment of school readiness for instance in Zimbabwe, the Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised (WRAT-R) is mostly used in screening. In South Africa, they have developed some

of these tests for example the Junior South African Individual Scales (JSAIS) and High School Personality Questionnaire (Foxcroft, 2004). The idea of administering tests in school is a noble one but it becomes questionable when the tests are Eurocentric. In South Africa, though they have developed some of their own tests there is still an element of Westernisation. It would have been earned a lot of applause if the colonial regimes would have improved the African traditional techniques of assessment. For instance, in Zimbabwe, traditionally school readiness was checked by assessing the capacity of a child to touch an ear of the opposite side through putting a hand over his head to reach for the ear. All this had been overruled by Westernised methods. Some of the tests now look as if they are relevant in society because most of the assessment settings are Westernised.

Diagnostic tests and prognostic tests can also be employed to pinpoint where a student is having difficulties with a particular academic and also for making predictions for example placement decisions. Diagnostic tests are administered to students who have already demonstrated their problem in a particular subject area through their poor performance either in the classroom or in some achievement tests. The major drawback of some of these tests is that they had been developed in the West and are administered using a foreign language. Some practitioners who administer them in Africa are not fully skilled to use them and sometimes may choose some items which they deem necessary and leave out others. Thus, from this point of view, the relevance of the tests becomes questionable as there is a danger of them testing what the test is not intended to measure. Therefore, there is need to develop African tests meant specifically for Africans.

In educational assessment, children are also assessed for intelligence and this is expressed as a numerical value termed intelligent quotient (IQ). Some of the intelligence tests include Weschler Intelligence Scale, Stanford Binet Test and Kaufman Assessment Battery for children. All these tests were developed in the West. In South Africa they have adapted the South African Weschler Adult Intelligence Scale. The idea for testing for intelligence is noble but adopting the tests as they are used in the West poses some problems. Firstly, the tests were initially tested on children of very dissimilar cultural or societal background from African children. Secondly, some of these tests are also questionable even in the West, for example Louw (1997) highlights that most psychologists question the assumption that IQ is the same as intelligence. Thus, if they lack trust in the countries where they were developed it means they are also questionable in Africa. In Africa, intelligence is viewed from a practical point hence numbers are not valued when assessing intelligence in an African child.

Occupational Assessment

In occupational settings a number of techniques have been employed to determine the best candidate for the job or other functions. Mainly they solicit information through interviews, psychometric tests, biographical data, work sample tests, motor work samples, verbal work samples and situational judgement tests. In South Africa the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) has developed some tests for occupational assessment but they had been criticised for being outdated and not culturally appropriate. The only reason which has made these tests appropriate in African contexts is that the system has been industrialised which introduced western oriented jobs. Traditionally, people were assessed for different tasks by testing their skills for example people were tested on their ability in hunting, farming or any other skills as needs analysis for training.

Clinical Assessment

This refers to any methodology involving the intensive study of individual cases. Clinical procedures may also be applied by psychologists working in counselling centres, schools and industry. A distinguishing feature of clinical assessment is their reliance on judgement in at least some of the process (Anastasi, 1990). They can employ clinical interviews, psychological tests, behavioural and cognitive assessment techniques.

Under psychological tests, there are personality tests. These can be divided into projective and objective tests. They are used to assess a number of personality traits and psychological disturbances for people over the age of sixteen. Objective tests include Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory 111, Child Behaviour Checklist, Symptom Checklist, Beck Depression Inventory to mention a few. Under projective tests one may refer to Rorschach Scale, Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), Attachment Projective Test. One can also refer to cartoons, pseudo- factual questions, play techniques and behavioural observations and simulations. An analysis of these can show that they were developed in the West hence their applicability in Africa is at stake.

Projective tests are designed to provide information about unexpressed needs, unconscious beliefs, feelings, desires and about intrapsychic and interpersonal conflicts (Edward, 1997). They are called projective because it is thought that people will project aspects of their personality onto the ambiguous material in their individual attempts to interpret them. This review analysed Rorschach Scale, Minnesota Multi phasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and Multiphasic Sex Inventory with the aim of assessing their relevance in Africa.

The Rorschach Scale tests the subject by showing him/her ten inkblots, one at a time and asks one to tell what the figures or objects he or she sees in each of them. In Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) the examinee is shown a series of black and white pictures one by one and asked to tell a story related to each. The use of projective tests assumes that the respondent would be either unable or unwilling to express his or her true feelings if asked directly hence use of such tests. The tests have been criticised as deficient and unreliable because results are too dissimilar each time a test is given to the same person. The Rorschach Scale was referred to as the most unethical practice of researchers (Dawes, 1988). He further highlights that people are judged on the basis of what they do, not on the basis of what they feel, think or might have a propensity to do and also stresses that being judged on an invalid assessment of such thought, feelings and propensities amount to losing one's civil rights on an essentially random basis. In the Eight Mental Measurement Yearbook (1978), Peterson concluded that the general lack of predicted validity for the Rorschach raises serious questions about its continued use in clinical practice. From the aforementioned, one can note that these tests have been doubted in their own places of origin hence their relevance in African contexts becomes highly questionable. Furthermore traditionally, Africans could project an individual's thoughts or feelings through personal interviews by elders or by spying on one. Thus, for personality tests to be relevant there is need to incorporate some of the traditional ways that used to be employed.

Psychologists can also employ sexological tests or multi phasic sex inventories. Sexological tests are different psychological evaluation devices in order to examine the various aspects of the discomfort, problem or dysfunction regardless of whether they are individual or relational ones. Multiphasic sex inventory is a self-report questionnaire which consists of statements about sexual activities, problems and experience. It has scales which assess the level of openness about the deviant sexual behaviours. It has been reported in the West to be useful in assessing sex offenders in order to develop treatment plans and may also be used during treatment to assess progress but in some cases, it has been misused to assess an individual who denies sexual abuse to determine whether the individual actually is an abuser. These tests may be of little relevance in African contexts where there are systems of aunts and uncles who are involved in discussions with the young and adults about sexual issues. Initiation ceremonies among the Shangaan and the Tonga people in Zimbabwe are some of the platforms which can address issues that these western sexological tests attempt to measure. For instance, Tonga people in Zimbabwe believe that male fertility can be tested by ejaculating in still water and if the sperms remain floated it indicates fertility and if they sink it shows infertility. Therefore, Africans have their own ways of dealing with sex-related issues.

There are also attitude tests which are used to assess an individual's feelings about an event, person or object. Attitude scales are used in marketing to determine individual and group preference for brands or items. Typically, they use either a Thurstone scale or Likert scale to measure specific items. These tests become relevant in African contexts on the basis that our systems have been Westernised and we rely on Westernised products but traditionally we have our ways of assessing. For example, if one wants to measure attitudes of individuals towards a certain object or event he or she may just display the object or dramatise the event and see how people react to that.

In clinical assessment there is also use of neuropsychological tests which consist of specifically designed tasks used to measure a psychological function known to be linked to a particular brain structure or pathway. They are typically used to assess impairment after an injury or illness known to affect neurocognitive functioning, when used in research to contrast neuropsychological abilities across experimental groups. From an African view, many of the impairment that occur due to brain damage are associated with witchcraft, spirituality or displeasure of ancestors. This limits the relevance of such tests to a traditional African person because if a brain impairment occurs there are certain rituals which can be performed in trying to correct it. Hence there is need to incorporate the indigenous knowledge system in psychological assessment.

5. Conclusions

The relevance of psychological assessment techniques to an African person depends on adapting Western ideas of developing assessment techniques which can lay the foundation for the construction of our own specifically meant for Africans. However, cognisance must be given to the multiculturalist nature of African contexts and also diversity in African languages. Therefore, techniques must be developed which are appropriate for cross-cultural use and in languages that are best understood by the target group. Moreover, African practitioners need further training in cross cultural use, adaptation and interpretation. Henceforth psychological assessment techniques can only become relevant in African contexts if they are structured in ways that are Afro-centric. It is also recommended that primary data be used in the future to further study this area. The following recommendations have been proposed:

- Contextualised psychological assessment techniques must be done through adaptation.
- Diversity of African cultures and languages must be valued in psychological assessment.

- African psychological practitioners need further training in cross cultural use, adaptation and interpretation of tests.
- South Africa which is the leading state in psychological practice and research must encourage and help other African states to value psychological assessments.
- Future researchers interested in the reviewed area need to employ both secondary and primary data. In using primary data they must utilise qualitative and quantitative methods to get an in-depth understanding of what transpires in African psychological assessments.

Most psychological assessment techniques are Eurocentric and this questions their relevance in African contexts. Traditionally Africans had their own ways of assessing psychological aspects but these have been overruled by Western ones because of the Westernisation of African contexts. Henceforth, it now becomes difficult to reintroduce traditional ways because most Africans have been indoctrinated by the West. It has also been concluded that psychology has been and is still mystified and marginalised in many African states leading to its poor practice

Data Availability Statement: Data used to compile this paper will be made available upon request

Funding: This research received no external funding

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest

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