



The Integration of Traditional Medicine within Contemporary Ugandan Healthcare Systems: An Action Research Study

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Abstract

Uganda's healthcare system faces challenges in integrating traditional medicine (TM), which is deeply rooted in cultural practices and knowledge. An action research approach was employed, involving community consultations, policy analysis, and stakeholder interviews to understand TM's role in health care and identify gaps for improvement. Community members reported a strong preference for integrating TM alongside Western medicine (WM), with approximately 70% supporting such integration. Identified challenges include lack of formal training for TM practitioners and inadequate funding for TM facilities. Integration is feasible but requires policy support to address identified gaps, ensuring equitable access to healthcare services in rural areas where TM plays a significant role. Policy makers should prioritise integrating TM into the national health insurance framework and provide financial incentives for TM practitioners. Training programmes for TM practitioners are also essential to enhance service quality and safety.

Keywords: *African geography, Traditional medicine, Community-based intervention, Participatory action research, Indigenous knowledge systems, Anthropology of health, Ethnography*

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