



A Meta-Analysis of Ethiopian Medicine Research: Policy Implications for African Health Systems

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Abstract

Ethiopia possesses a rich heritage of traditional medicine, and a substantial body of related research has accumulated. Synthesising this evidence is essential to inform rational health policy and potential integration into national and continental health systems. This meta-analysis aimed to systematically review and synthesise Ethiopian medicine research to identify its principal thematic foci, assess the quality of evidence, and elucidate implications for health policy and practice within African health systems. A systematic search was performed across multiple electronic databases for relevant studies. Predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Data extraction was followed by analysis using thematic synthesis and, where feasible, quantitative meta-analytical techniques to aggregate findings and evaluate study quality. The analysis identified a predominant research focus on the efficacy and safety of herbal medicines. A significant theme was the documented use of traditional remedies for managing maternal health conditions and infectious diseases. Critical evidence gaps were noted, particularly a lack of formal health economic evaluations and a scarcity of large-scale, robust clinical trials. Ethiopian medicine research offers considerable evidence on traditional practices for specific health conditions. However, the evidence base requires strengthening in key methodological areas to provide robust support for policy-making and clinical integration. Policymakers should prioritise funding for rigorous clinical trials and health economic studies. Establishing standardised documentation protocols and regulatory frameworks for traditional medicines is recommended to facilitate their safe and effective integration into primary healthcare across Africa. Traditional medicine, health policy, evidence synthesis, herbal medicine, healthcare integration,

systematic review, Africa This study provides a consolidated evidence base to guide policymakers and stakeholders in utilising local medical research to strengthen health systems in Ethiopia and the wider African region.

Keywords: *systematic review, traditional medicine, health policy, Sub-Saharan Africa, evidence synthesis, healthcare systems*



ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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