

Decolonial and Critical Approaches to Community Wellbeing and Mental Health: A Rapid Review

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Keywords: Decolonial, Critical, Feminist, Culturally Responsive, Praxis, Community Wellbeing, Mental Health

Author Biographies: *Ramy Barhouche* is a community psychology scholar-activist, practitioner, and educator whose work lives at the intersection of healing, power, governance, and collective transformation. Grounded in liberation psychology, decolonial thought, community organizing, and critical pedagogy, he explores how colonial and capitalist systems shape how we see ourselves and the world, relate to one another, and imagine what is possible. Across Lebanon, the US, and Canada, Ramy collaborates with SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African) and other racialized communities to cultivate relational care, critical consciousness, and collective action. His work moves beyond individual therapy models toward building community collectives that restore memory where erasure occurred, rebuild connection where fragmentation was normalized, and expand collective imagination and agency where systemic oppression has narrowed it. *Hana Masud* is a researcher and lecturer based in Chicago. Through her writing she seems to critically recognize and dismantle the deeply entrenched Western logic of subordination that underpins the language used to describe the ways of being and resisting among colonized and oppressed peoples. This pernicious logic reinforces the binary thinking that is foundational to hegemonic discourses, continuously relegating colonized people to positions of subjugation and marginalization. As such, Hana uses unapologetic and often provocative expressions of

decoloniality, resistance, and cultural reclamations. *Melody Morton Ninomiya* is a faculty member in the Department of Health Sciences at Wilfrid Laurier University, holds a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Community-Driven Knowledge Mobilization and Pathways to Wellness, and leads the Ishkode: Interdisciplinary and Indigenous Pathways to Wellness Research Group. A bi-cultural (Japanese and Swiss-German Mennonite) researcher, her scholarship focuses on community-partnered research, knowledge mobilization, and research on research, particularly how research partnerships and evidence use can strengthen community impact. Working alongside sovereignty and equity-denied/deserving communities, her research advances collaborative approaches to mental wellness, health promotion, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) prevention, education, and supports that promote relevance, reciprocity, and dignity.

Recommended Citation: Barhouche, R., Masud, H., & Morton Ninomiya, M. E. (2026). Decolonial and Critical Approaches to Community Wellbeing and Mental Health: A Rapid Review. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 17(1), 1-26. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpc.org/>).

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Abstract

Introduction: This rapid review explores decolonial and critical approaches to community wellbeing and mental health (CWMH) in existing literature to provide insights into addressing CWMH disparities in Indigenous, racialized, and Global South communities.

Methods: The study employed a rapid review method to expedite gathering, screening, and analyzing relevant literature. Data synthesis and analysis involved thematic analysis of extracted information from the documents that met inclusion criteria.

Results: Analysis included 18 documents published between 2005 and 2024, reporting on interventions in nine countries. The thematic analysis findings highlighted the importance of incorporating decolonial and critical perspectives in CWMH initiatives to address systemic disparities, identified different types of interventions, and summarized recommendations and lessons learned.

Discussion: This study explores the transformative potential of decolonial and critical approaches in community wellbeing and mental health. It highlights the importance of centering marginalized communities' knowledge and adopting social justice-oriented strategies. By promoting inclusive, culturally responsive, and trauma-informed interventions, these frameworks offer promising pathways to address systemic inequalities and foster holistic CWMH.

Introduction

Western-based mainstream psychology paradigms are frequently used to address mental health symptoms of Indigenous, racialized, and Global South communities (Fanon, 2005; Lewis et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Millner et al., 2021; Parker, 2007; Teo, 2015). Moreover, Western-based mainstream psychology framing and approaches tend to focus on individual behavior, cognition, and experience that prioritize "value-neutral", psychopathological, and biomedical treatments, therapies, and research (Parker, 2007; Teo, 2015). While effective in some contexts, their universalized and centralized framing demonstrates several limitations and serves to perpetuate harmful

and oppressive structures (Fanon, 2005; Lewis et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Millner et al., 2021; Parker, 2007; Teo, 2015).

The reductionist framing of Western-based mainstream psychology overlooks profound impacts of power, colonialism/imperialism, and systemic oppressions on mental health, psychological phenomena, constructs, and framing (Parker, 2007). Mental health practitioners and scholars who work within Western-based paradigms are inherently at risk of perpetuating systems of power and colonial hegemony that impact the subjectivity of colonized groups and subjugate them to oppressive systems (Fanon, 2005; Jimenez & Lee, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Teo, 2015). The

failure to consider broader politico-economic, historical, and socio-cultural contexts has resulted in a lack of culturally responsive and contextually relevant interventions for Indigenous, racialized, and Global South communities (Lewis et al., 2018; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Millner et al., 2021). Consequently, many of these communities experience disconnection from their ancestral cultures, practices, knowledges, and land connection while continuing to experience alienation, trauma, and impacts of colonial legacies and systemic oppressions (Fanon, 2005; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Millner et al., 2021).

There has been a growing call for the development and integration of decolonial and critical community wellbeing and mental health (CWMH) frameworks and approaches to better address these discrepancies and complex contexts (Beals et al., 2021; Dutta, 2022; Evans, 2015; Evans et al., 2017; Fernández et al., 2021; Jimenez & Lee, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2017; Parker, 2007; Seedat et al., 2017; Suffla et al., 2015; Teo, 2015). Decolonial practitioners, scholars, and activists explore the impact of modern/colonial systems which perpetuate harmful systems of power and shape entire community systems and paradigms (Beals et al., 2021; Dutta, 2018; Fernández et al., 2021; Jimenez & Lee, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2017). Decolonial practitioners, scholars, and activists analyze and dismantle colonial epistemologies and systems of oppression while embracing pluralistic, Indigenous, and local ways of being, knowing, doing, and healing. Similarly, critical practitioners, scholars, and activists, such as critical psychologists, emphasize the importance of understanding and addressing social issues within their broader socio-political context and critique mainstream psychology for supporting the status quo (Evans, 2015; Evans et al., 2017; Nelson, 2013; Nelson & Evans, 2014; Parker, 2007; Sloan, 2000; Teo, 2015). Furthermore, community-oriented

decolonial and critical practitioners, scholars, and activists highlight the importance of centering and collaborating with communities and marginalized groups to identify and challenge oppressive structures, fostering more inclusive and liberatory social transformation (Beals et al., 2021; Dutta, 2016, 2022; Evans, 2015; Evans et al., 2017; Fernández et al., 2021; Jimenez & Lee, 2022; Martín-Baró, 1996).

Objective and Research Question

The objective of this rapid review study was to gather and synthesize published literature about current decolonial and/or critical CWMH praxis used to support and meet the needs of Indigenous, racialized, and Global South communities globally. The search strategy, inclusion criteria, data extraction, and analysis were based on the understanding that community wellbeing is a key determinant of both individual and collective wellbeing and mental health (Martín-Baró, 1996). Community wellbeing must look beyond individual factors and address social and structural determinants of health and quality of life. The principal investigator (PI) [RB] led a rapid review to explore how CWMH practitioners, scholars, and activists incorporate decolonial and/or critical praxis into their practice to support CWMH globally.

Methods

A rapid review is an efficient approach to systematically gather, synthesize, and analyze literature within a short time frame, making it well-suited for time-sensitive literature-based knowledge synthesis (Tricco et al., 2017). This approach allows for the swift addressing of research questions, offering valuable insights while upholding the rigor and methodological integrity of traditional systematic reviews within an accelerated time frame (Tricco et al., 2017). A rapid review is different from a systematic review

primarily in timeframe, number of reviewers, and/or number of searched databases (Tricco et al., 2017). On the other hand, a systematic review involves an exhaustive search, double screening throughout the screening process, and a quality appraisal of all included papers before extraction, and often takes months to complete (Tricco et al., 2017). The PI chose to conduct a rapid review for this study due to time constraints and the need for timely information to support another study. By employing this method, this research remains both timely and evidence-based.

Protocol and Search Strategy

The PI served as the primary reviewer, and HM served as the second reviewer. The PI developed the rapid review protocol and search strategy in consultation with MMN, HM, and a university librarian [MW], and in accordance with the definition and methodology outlined by *Rapid Reviews to Strengthen Health Policy and Systems: A Practical Guide*, developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Tricco et al., 2017). The WHO rapid review guide provided practical advice on how to plan, conduct, and promote the use of rapid reviews in the context of health literature, which also relates to CWMH. The WHO guide provided the study with methodological directions on how to develop a research question, define inclusion and exclusion criteria, search for and select studies, extract and synthesize data, and report the results. In addition to the WHO guide, we used thematic analysis in accordance with Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2023) guide, which will be discussed shortly. The second reviewer independently screened full texts and, at the extraction stage, checked the quality of the data extracted by the primary reviewer for each included paper.

After extensive testing, refining, and discussions with content and methodological experts, the PI finalized the search strategy for three databases: PsycINFO (ProQuest),

Social Sciences Citation Index (Web of Science), and CINAHL (EBSCOhost) (see S2 Appendix). Given the lack of consistent use of subject headings for concepts related to decolonial and critical community wellbeing and mental health, the team decided not to use subject headings, and instead limited the search strategy to keywords in the 'Title' and 'Abstract' (Table 1). A quick search in the selected databases revealed that the earliest mentions of the concept "decolonial" began around the 2000s. While the earliest mentions of the concept "critical theory" and related terms began in the 1800s, the vast use of critical theory terms began in the 1990s and 2000s. Given the wide range of dates for the usage of relevant terms, the PI decided to limit the search to January 2000 through July 21, 2023, to include the most up-to-date studies and interventions.

Table 1
Search Strategy

#	PsycINFO Database Results
1	title(("decolonial*" OR "de-colonial*" OR "decoloniz*" OR "de-coloniz*" OR "postcolonial*" OR "delink*" OR "de-link*" OR "indigenous" OR "aboriginal" OR "plurivers*" OR "pluri-vers*") OR ("colonial*" OR "coloniz*" OR "modern*" OR "hegemon*") OR "critical" OR "feminis*" OR "intersection*" OR "liberat*"))
2	title(("approach" OR "framework" OR "praxis" OR "conceptualiz*" OR "paradigm*" OR "ontolog*" OR "epistem*" OR "pedagog*" OR "knowledge" OR "practice" OR "initiative" OR "intervention" OR "program" OR "project" OR "participat*" OR "collaborat*" OR "mobiliz*" OR applied OR implement* OR coalition OR mobiliz* OR mobilis* OR healing))
3	tiab(("communit*") OR ("mental health" OR "wellbeing" OR "well-being" OR "wellness" OR "resilien*" OR healing)))
4	1 AND 2 AND 3

5 4 (Limits: Date Range: 01-01-2000 (Jan) to 07-21-2023 (July); Source type: Scholarly Journals and Books; Language: English)

The inclusion criteria included peer-reviewed articles and book chapters published in English from January 1, 2000 onwards. The study populations needed to include general and marginalized communities as well as practitioners, scholars, activists, and/or community organizations that used decolonial and critical approaches globally. To be included, the authors needed to write about interventions and studies that utilized participatory qualitative or mixed-methods research designs to explore decolonial and critical approaches to CWMH. Lastly, to be included for analysis, interventions or practices had to be based on decolonial and critical approaches to CWMH, while examining the implementation, processes, and outcomes of these interventions.

The exclusion criteria excluded documents that lacked sufficient information, did not use a decolonial or critical framework, and/or did not link to the community. Documents solely focused on training stakeholders without community application, experimental studies

conducted in controlled laboratory settings, review articles (e.g., systematic, scoping, etc.), meta-analyses, conceptual papers, or gray literature were excluded. Lastly, documents that solely focused on Western-based individual, biomedical, and psychopathological models without addressing systemic issues or incorporating decolonial or critical frameworks were also excluded.

Data Selection and Analysis

Document selection. The database search results were imported into Covidence® on July 21, 2023. Covidence® is a web-based data screening and extraction software for systematic and scoping reviews (Veritas Health Innovation, 2023). The primary reviewer screened 7,234 titles and abstracts; 72 documents met the inclusion criteria for full-text review (Figure 1). Before screening the full texts, the primary and second reviewers pilot-screened a random sample of five articles to test for agreement, discussing conflicts until consensus was reached. Of the 72 full texts, eighteen documents (sixteen peer-reviewed articles and two book chapters) met the inclusion criteria for the data extraction phase.

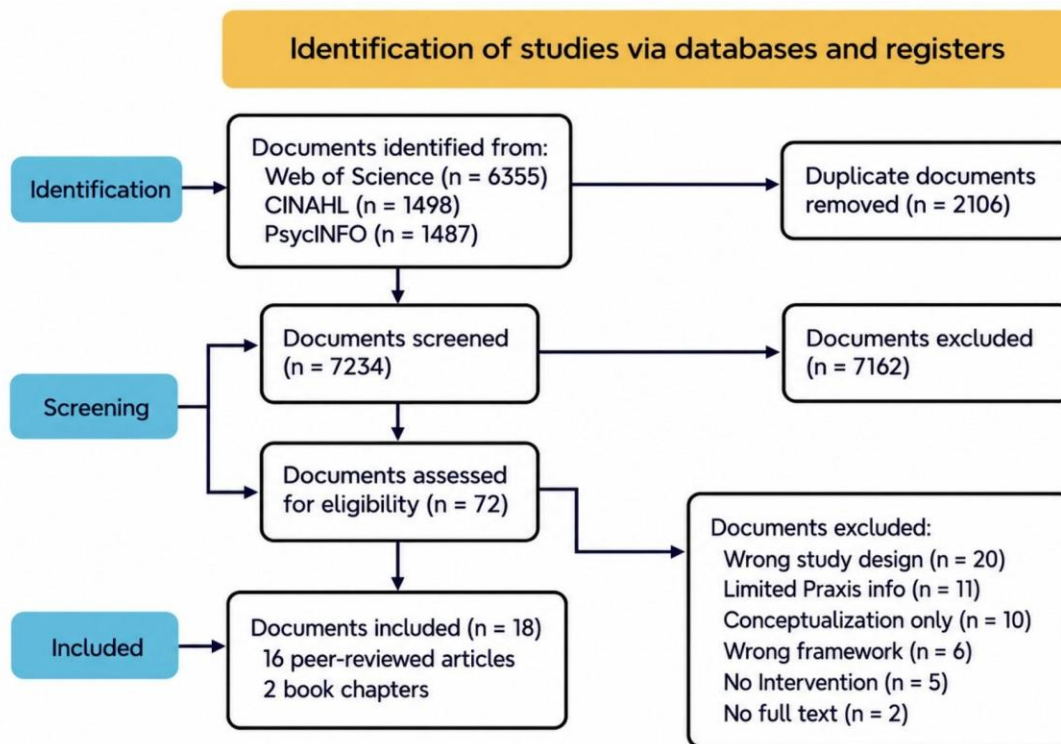


Figure 1

PRISMA flow diagram of documents (Based on the 2020 PRISMA flow diagram by Page et al., 2021)

Data synthesis and analysis

During the extraction phase, the primary reviewer extracted data from the eighteen included documents, and the second reviewer reviewed and authenticated the extracted data. The extracted data were synthesized based on four predetermined categories with multiple extraction fields (Table 2). The primary reviewer used thematic analysis to analyze data collected from the 'framework, intervention application, and discussion' categories. The thematic analysis process involved identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns and themes within the synthesized data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2023).

The analysis was guided by a six-phase approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2023). In the first phase of analysis, the primary reviewer familiarized himself with the data

by reading through the documents and the extracted data multiple times to gain an overall sense of the content. In the second phase, initial codes were generated by labeling key concepts and descriptions in the data. Using a combination of inductive and deductive coding, data were categorized from the selected literature. Due to the large amount of data, the analysis was conducted within three separate categories: 1) praxis framing and approaches, 2) types of interventions, and 3) recommendations and lessons learned (Table 2). The primary reviewer used an inductive coding approach to identify patterns and generate codes based on the content of the data itself. Inductive coding allowed themes to emerge organically from the data without being constrained by predetermined codes or themes. Deductive coding, in combination with inductive coding, was used to apply pre-existing theory and

framework concepts as themes to guide the coding and theme creation process only within the 'Praxis Framing and Approaches' category.

In the third phase, codes were grouped together into potential themes by looking for similarities and differences across the data. In the fourth phase, themes were reviewed and refined by checking for consistency and coherence within and across the data. Several themes were combined to reduce redundancy in this phase. In the fifth phase, themes were defined and named based on their content and meaning. Finally, in the sixth phase, the analyzed findings were added to the results section, along with supporting quotations from the documents.

Table 2

List of extraction headings and questions

Category	Extraction Information
Publication Information	Authors
	First author email
	Author affiliation
	Publication date
	Journal
	Identifier (keyword)
Framework	Article abstract
	Theoretical and praxis framing
Intervention Application	Name of intervention
	Location of intervention
	Participants of intervention
	Ecological level
	Description of intervention
	Activities and outcomes of intervention
Discussion	Challenges
	Recommendations and lessons learned

Results

Study Demographics

The eighteen documents included for analysis were published between 2005 and 2024. Black et al. (2024), although assigned to a 2024 journal issue, was available online in May 2023 and was identified within the July 2023 database search. Excluded documents did not use relevant frameworks, did not include praxis applications, shared limited praxis information, or did not meet the criteria of the study design. The included documents reported on interventions in Australia (n=6), Canada (n=4), the United States (n=2), India (n=2), Palestine-Chile-USA (n=1), South Africa (n=1), Brazil (n=1), and Thailand (n=1). A summary table of the analyzed literature can be found in the Supplementary Documents in 'S1 Appendix'.

Thematic Analysis Results

This section reports on three distinct categories and findings of the thematic analysis of the documents that met the inclusion criteria: praxis framing and approaches, types of interventions, and recommendations and lessons learned. The themes and subthemes overlap and were based on explicit and non-explicit mentions made by the authors in the selected documents about frameworks, approaches, methodologies, interventions, and recommendations.

Praxis Framing and Approaches. Through the thematic analysis, the team generated two themes and several sub-themes related to the praxis framing and approaches category. Frameworks and approaches that practitioners, scholars, activists, and/or communities utilized to guide their participatory research and collaborative interventions to enhance CWMH and achieve social transformation were explored. Praxis is

conceptualized as the interconnectedness of theory-knowledge and practice, and the integration of reflection and action to create meaningful change (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Malherbe et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). The two major themes are 1) integrated liberatory praxis enhanced CWMH, community collaboration, and social transformation and 2) applied collaborative and community-centered participatory approaches that moved beyond Western-based traditional research methodologies.

Theme 1. Integrated liberatory praxis enhanced CWMH, community collaboration, and social transformation. In exploring the integration of several forms of liberatory praxis to enhance CWMH, community collaboration, and social transformation (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Keddie, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Malherbe et al., 2019; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013), liberatory praxis was most grounded in a critical analysis of oppressive power structures. Liberatory praxis involved a cyclical reflective process of continuous critical reflection and action-oriented practice to advance liberation, healing, and social justice. Authors of all included studies reported interventions that used some form of liberatory theories and/or practices to challenge and dismantle normative and oppressive systems of power, disrupt socio-political-economic inequalities, and promote healing and social transformation through alternative practices and community engagement. Some forms of liberatory praxis that were explored and applied in the studies and interventions combined concepts of liberation, decolonial,

critical, feminist, intersectional, and Indigenous worldviews and praxis.

Studies and interventions in the rapid review used decolonial theories and practices to challenge and transform the legacies of colonialism/imperialism, modernity/coloniality, systemic racism, and global Western hegemony (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Malherbe et al., 2019; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). The studies and interventions' praxis emphasized liberation from colonial and oppressive systems, challenging dominant narratives, and seeking multiple ways of knowing, being, and doing according to community contexts (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Malherbe et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). The studies and interventions also used a set of critical theories and practices that involved a continuous cyclical process of reflection and action (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). In other words, the practitioners, scholars, activists, and communities engaged in ongoing reflection on their practices and used this reflection to inform future action aimed at challenging oppressive systems and transforming society.

Authors of five documents reported on studies and interventions using feminist theories and practices to highlight the experiences of women and marginalized gendered groups, challenge patriarchal structures, and promote gender equality and representation in all aspects of society (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Fernández, 2022; Malherbe et al., 2019). Intersectionality was explicitly explored in one document to describe the interconnected nature of various social

identities, oppressive systems, and positionality (Chamsanit et al., 2021). Intersectionality was described as recognizing that researchers, individuals, and communities experience multiple and intersecting forms of oppression and privilege based on factors such as race, gender, class, social status, sexuality, disability, nationality, and religion.

Fernández (2022) explored several aspects of Latin American liberation psychology, LatCrit theory, decolonial feminist *mujerista*, and *testimonio* approaches and framing to cultivate healing through storytelling, saying:

Testimonio as a decolonial feminist *mujerista* strategy to cultivate decolonial healing through storytelling. Healing is conceptualized as a process of reconstituting the self, individually, relationally, and collectively, through life stories. Extending this definition, decolonial healing is experiencing community well-being through relational critically reflexive dialogues that facilitate a critical social analysis, mutual reciprocal recognitions, and radical hope (p. 131).

Similarly, Sonn and Quayle (2013) drew on several aspects of critical race theory and critical praxis to explore the dynamics of race and utilized community arts and cultural development to support Indigenous communities, stating:

We argue that using tools from critical race theory allowed us to make visible the dynamics of race, in both local and global contexts, which informed and continues to inform CAN WA's [Community Arts Network Western Australia] praxis oriented community cultural development work. (p. 437) [...] Bringing a critical lens to arts practice and community cultural

development can allow us to guard against the romanticizing of community culture, in particular Indigenous cultural practice and expression (p. 440).

Theme 2. Applied collaborative and community-centered participatory approaches moved beyond Western-based traditional research methodologies. Across the reviewed studies and interventions, authors described collaborative and community-centered approaches that sought to move beyond conventional Western research methodologies by centering community participation, relationships, cultural knowledge, and lived experience. These approaches were reflected across three interconnected subthemes: 1) participatory action research and community-based participatory research, 2) culturally responsive and Indigenous approaches, and 3) storytelling and counterstorytelling approaches.

Subtheme 2.1. Applied Participatory Action Research and Community-Based Participatory Research (PAR-CBPR). Authors described constructs such as community-based research, participatory research, participatory action research (PAR), and community-based participatory research (CBPR) to describe the research and approaches of the studies and interventions (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Keddie, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Malherbe et al., 2019; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Authors used similar terms interchangeably, with minimal differentiation between them. Therefore, for the purposes of this review, the team collectively referred to these participatory methodologies as PAR-CBPR. Overall, PAR-CBPR was used to address

community needs, advocate for epistemic and social justice, and promote social change by actively engaging community members as co-researchers, rather than passive subjects, at multiple stages of the research and intervention process. Several PAR-CBPR studies and interventions prioritized building trust and fostering equitable long-term partnerships among practitioners, scholars, activists, and community stakeholders.

Subtheme 2.2. Applied Culturally Responsive and Indigenous Approaches in Community Research and Interventions. Across the reviewed studies and interventions, authors applied and/or discussed various culturally responsive approaches in their community collaborations, including cultural safety, cultural competence, cultural development, cultural sensitivity, culturally appropriate approaches, and culturally based approaches. Overall, the studies and interventions recognized and/or adapted to the cultural norms, values, beliefs, knowledge, practices, and/or lived experiences of the communities with whom they collaborated to create inclusive and equitable environments that met the communities' needs and contexts. Some studies and interventions highlighted the risk of projects being perceived as appropriation or assimilation if they did not address underlying power dynamics and racial inequalities, and challenged the superficial celebration of culture and diversity (Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013).

Furthermore, several of the analyzed studies and interventions emphasized Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and relating grounded in the cultures, practices, and contexts of the communities involved (Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Dutta, 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Keddie, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023). A recurring framing across these studies was

relationality, emphasizing interconnectedness, reciprocity, self-determination, and the integration of relational, spiritual, cultural, communal, and ecological dimensions. The Indigenous methodologies in the studies and interventions prioritized oral histories, storytelling, ceremonies, land-based activities, and collaborative community practices and healing. These methodologies recognized Indigenous knowledges as essential resources for addressing present-day challenges and underscored the significance of centering Indigenous knowledges and perspectives in research, education, interventions, and policy-making endeavors.

Subtheme 2.3. Applied Storytelling and Counterstorytelling Approaches to Achieve Epistemic Justice, Amplify Marginalized Voices, and Challenge Dominant Narratives. Across the studies and interventions, storytelling, counterstorytelling, and testimonio were used as methods and platforms to amplify the voices of individuals and communities, create space for narrating lived experiences and learning from one another, and identify strategies for resistance, healing, and cultural and economic development toward epistemic and social justice (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Hickey et al., 2020; Lester-Smith, 2013; Quayle et al., 2016). Storytelling was employed through counterstorytelling (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Quayle et al., 2016) and testimonio (Fernández, 2022) approaches and methods, which centered the stories and experiences of racialized, Indigenous, and gendered individuals and communities. Studies and interventions involved collaborative efforts among communities, practitioners, scholars, and activists to foster epistemic justice and community empowerment by challenging established dominant narratives and power structures that oppress and dismiss the experiences and

knowledges of Indigenous, racialized, and gendered individuals and communities. Counterstorytelling and testimonio were presented as forms of decolonial and critical praxis that required disrupting conventional modes of research, writing, education, and representation, while also providing communities with space to heal and share their stories. Both counterstorytelling and testimonio were used to support community-building, political engagement, epistemic justice, and healing at personal and communal levels (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Quayle et al., 2016). For example, Lafrenière et al. (2005) shared an example of a community-initiated initiative where the researchers' services were requested for support:

In May of 2003, we [Ginette Lafrenière and Lamine Diallo] met with both Donna and Lou [Indigenous community members and service providers]. After colliding socially with Donna, we were approached to assist in the development of an ambitious healing project proposal for survivors and intergenerational survivors of the residential school system. Later, we were introduced to Lou who also wished to transform his volunteer work with Aboriginal offenders into a full time program. We agreed to assist, and after many hurdles and revisions to project proposals, both the Healing and Four Directions projects received funding. This enabled Lou and Donna to access a physical location and hire staff (p. 55).

In addition, Balla et al. (2023) shared their culturally responsive, Indigenous-based, and storytelling-based approaches to community research and initiatives, stating:

Within the culturally safe space of our community of practice, we shared stories of our past and present, stories about oppression, marginalization, and exclusion, as well as stories of survival, resistance, and love. We sought to engage with these stories to discern and document processes central to a decolonial praxis aimed at supporting Aboriginal women through the creation of a culturally safe, affirming, and intergenerational space for yarning together in and through cultural practice. The work is an enactment of solidarity that challenges the violence of colonialism, racism, and patriarchy that erase and delegitimize Aboriginal women's ways of knowing, doing, and being (p. 21).

Types of Interventions

Interventions were organized around five themes. In this paper, interventions refer to the application of specific actions, strategies, and/or activities to address a social problem or need, challenge systemic injustice, or promote social change and CWMH within a community. The themes extracted from the studies and interventions were: 1) alternative CWMH and healing initiatives, 2) community empowerment, arts, and cultural development initiatives, 3) land-based initiatives, 4) digital-based and online-based initiatives, and 5) alternative pedagogical initiatives.

Theme 1. Applied Alternative CWMH and Healing Initiatives. Through the thematic analysis, the primary reviewer explored the studies and interventions' application of alternative CWMH and healing initiatives with various Indigenous, racialized, gendered, and Global South communities (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Fernández, 2022; Hickey et al., 2020; Lafrenière et al., 2005;

Lester-Smith, 2013; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023). Some of the studies and interventions highlighted that Western-based mainstream therapy and approaches have generally failed to meet the needs of Indigenous, racialized, and/or gendered communities who were often dealing with lasting effects of trauma, systemic oppression, and colonial legacies (Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Fernández, 2022; Hickey et al., 2020; Lester-Smith, 2013; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023). Practitioners, researchers, and community organizations alike applied a wide variety of trauma-informed, culturally responsive, decolonial, critical, and community-centered approaches and interventions to accommodate the multifaceted CWMH contexts and needs of the impacted communities. Initiatives applied healing efforts to address sexual, gendered, and family-based violence and trauma (Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Keddle, 2014; Lester-Smith, 2013), as well as intergenerational trauma due to systemic racism and colonialism (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Hickey et al., 2020; Keddle, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023). Hickey et al. (2020) explored a family camping weekend community healing initiative, writing:

Based on input from community members this initiative grew into a culture and land-based healing initiative – the Family Camping Weekend – that aims to foster physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental wellbeing in an outdoor environment. [...] Families sleep in cabins, a communal bunkhouse, or a prospectors' tent, and participate in cultural activities such as drumming

and singing, canoeing, community feasts, medicine walks, storytelling, and ceremony. Elders attend and provide teachings throughout the weekend (p. 26).

Theme 2. Applied Community Empowerment, Arts, and Cultural Development Initiatives. The application of community empowerment, arts, and cultural development initiatives across many studies and interventions served two main purposes (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). The first purpose was related to engaging communities directly to empower and reconnect them to cultural practices in efforts to facilitate cultural continuity, community development, and meet their various socio-politico-economic needs and contexts (Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). The second purpose was related to humanizing the impacted communities and increasing community-wide understanding and awareness of their cultures and experiences to reduce prejudice and discriminatory practices (Balla et al., 2023; Dutta et al., 2022; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Storytelling, art, cultural events, and counterstorytelling were utilized to challenge dominant colonial narratives and advocate for Indigenous and local ways of being, knowing, and doing (Balla et al., 2023; Dutta et al., 2022; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Promoting cultural revitalization, art and creative expression, epistemic justice, and social transformation helped foster a sense of belonging, empowerment, and cultural pride among participants. Quayle et al. (2016) explored the application of community empowerment and cultural development through arts and counterstorytelling in the Bush Babies and Elders portrait project, writing:

Sharing these stories is important for the families of our “Bush Babies”, but also for all Australians to learn, understand and acknowledge what happened in the past, so we can reconcile and move forward together. (p. 262) [...] Culture is defined as a ‘system of continually contested meanings in which “societies” and “individuals” are reproduced and transformed, but within a nexus of social relations around domination and subordination’ (Griffin 2000, 20). Participatory and community-based methodologies, often employing the arts, help people understand that social practices are ‘located in, and are the product of, particular material, social and historical circumstances that produce them and by which they are reproduced in everyday social interaction in a particular setting’ (Kemmis and McTaggart 2005, 565, p. 264).

Theme 3. Applied Land-based initiatives within Indigenous communities. Several authors highlighted studies and interventions that applied land-based approaches (Black et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Reed & Diver, 2023). Initiatives centering communities’ connection to land and using non-Western and Indigenous cultural practices, traditional knowledge, and land-based activities promoted CWMH and healing, healthy eating and sustainable living, and self-governance within Indigenous communities. Initiatives addressed historical traumas, promoted environmental justice, and empowered communities to reclaim their sovereignty and cultural heritage as well as foster community relationships to support economic, physical, mental, and spiritual health. Some initiatives applied family and cultural healing camps (Black et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020), community kitchen gardens (Mundel & Chapman, 2010), and land management programs (Reed & Diver, 2023),

all of which provided spaces for cultural revitalization, intergenerational learning and healing, and the promotion of reciprocal relations between people and land. Mundel and Chapman’s (2010) Urban Aboriginal Community Kitchen Garden Project was a partnership between Vancouver Native Health Society (VNHS) and the University of British Columbia (UBC) Farm. The authors wrote:

Garden Project participants were also able to increase health promoting capacities related to cooking and growing food and create health supporting social networks, particularly for longer-term participants. There is evidence that many health issues experienced by Aboriginal peoples can be related to diet (Willows, 2005) and that thriving health in Aboriginal communities is positively correlated with social support (Richmond 2007; Richmond et al., 2007). Thus, increased food-related capacities and social support are examples of the pathways by which the Garden Project may positively influence health within a health promotion frame (p. 172).

In another example, Reed and Diver (2023) described the application of a land- and community-based governance initiative, stating:

My family history outlines multiple pathways toward healing through Indigenous environmental governance, where governance can be understood as something more than bureaucratic or corporate forms of management, and rather as something that builds relationships through families and communities. This is a model for community-based management that starts with the family. The family-based model responds to colonial legacies that can

leave tribal community members feeling disconnected from their culture, the land, and tribal government. [...] For myself, I have experienced healing through family-based management, restoring ceremonial trails, and working with tribal youth to reconnect with the natural world and my relations (p. 9).

Theme 4. Applied Digital- and Online-based Initiatives. A few studies and interventions applied digital- and online-based initiatives utilizing digital archiving platforms (Dutta, 2019), creative arts (Malherbe et al., 2019), and online community engagement (Dutta et al., 2022) to document and amplify the voices and experiences of politically underrepresented and marginalized communities. These initiatives aimed to preserve cultural heritage, challenge dominant narratives, address systemic issues, and empower affected communities through a digital humanities application, counterstorytelling interventions, and youth-centered participatory filmmaking. By incorporating community-generated content, multimedia elements, and participatory approaches, these initiatives bridged the digital divide, promoted inclusivity, and raised awareness about the experiences and struggles of marginalized groups. Malherbe et al. (2019) explored a PAR filmmaking approach to support students in an impoverished community to spread awareness about sexual health and teenage pregnancy, writing:

Community-centred work that engages liberation in this manner is as messy, complex and fraught with contradiction as it is necessary and overdue. As a means of exploring some of the complexities of PAR, as framed by principles of decolonial feminist psychologies, this chapter draws on a community engaged project that saw a group of South

African school-going learners work with researchers and filmmakers to produce a participatory film on teenage pregnancy. Throughout the film's production, primary and secondary texts, participants engaged in a process of coming-to-voice, where they ignored, subverted, challenged, remade and (in)visibilised hegemonic knowledges and powers in a manner that signified their enabling power (p. 91).

Theme 5. Applied Alternative Pedagogical Initiatives. Studies and interventions applied alternative pedagogical initiatives (Fernández, 2022; Keddie, 2014). Keddie (2014) described an alternative Indigenous-led school that utilized culturally responsive pedagogy, involved Indigenous community members, staff, and elders, and supported Indigenous students based on their needs and context. The school integrated an Indigenous epistemology of relationality and principles of self-determination and cultural recognition to address Indigenous student disadvantages and promote academic success. Fernández (2022) wrote about the creation of alternative classroom settings within neoliberal and academic institutions to empower and support the needs of the students. The instructor implemented testimonio as a decolonial feminist *mujerista* strategy rooted in Latinx feminist thought and activism in an online course to cultivate decolonial healing among Latinx students. This approach emphasized the use of testimonio as a resource for critical reflection, counterstorytelling, and community building within an educational setting. Keddie (2014) reflected on the benefits of Indigenous alternative schooling systems, saying:

As Ms C's remarks in the previous section attest, there are no 'quick fixes' to addressing the complex issue of Indigenous disadvantage – the journey will continue to be

necessarily 'long and hard' especially given the ongoing harmful effects of colonial legacies on Indigenous communities across the western world. It is clear that schools cannot be a panacea for all social ills; however, they can make a significant difference towards enhancing the schooling participation and experience of Indigenous students. [...] This epistemology [of relationality] where community, kinship and family networks are at the centre of all relations was an ethos that differentiated the school from mainstream/ non-Indigenous schools (p. 69).

Author-Reported Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Authors frequently reported on lessons learned and recommendations from their own perspectives or based on what communities shared in the study. Lessons learned and recommendations are organized around the following four themes, which are further described below: 1) establish sustainable, decentralized, and pluralistic initiatives and spaces; 2) develop collaborative community partnerships that foster meaningful community relationships, build trust, and include community in designing and implementing initiatives; 3) develop social justice and social transformation-oriented initiatives grounded in decolonial, critical, feminist, liberatory, and culturally responsive frameworks; and 4) apply alternative and creative settings, methods, and tools to support communities and enhance community wellbeing.

Theme 1: Establish sustainable, decentralized, and pluralistic initiatives and spaces. Authors of several studies and interventions recommended and reflected on the pursuit of sustainable, decentralized, and pluralistic initiatives in community-based interventions

and research projects, emphasizing the need for continuous support, accessible resources, and sustainable funding (Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Keddle, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Malherbe et al., 2019; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). They recommended fostering inter-community collaborations (Ferreira et al., 2019; Reed & Diver, 2023) as well as forming partnerships with universities, local groups, and government agencies to secure long-term resources (Lafrenière et al., 2005; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Some authors discussed limitations in community and cultural initiatives (Dutta et al., 2022; Keddle, 2014; Quayle et al., 2016; Sonn & Quayle, 2013), such as how a lack of awareness regarding fundamental dynamics of race and coloniality can lead to material and harmful implications in terms of assigning blame, making decisions on solutions, distributing funding, and establishing accountability for driving change. Thus, creating spaces for continuous reflection and open dialogue, seeking feedback, and maintaining engagement with community partners are essential for navigating these challenges and helping to address power dynamics and ensure inclusive participation and support (Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Malherbe et al., 2019; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Authors recommended that the involvement of educators, mentors, and community leaders play a crucial role in the sustainability of plans for healing, student support, and personal and professional development (Fernández, 2022; Keddle, 2014; Malherbe et al., 2019; Reed & Diver, 2023). Involving stakeholders such as educators, mentors, and community leaders benefits initiatives by drawing on their expertise, guidance, and leadership for effective program design, implementation, and dissemination of Indigenous and local knowledge. Lastly, authors emphasized the importance of

advocating for self-determination, pluralistic initiatives, and policy reforms that prioritize Indigenous and marginalized populations' voices, knowledge, and cultural practices (Black et al., 2024; Dutta, 2019; Ferreira et al., 2019; Keddle, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Reed & Diver, 2023). Sonn and Quayle (2013) reflected on how a lack of awareness regarding fundamental dynamics of race and coloniality could lead to harm, saying:

Blindness to the underlying dynamics of race and thus coloniality ultimately has material implications in terms of how blame is afforded, decisions made about solutions, funding distributed, and accountability for change determined (p. 444).

Similarly, Reed and Diver (2023) reflected on sustainable initiatives through Indigenous sovereignty and family- and community-led collaborations, writing:

For myself, I have experienced healing through family-based management, restoring ceremonial trails, and working with tribal youth to reconnect with the natural world and my relations. I see such family-based initiatives as an essential part of contemporary Karuk social and environmental management [...] As we engage in family-based management, we see an opportunity for collective action. We seek to extend our web, reaching out to different families in the community. We are also building bridges with tribal government (pp. 9-10).

Theme 2: Develop collaborative community partnerships that foster meaningful community relationships, build trust, and include the community in designing and implementing the initiatives. Authors of several studies and interventions

recommended and reflected on the need for building and maintaining trusting relationships to foster collaborative community partnerships and co-design and co-implement community initiatives (Balla et al., 2023; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Malherbe et al., 2019; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Long-term engagement with Indigenous and marginalized communities creates safe spaces that value relationality and provide supportive environments for lasting relationships and continued engagement in community-based initiatives and research (Dutta, 2019; Keddle, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Lester-Smith, 2013; Malherbe et al., 2019; Reed & Diver, 2023). Furthermore, involving local Indigenous, racialized, and Global South communities in decision-making enables initiatives to address community needs, promote cultural relevance, and foster sustainable outcomes. Dutta et al. (2022) reflected on the principles of the Miya Community Research Collective, stating:

We understand the MCRC's work as a (re)humanizing project—counter-storytelling against knowledge and representations that dehumanize and dispossess Miya people [...] At the heart of our knowledge production ethos is that research must not only have a direct bearing on people's lives but must also have the potential to be transformative (Watkins & Shulman, 2008). Simultaneously, we recognize that not everything has to be deemed as research to render it legitimate, visible, or even valuable (Tuck & Yang, 2014) [...] Centering radical relationality and communal knowing, we seek to create/reclaim cultural, knowledge, and political spaces that center Miya peoples' struggles and resistance (p. 66).

Theme 3: Develop social justice and transformation-oriented initiatives, grounded in decolonial, critical, feminist, liberatory, culturally responsive frameworks. Authors of studies reflected on developing social justice and transformation-oriented initiatives aimed at driving broader social change by challenging dominant narratives, advancing equity, and dismantling systemic racism and colonial legacies (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Lester-Smith, 2013; Malherbe et al., 2019; Mundel & Chapman, 2010; Quayle et al., 2016). Recommendations focused on promoting epistemic justice, healing, and cultural recognition, addressing power imbalances, and amplifying Indigenous and marginalized voices. Initiatives prioritized Indigenous and non-Western local knowledge, created healing and safe spaces, and engaged youth and communities in cultural connections. By emphasizing decolonial, critical, and feminist framings, the initiatives fostered personal and societal transformation, promoting critical consciousness and social change. Balla et al. (2023) shared the following reflection on deconstructing violent histories of dispossession and decolonial tactics to contest white supremacy and coloniality:

It is essential to create spaces of relationality to share and together deconstruct personal and collective histories, in particular the violent histories of dispossession that until recent times in Australia have been constructed as a reality of the past. Our Blak Women's Healing collective looks to create settings that are safe for women gathering, connecting, listening, and responding to each other without fear and reprisal. The space is different from the surveillance, of being watched and watchful, that characterizes everyday life for Aboriginal women. The stories

of resistance and survival that individuals and communities tell from below are necessary counter stories that contest White innocence and ignorance, and they are also stories that provide insight into the strategies and resources of survival that have sustained Aboriginal and marginalized communities (Glover et al., 2010) (p. 28).

Theme 4: Apply alternative and creative settings, methods, and tools to support communities and enhance CWMH and achieve social change. All authors recommended and reflected on the use of alternative and creative settings, methods, and tools to support communities, enhance CWMH, and achieve social change, such as cultural development, trauma-informed practice, arts, storytelling, counterstorytelling, filmmaking, digital archiving apps, alternative schooling, and land-based initiatives. Some of the settings, methods, and tools can be applied in a class setting as a form of alternative pedagogy, healing, and epistemic justice, as Fernández (2022) reflected:

As the testimonios provided by the Latinx students demonstrate, the process of healing cannot be done in isolation. Healing calls us to engage in a relational critically reflexive dialogue, an introspective, personal, and communal process of being heard. Witnessing in the context of a testimonio experience is about seeing the other person fully; it is precisely about those moments of mutual recognition that contextualize the social conditions of oppression through a critical social analysis that can help us understand the why to the problems noted and how to create change. The radical hope that Latinx students brought to the surface in their documenting of their loved one's testimonio demonstrates the

affirmation and validation they facilitated, which helped the testimoniante reflect and process the current moment. (p. 152)

Similarly, Lester-Smith (2013) reflected on the tools used to ensure inclusive and Indigenous practices and worldviews are respected:

Aboriginal ways of knowing are often taught and learned through Aboriginal storytelling and sharing-circles. Customarily, a sacred eagle feather or an Aboriginal-carved “talking stick” is passed around a sharing circle. The person holding the sacred item is the only speaker at the time, while all others respectfully listen and remain silent until their turn to speak. When done respectfully, circle participation reflects the basic traditional and philosophical worldview of Aboriginal peoples regardless of whether it is done from a healing perspective, a teaching approach or as a path to problem solving (pp. 314-315).

Discussion

The team selected praxis as the framework guiding this study because it conceptualizes the interconnectedness of theory and practice (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Beals et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández et al., 2021; Martín-Baró, 1996; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). This cyclical reflection and action is essential for creating meaningful social transformation and enhancing CWMH. Praxis has gained traction in critical, decolonial, and liberation psychology as well as other social science fields as a conscious effort to counteract the gatekeeping of knowledge production and distribution by academia and other neoliberal institutions (Atallah, 2022; Balla et al., 2023; Beals et al., 2021; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández et al., 2021; Martín-Baró,

1996; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). This gatekeeping, referred to as the colonality of knowledge (Mignolo, 2007; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Quijano, 2007), limits the dissemination and application of knowledge, thus hindering efforts to mobilize knowledge into action.

Colonial gatekeeping presents significant challenges and harm from a CWMH, social transformation, and community standpoint (Incite! Women of Color Against Violence, 2017; Martín-Baró, 1996; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Gatekeepers are frequently disconnected from the real-life experiences, contexts, and needs of Indigenous, racialized, gendered, and Global South communities. As a result, they perpetuate colonial and oppressive knowledge systems. In contrast, employing a liberatory praxis includes decolonial, critical, liberation, intersectional, feminist, and Indigenous perspectives that can effectively guide the transformation of knowledge into action (Martín-Baró, 1996). Liberatory praxis promotes liberatory CWMH and social transformation by challenging normative and oppressive power structures, disrupting socio-economic inequalities, and fostering healing, epistemic and social justice, and community engagement (Jiménez-Domínguez, 2009; Martín-Baró, 1996; Montero et al., 2017).

Participatory action research (PAR), community-based participatory research (CBPR), Indigenous research methods and epistemologies are some of the few approaches and tools that were utilized in the studies and interventions to ensure community and action-oriented research and interventions were inclusive, reciprocal, and relational (Burton, 2013; Cornish et al., 2023; Martín-Baró, 1996; Tapp et al., 2013; Wilson, 2008). Some initiatives were driven by community organizations and/or community members, with researchers being invited to co-design and assess the effectiveness of initiatives and recommend next steps (Balla

et al., 2023; Black et al., 2019, 2024; Keddie, 2014; Lafrenière et al., 2005; Quayle et al., 2016; Reed & Diver, 2023; Sonn & Quayle, 2013). Other initiatives were researcher-initiated but co-designed and co-implemented in partnership with the community, ensuring that the projects addressed the communities' specific needs and contexts (Chamsanit et al., 2021; Dutta, 2019; Dutta et al., 2022; Fernández, 2022; Ferreira et al., 2019; Hickey et al., 2020; Lester-Smith, 2013; Malherbe et al., 2019; Mundel & Chapman, 2010). Both approaches exemplify the principles of PAR-CBPR and Indigenous research methodologies, highlighting the importance of community agency and cultural responsiveness in research and intervention design.

The team did not identify any clear distinctions between PAR and CBPR in the analyzed literature. While some sources stated that there are differences between PAR and CBPR, others used them interchangeably and did not distinguish between them (Huffman, 2017; Tapp et al., 2013). For this reason, the team decided to refer to them collectively as PAR-CBPR and adopt the principles that were clear in relation to centering community collaboration and cultural responsiveness; creating knowledge-to-action and knowledge-from-action to benefit communities while centering their lived experiences, cultural knowledge, and practices; and promoting epistemic and social justice.

Strengths and Limitations

By streamlining the title and abstract screening process, the rapid review approach facilitated the timely gathering and analysis of relevant literature, while also providing valuable insights into community wellbeing and mental health. However, due to the limited availability of reviewers with content expertise, the titles and abstracts were screened by only one person.

Developing the search strategy posed a few challenges, as decolonial, critical, and other liberatory praxis terms are not well indexed, nor is there consistent terminology across studies. We may have missed relevant studies and interventions that used niche terms employed by critical and decolonial scholars. Given the lack of relevant indexed keywords within databases, the team decided not to use indexed keywords and instead searched for documents that included a wide range of relevant terms, including synonyms connected to disciplinarily niche concepts, within the title and abstract.

One of the ways we made the rapid review feasible was to limit it to published literature only. By limiting our research to academic databases, our findings do not include gray literature that would undoubtedly reveal more relevant data that could be incorporated into a future systematic or realist review.

Future Research Recommendations

The team recommends two studies to build on the rapid review findings. First, we recommend conducting a realist or systematic review that includes both published and gray literature. A possible approach would be to conduct a comparative analysis of existing liberatory literature (e.g., decolonial and critical) and interventions across different contexts in the Global South and/or Global North. This approach could provide valuable insights into the diverse interpretations and applications of liberatory thought across different contexts and disciplines. By systematically comparing key texts and studies, we could identify common themes, divergences, and the unique ways in which liberatory frameworks are being utilized. This analysis would not only deepen our understanding of the field but also highlight the various ways scholars and practitioners are applying liberatory principles to address specific issues. The team

believes this comparative analysis could significantly enhance our current project and offer a more nuanced perspective on the evolving landscape of liberatory thought. Second, a study involving interviews with practitioners, scholars, and activists from the analyzed documents, as well as others doing similar work, would offer more in-depth insights into the decolonial, critical, and other liberatory framings, approaches, and initiatives applied to CWMH by practitioners, scholars, and activists.

Conclusion

This rapid review reveals and clarifies how practitioners, scholars, and activists are conceptualizing, framing, and applying their community wellbeing and mental health initiatives. One of the main takeaways from the thematic analysis is that in order to achieve community wellbeing and mental health, it is necessary to be culturally responsive and center local communities' ways of knowing, being, and doing. It is important to take into consideration the broader context and use a social justice-oriented approach, as healing is interconnected with just systemic change. It will be beneficial for future studies to build on this rapid review by reaching out to and interviewing practitioners, scholars, and activists from the literature and elsewhere for further insight and suggestions about the application of decolonial and critical approaches to community wellbeing and mental health. Due to the limited information about the framing and processes, interviews with decolonial and critical practitioners, scholars, and activists would help further clarify and provide insight into how different praxis frameworks are being applied and conceptualized in the field and communities.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of and express our gratitude to Natalie Kivell, Manuel Riemer, Ehaab Abdou, and Mark Weiler for their support in developing the rapid review protocol and reviewing the manuscript.