

Afrikan Natural Medicines: An Innovation-Based Model for Medicines Production, Curriculum Development and Clinical Application

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Abstract : The innovative development, production, and clinical utilisation of African natural medicines requires frameworks from systematisation, innovation, registration. Afrika faces challenges when it comes to these sectors. The opposite is the case as is evident in ancient Asian (Traditional Chinese Medicine and Indian Ayurveda and Siddha) medical systems, which are interfaced into their respective national health and educational systems. Afrikan Natural Medicines (ANMs) are yet to develop systematisation frameworks, i.e. disease characterisation and medicines classification. This paper explores classical medical systems drawn from Afrikan and Chinese experts in natural medicines. An Afrikological research methodology was used to conduct in-depth interviews with 20 key respondents selected through purposeful sampling technique. Data was summarised into systematisation frameworks for classical disease theories, patient categorisation, medicine classification, aetiology and pathogenesis of disease, diagnosis and prognosis techniques and treatment methods. It was discovered that ancient Afrika had systematic medical cosmologies, remnants of which are evident in most Afrikan cultural health practices. Parallels could be drawn from classical medical concepts of antiquity, like Chinese Taoist and Indian tantric health systems. Data revealed that both the ancient and contemporary ANM systems were based on living medical cosmologies. The study showed that African Natural Healing Systems have etiological systems, general pathogenesis knowledge, differential diagnostic techniques, comprehensive prognosis and holistic treatment regimes. Systematisation models were developed out of these frameworks, and this could be used for evaluation of clinical research, medical application including development of curriculum for high-education. It was envisaged that frameworks will pave way towards the development, production and commercialisation of ANMs. This was piloted in inclusive innovation, technology transfer and commercialisation of South African natural medicines, cosmeceuticals, nutraceuticals and health infusions. The central model presented here in will assist in curriculum development and establishment of Afrikan Medicines Hospitals and Pharmaceutical Industries.

Keywords : African Natural Medicines, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Medical Cosmology, Clinical Application

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