

Potential Challenges of Importing Assessment Measures from the West

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Aims of this Presentation

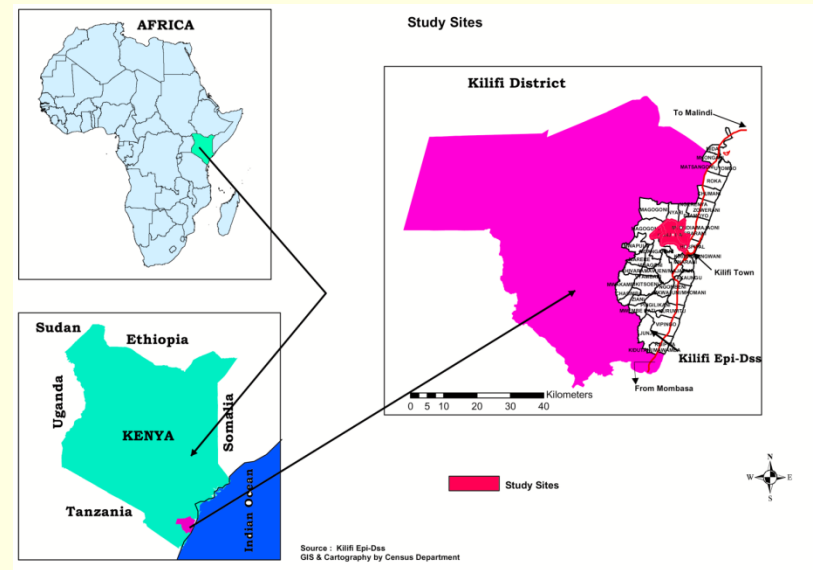
Discuss potential pitfalls and problems we are likely to face as we use scales from the West.

The discussion will draw heavily from our experiences with

- Social Communication Questionnaire
- Autism Diagnostic Observational Schedule
- Cognitive assessments

Where I am based.....

- ❑ Rural community
- ❑ Subsistence farming
- ❑ 66% live below poverty line
- ❑ Low literacy levels
- ❑ Multiple risks
- ❑ Limited resources



Background

There are several measures for screening and diagnosing ASD that have adequate sensitivity and specificity

These measures include

- Autism Diagnostic Observational Schedule
- Autism Diagnostic Interview-R
- The Developmental, Dimensional and Diagnostic Interview
- Social communication Questionnaire

Background

- All the standardized and well validated measures of ASD were developed in the West.
- These measures could be used for screening and diagnosing ASD in settings such as Africa where we are experiencing a shortage of tools

Benefits of Importing Scales

- Relatively easy to implement
- Cross-cultural comparisons
- Availability of **NORMS/ CRITERION**



Importation of Scales

- Direct adoption may be challenged

- Key constructs

- ✓ Validity
- ✓ Reliability
- ✓ Standardization

□ Leading to **BIAS**

What is Bias?

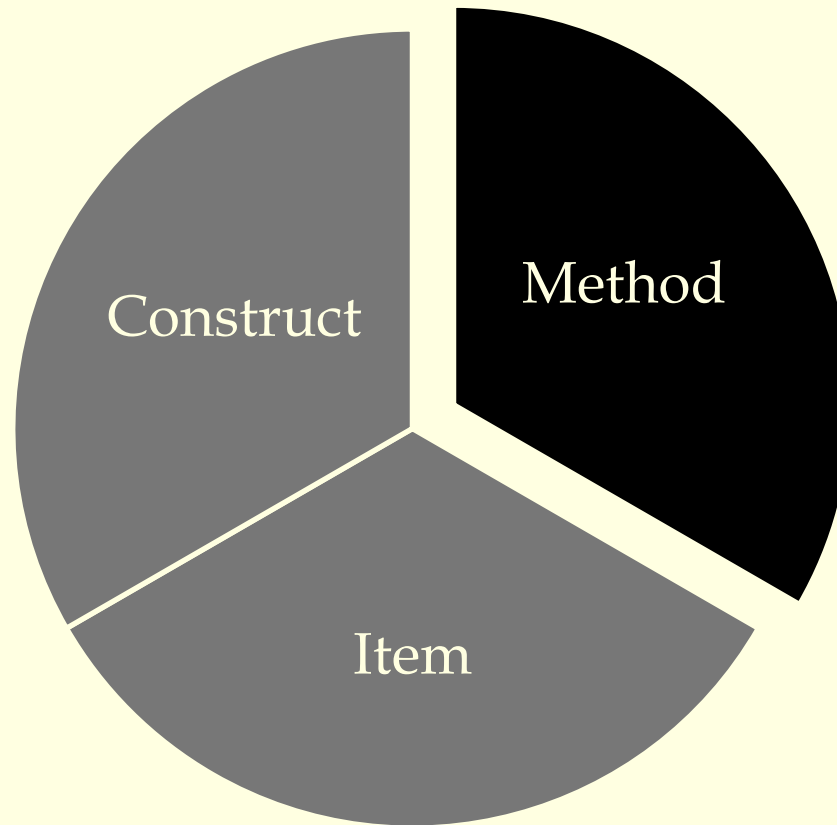
Unintended sources of variation that constitute alternative explanations of intergroup/interindividual differences

Likely to increase with

- ❖ Cultural distance
- ❖ Cultural loaded tests

Taxonomy of bias-

Van de vijver & Poortinga 1997





Construct Bias



Construct Bias

Partial overlap of construct across cultures

Differential appropriateness of items across culture

We have limited knowledge of ASD in Africa to comment on this?

Method Bias

Sample Bias
Administration Bias
Instrument Bias

Sample Bias

- Literate vs. non-literate samples
- Written questionnaires vs Oral interviews



Administration Bias

Engaging in dyadic Interactions

Especially salient in cultures where social interactions
are high regulated

Instrument bias



- Stimulus unfamiliarity
- Brushing teeth common task
- Bathroom sink not so common in resource constrained settings

Instrument bias

- Task familiarity
- Reading books to children is a common practice in the West
- Uncommon in many African setting
- *is this a disadvantage?*

Instrument Bias



- Stimulus unfamiliarity
- ‘ How long can the child pay attention , with the exception of when he is watching TV’



Item Bias



Translation Problems



Absence of appropriate terms,
idioms or phrases

'Stereotyped behavior'

'Social overtures'

'Autism'

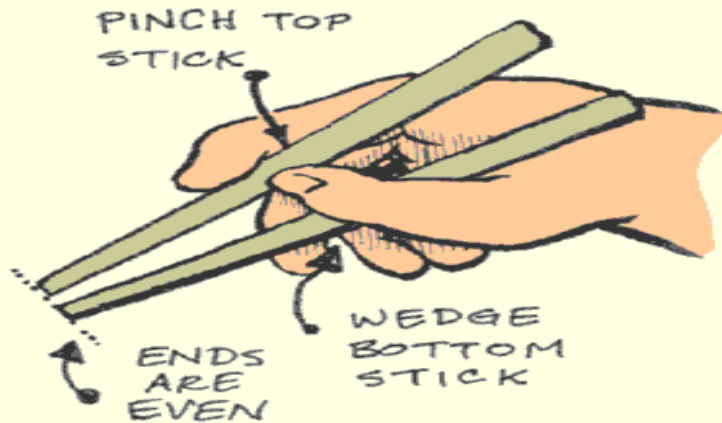
Coupled with low awareness

Translation Problems

Differential appropriateness of examples

‘ Has she/he ever had any interests that preoccupy her or him and might seem odd to other people e.g. traffic lights, drainage pipes or time tables’

Item Bias



Can your child eat with a spoon without spilling?

Resources

Use of imported scales may be limited by costs of

- pay per use to the copyright holders
- need for highly trained personnel
- translations
- purchasing the tools

Adaptation and Assembly

Two potential solutions

Adaptation

Changing contents of one or more items so as to increase cultural appropriateness

- *Advantage*: more flexible, more tailored to the context
- *Disadvantage*: fewer statistical techniques available to compare scores across cultures; issues of costs, resources and copyright.

Assembly

- **Composing a new instrument**
 - Advantage: very flexible
 - Disadvantage: almost no comparability maintained

Way forward?- Systematic tool adaptation/development

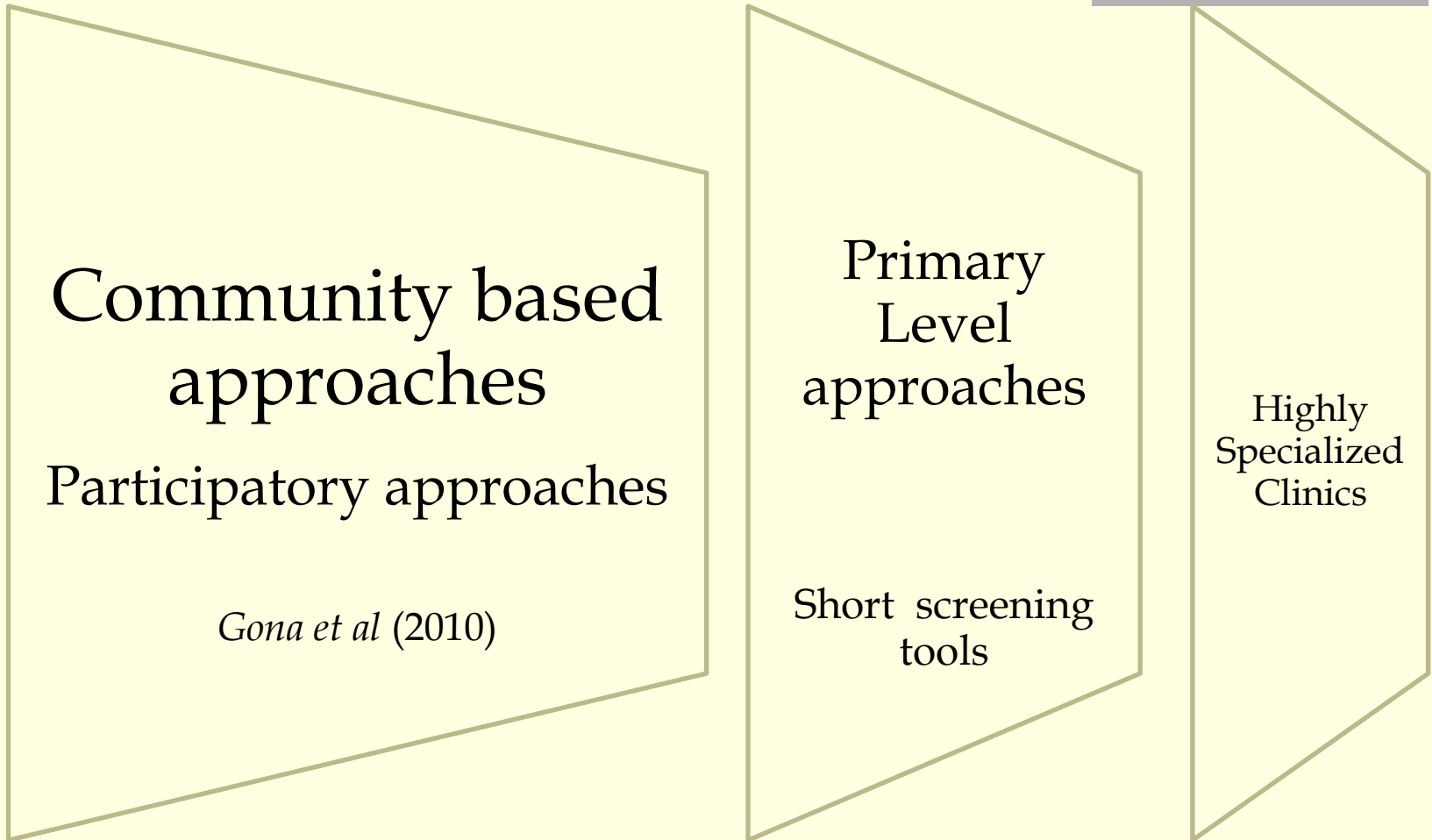
Construct definition

Item pool creation

Scale development

Test evaluation

Way forward?- 3 tier system in screening



What is the way forward?

- Closer collaborations to avoid duplication of efforts
- Research Networks
- Multi-site studies

Acknowledgment

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THANK YOU 😊