TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH

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SECTION	CHECKLIST ITEM	EVALUATION		REMARKS
		YES	NO	
Title	Is the title clear?			
Introduction	Is the scientific background adequately described?			
Background	Is the health problem/burden of disease/condition of interest adequately described: morbidity measures, morbidity measures, BOD measures -DALYs?			
	For clinical trials: Are the following information provided: study outcomes, types of intervention, study population, and type of study designs used?			
Statement of the problem	Is the research problem adequately described, that is, all elements below are provided? 4 elements (a brief explanation of what is to be researched about and its context, covering the following): (a) desired situation (knowledge need) (b) current situation and how it falls short of the desired (knowledge gap) (c) how the research results will move the current to the desired situation (d) specific research questions			
Significance of the study	Is the research significance adequately described and convincing enough? *This section requires imagination and creativity. In terms of knowledge show how the results will confirm, contradict, conflict or create new body of information in the field of mental health.*			
	a. Does it include how results can contribute to the evolving body of **knowledge**? Focus on knowledge building / development – expand the horizon of knowledge in MH.			
	b. Does it include how results can impact on: • practice of profession (mental health professional practice: clinical/public health)? • MH policy?			
	c. Does it describe the multi-level implications to *education, training, practice viewed in terms of promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation and transformation in MH intervention?* d. Does it show how the study will contribute to the knowledge building needs of MH • How the results of the study will contribute to the overall performance of MH interventions? • What improvements, innovations and changes may be initiated using the results of the study? *This section can be summarized as (K) Knowledge (I) Information (M) Management (P) Practice **(K I M P).** These must show the impact of the research on the over-all intervention management in MH. If possible the*			

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	implications must indicate the challenges of the results to the overall management and practice of mental health. This will cover: Promotion, Prevention, care, rehabilitation, and transformation. It must be remembered that research in MH is action research.			
Objectives/ Research Questions	Are the specific objectives or hypotheses specific, measurable, attainable (and time-bound, if applicable)?			
	Are specific objectives relevant to the general objective and will they contribute to its attainment?			
	For intervention studies/clinical trials/reviews Does the objective explicitly state the research question being addressed with reference to patient, intervention, comparator, and outcome of interest (PICO)?			
Literature Review	Is the current state of knowledge (what is known/what is unknown) adequately described?			
	Is the gap in knowledge clearly identified?			
	Is the literature review comprehensive and up-to-date?			
	Are the literature included directly relevant to the research question? Are local literature cited?			
Epidemiology of study variables	Is the epidemiology of all the study variables presented and adequately described?			
	For analytic studies: Aside from the study variables (e.g. independent and dependent variables), are confounding variables identified, described, and their epidemiology presented?			
Conceptual framework	Does the framework represent a good synthesis of the literature on the topic in relation to the research question?			
	- Does the framework situate the research problem in the current body of knowledge?			
	- Are study variables identified in the framework? *For analytic studies*: Are the independent, dependent, and confounding variables clearly identified?			
	If the framework was drawn on existing models/theoretical framework, like behavioral models, are the study variables clearly identified in the model/framework?			
Methods				
1. Study design	Is the study design identified and appropriate to answer the research problem?			
	Is the research design cost-effective to answer the objectives of the study?			
	Is the study design described adequately (i.e. key elements of study design presented)?			

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	For clinical trials: Is there an indication if the trial is parallel or factorial, and the allocation ratio used?			
Study population	Is the study population appropriate for the objective of the study and the research design?			
	Are the eligibility criteria for participation identified (i.e. inclusion/exclusion criteria)?			
	Is the rationale for the eligibility criteria explained?			
	Is the method of ascertainment of each eligibility criterion described?			
	Is the setting of the proposed study described?			
Recruitment process	*For primary data collection (query and observation)* - Is the method of recruitment adequately described?			
	- How will recruitment of respondents be done: in-person, posters, flyers, by phone?			
	- Who will do the recruitment? - Is there possibility of undue influence?			
Other considerations	Is the source population/sampling population (where the sample will be selected) adequately described?			
	For cohort studies: - Are the methods of follow up described?			
	- For matched studies, are matching criteria and the number of exposed and unexposed indicated?			
	For case-control studies: - Is the rationale for choice of cases and controls explained?			
	- Are matching criteria and the number of controls per case indicated?			
	For reviews: - Is a description of databases with dates of coverage, and plans for contact with study authors to identify additional studies included?			
	- Is a full electronic search strategy for at least one database, including limits to be used indicated?			
	For studies on instrument validation or diagnostic accuracy: - Is the reference standard and its rationale for use described?			
	- Are the technical specifications of materials and methods involved (including how and when measurements will be taken) indicated and/or references for index tests and reference standard cited?			
	- Are the definitions of and rationale for units, cut-offs, and/or categories of the results of the index tests and the reference standard indicated?			
Study variables	Are the major study variables identified?			
	For analytic studies:			

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	Are variables such as independent variables, dependent variables, potential confounders, and effect modifiers clearly identified?			
	For clinical trials: - Are the interventions for each group described, including specific details to allow replication?			
	- Are the outcomes adequately explained, including how these will be measured and assessed?			
	For systematic reviews: - Are variables listed and defined, including any assumptions and simplifications made?			
	- Are the summary measures clearly defined per variable?			
2. Sampling				
Sampling method	*For Quantitative Studies:*			
	Is the sampling method identified?			
	Are the following defined: target population, sampling population, sampling frame, sample?			
	Is the sampling procedure clearly described – step-by-step to allow replication?			
	Is the sample representative of the target population?			
	For Quantitative Studies: - Are the sampling method and size justified? Note that representativeness is not necessarily the goal. What justifies the interest in a heterogenous/diverse, non-representative sample for this study?			
Sample size	Is sample size justified? *For quantitative research* - Is the sample size computation correct? - Are the statistical parameters used for the computation of sample size indicated? - Are the references used for the parameter used in the computation of sample size cited?			
Other considerations	*For clinical trials*: Are interim analysis and guidelines for termination needed for the type of outcome? If so, are they specified?			
	For reviews: - Is the process for selecting studies (i.e. eligibility, screening, included in systematic review/meta-analysis) indicated?			
	- Are the approaches to literature search (e.g. hand-searching, citation snowballing) described?			
3. Data collection methods	Is the data collection method adequately described to allow replication?			
	Is the data collection instrument identified and described?			
	Is the data collection instrument clear and complete (i.e. all study variables or their indicators are covered)?			

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	For multiple methods of data collection, is the data collection matrix provided (for each objective, the corresponding variables, method of data collection and source of data identified)?			
	Is there an operational definition of study variables? *For studies that will use scales or index scores:* *Is the scoring system provided?*			
	Are all study variables relevant to the attainment of the objectives?			
	Are data quality control measures in place?			
	For qualitative research: - Have the data collection methods been justified? - *Have the data collection and analysis protocols/procedures been described adequately* - *Can the included instrument (eg. Interview protocol) be seen to potentially yield data necessary for meeting the research objectives?*			
	For secondary data collection (document/records review) - Is the source document identified and described?			
	- Who collected or is collecting the data?			
	- What is the nature of the data? -registration system, surveillance, research data, etc? -date of data collection or frequency of data collection – periodic, adhoc, etc?			
	- Is there a description of how the document or individual records (patient, employment records) will be accessed?			
	For clinical trial: - Is the method to be used to generate random allocation sequence given?			
	- Is the type of randomization described?			
	- Are the individuals who will generate the random allocation sequence, who will enrol participants, and who will assign participants to interventions identified?			
	- Are those who will be blinded after assignment to interventions indicated?			
	For studies on diagnostic accuracy: - Is the period of data collection (i.e. before or after the tests) described?			
	- Are information on the number, training, and expertise of persons executing and reading the index test and the reference standard given?			

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	- Is there any description of whether or not the readers of the index test and the reference standard will be blinded to the results of the other test and of clinical information that may influence the reading of the test result?			
	For reviews: - Is the method of data extraction from reports and any processes for obtaining and confirming data from investigators explained?			
	- Are the methods of handling data, coding, and combining results of studies (including methods of consistency) described?			
	- Are the methods of addressing articles published in languages other than English given?			
	- Are the methods of handling abstracts and unpublished studies described?			
	For systematic reviews: - Are the methods to be used for assessing risk of bias in individual studies (including specification of whether this was done at the study or outcome level) and how this information is to be used in any data synthesis described?			
	- Are the methods used for assessing risk of bias that may affect cumulative evidence (e.g. publication bias, selective reporting within studies) explained?			
Bias and limitations	Are possible biases (selection bias, information bias) and confounding and their sources identified and the corresponding methods to minimize them described? Are the limitations of the study described?			
	For qualitative research: What techniques or strategies are employed to improve trustworthiness of the data and subsequent analysis?			
Data analysis	Are the descriptive statistical measures to be used identified?			
	Are inferential statistical approaches specified?			
	Is the data analysis matrix presented (statistical tools to be applied per research objective)?			
	Is there an explanation on how missing data will be addressed?			
	For association studies: Are measures to control for confounding described?			
	For cohort studies: Is there an explanation on how losses to follow-up will be addressed?			
	For qualitative research Is the plan for analysis adequately described and appropriate in consideration of the research objectives, methodology, and theoretical framework?			

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Ethical Consideration	Is there an ethical consideration section in the proposal? Are all the elements of research ethics addressed in this section?			
	1. Is the recruitment process clearly described (how, where, who)?			
	2. Is the Informed consent form complete, clear, and appropriate?			
	3. Is the process of obtaining informed consent clearly described (how, where, who?)			
	4. Is the process for ensuring privacy and confidentiality of data, including data protection plan described?			
	5. Are all known and anticipated risks and discomforts related to participation of respondents and the corresponding measures to mitigate them adequately described?			
	6. What are the benefits of the study to the study participants, if any?			
Attachments	Are the following documents, as well as others that are cited in the body of the proposal, attached to the proposal? a. Sample size computation b. Data collection instrument c. Dummy tables d. Sampling frame e. Recruitment material (letter, flyer, script for in-person recruitment) f. Informed consent form g. others			