



Methodological Considerations for Studying Informal Healthcare Provision in Urban Lesotho: A Scoping Review Protocol

Matseliso Mokhethi¹, Mpho Thabane¹, Teboho Letsie^{2,3}

¹ National University of Lesotho

² Department of Epidemiology, National University of Lesotho

³ Department of Public Health, National University of Lesotho

Published: 18 October 2024 | **Received:** 14 June 2024 | **Accepted:** 24 August 2024

Correspondence: mmokhethi@yahoo.com

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18531808](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18531808)

Author notes

Matseliso Mokhethi is affiliated with National University of Lesotho and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Mpho Thabane is affiliated with National University of Lesotho and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Teboho Letsie is affiliated with Department of Epidemiology, National University of Lesotho and focuses on Medicine research in Africa.

Abstract

In urban Lesotho, a substantial amount of healthcare is delivered by informal providers, such as traditional healers, medicine vendors, and faith-based practitioners. This sector is poorly integrated into the formal health system, and its role, practices, and impact, particularly for maternal and reproductive health, are not well understood. This protocol describes the methodology for a scoping review to systematically map published and grey literature on informal healthcare provision in urban Lesotho. The objective is to identify key concepts, types of evidence, and research gaps to inform future primary research and policy. The scoping review will follow the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) methodology. It will involve systematic searches of multiple electronic databases and grey literature sources. Two independent reviewers will screen titles, abstracts, and full texts against pre-defined inclusion criteria. Data from selected studies will be charted and analysed using quantitative summary and qualitative thematic analysis. As this is a protocol, no empirical findings are presented. The review is anticipated to produce a comprehensive map of the literature, highlighting predominant themes and evidence gaps. This protocol provides a structured methodological plan for synthesising evidence on an under-studied component of the urban health system. The subsequent review will be the first to scope this field specifically for urban Lesotho. Future primary research should use mixed-methods designs to explore interfaces between informal and formal health sectors. Policymakers should consider the review's findings when developing strategies for integration and regulation. scoping review protocol, informal healthcare, traditional medicine, urban health, Lesotho, health systems, methodology This work provides a formal methodological framework for investigating the informal health sector in a specific urban African context, aiming to strengthen the evidence base for health systems policy.

Keywords: *Informal healthcare, urban health, Sub-Saharan Africa, scoping review protocol, mixed-methods research, health systems integration, traditional medicine*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

REQUEST FULL PAPER

 **Email:** info@parj.africa

Request your copy of the full paper today!

SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH

Are you a researcher in Africa? We welcome your submissions!

Join our community of African scholars and share your groundbreaking work.

 **Submit at:** app.parj.africa



Scan to visit app.parj.africa

Open Access Scholarship from PARJ

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global Knowledge