



A Brief Report: An Empirical Analysis of Key Issues in African Medicine in Zimbabwe

Tendai Moyo^{1,2}, Farai Chikowore¹

¹ Africa University

² Department of Public Health, University of Zimbabwe, Harare

Published: 10 October 2021 | Received: 02 July 2021 | Accepted: 18 August 2021

Correspondence: tmoyo@yahoo.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18530758](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18530758)

Author notes

*Tendai Moyo is affiliated with Africa University and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.
Farai Chikowore is affiliated with Africa University and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.*

Abstract

African medicine, encompassing traditional and complementary practices, is a substantial component of Zimbabwe's healthcare landscape. A clearer understanding of its contemporary challenges is needed to inform effective health policy and integration efforts. This brief report aims to identify and analyse the key issues affecting the practice, integration, and regulation of African medicine in Zimbabwe. A qualitative empirical analysis was conducted. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of traditional healers, biomedical practitioners, and health policy stakeholders. This was supplemented by documentary analysis of relevant policy drafts and regulatory frameworks. Several predominant themes emerged. A central issue was the lack of formal recognition and clear regulatory frameworks, leading to problems with standardisation and safety. Practitioners frequently reported feeling marginalised from the formal health system, despite high public utilisation. A significant barrier identified was the absence of structured collaborative training programmes between traditional and biomedical health sectors. Key challenges in African medicine in Zimbabwe are fundamentally centred on governance, integration, and professional recognition. Addressing these systemic issues is critical for leveraging its potential within public health. Develop a clear statutory regulatory framework for traditional medicine practitioners. Establish pilot programmes for collaborative training and knowledge exchange. Integrate traditional medicine formally into national health policy dialogues. African traditional medicine, Zimbabwe, health policy, integration, regulation, qualitative research This report provides contemporary empirical data from practitioner and stakeholder perspectives, highlighting specific systemic barriers that require policy attention for the integration of African medicine into Zimbabwe's healthcare system.

Keywords: *Traditional medicine, Complementary medicine, Healthcare systems, Sub-Saharan Africa, Empirical analysis, Health policy, Zimbabwe*



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