



The Integration and Evolution of Traditional Medicine within Contemporary South African Healthcare Systems: A Policy Analysis

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Abstract

Traditional medicine plays a significant role in healthcare systems across Africa, including South Africa, where it is practiced alongside modern medical practices. The study employs a qualitative approach to analyse existing literature, government documents, and expert interviews to understand current practices and challenges in integrating traditional medicine into mainstream healthcare. A key finding is the significant proportion (70%) of South African communities that rely on traditional healers for primary healthcare services, highlighting the need for policy support to enhance accessibility and quality. Traditional medicine contributes significantly to South Africa's healthcare landscape but requires strategic integration into national health policies to address its underutilized potential. Recommendations include funding research to validate traditional remedies, establishing regulatory frameworks for traditional practitioners, and promoting public education on complementary therapies.

Keywords: *Africanization, Cultural Competence, Ethno-medicine, Health Policy, Integrative Medicine, Public Health Initiatives, Traditional Healing Practices*

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