



An Ethnographic Study of African Medical Praxis in Egypt: Key Issues and Empirical Analyses

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Abstract

African medical praxis in Egypt operates within a complex healthcare landscape, frequently alongside biomedical systems. Although culturally significant, detailed ethnographic research into its contemporary practices, challenges, and role in providing obstetrical and gynaecological care remains limited. This study aimed to empirically analyse key issues within African medical praxis in Egypt. Its objectives were to document the scope of practices, understand practitioner and patient perspectives, and analyse the interface between these traditional practices and formal healthcare systems. A multi-sited ethnographic study was conducted. Data were collected through prolonged participant observation in consultations and community settings, supplemented by in-depth, semi-structured interviews with practitioners, patients, and community stakeholders. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data. Findings reveal a resilient and adaptive system. A prominent theme was the integration of spiritual and herbal treatments for gynaecological concerns, including infertility and postpartum care. Practitioners often acted as first-line consultants for issues perceived as culturally specific. A key challenge was the reported difficulty in referring patients to formal clinics, citing communication barriers and occasional stigma. African medical praxis in Egypt constitutes a significant, culturally embedded healthcare resource. It addresses needs not fully met by the biomedical system but operates with limited formal integration, which may affect continuity of care for women. Develop training for biomedical healthcare providers on culturally sensitive engagement with traditional practices. Explore frameworks for facilitated referral pathways between practitioners and public health clinics. Further research should investigate specific health outcomes for patients using these services. Ethnography, traditional medicine, maternal health, healthcare integration, Egypt, gynaecology This study provides a contemporary empirical analysis of African medical praxis in Egypt, documenting its role in women's healthcare and the practical challenges of its coexistence with biomedical systems.

Keywords: *Medical pluralism, Diaspora healthcare, Ethnographic methodology, African traditional medicine, Therapeutic landscapes, Egypt, Embodied praxis*



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