



A Commentary on Comparative Medicine in Botswana: An African Perspective from 2000 to 2026

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Abstract

Comparative medicine, the study of health across species, is an emerging field with particular relevance for Africa. Botswana's distinct human-wildlife-livestock interface presents specific opportunities and challenges for its application that require analysis from an African perspective. This commentary critically examines the development and contemporary status of comparative medicine in Botswana. It aims to articulate the field's relevance to regional public health priorities and to identify strategic directions for its future advancement on the continent. As a commentary, this article synthesises and reflects upon existing literature, policy documents, and the author's professional observations. It employs a narrative, analytical approach rather than primary data collection. Key insights: A central theme is the critical need to integrate human and veterinary medicine to address zoonotic diseases effectively. Progress in Botswana has been constrained by fragmented funding streams and an absence of dedicated training pathways, despite the field's foundational role in understanding shared health threats. Comparative medicine in Botswana has established its importance for understanding cross-species health but requires more cohesive institutional support to realise its full potential for enhancing biosecurity and health system resilience. Key recommendations are to establish a national centre for comparative medicine, develop cross-disciplinary postgraduate training programmes, and increase targeted funding for research at the human-animal-ecosystem interface. Comparative medicine, One Health, Botswana, zoonoses, Africa, public health, veterinary medicine This commentary provides a focused, critical perspective on the development of comparative medicine in a key African region, offering pragmatic recommendations for strengthening this field to address continental health priorities.

Keywords: *One Health, Comparative Medicine, Southern Africa, Zoonotic Diseases, Human-Wildlife-Livestock Interface, Botswana, Transdisciplinary Research*



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