

**TRADITIONAL HEALERS' PERCEPTIONS ON NON-ADHERENCE TO AFRICAN  
TRADITIONAL MEDICINE AMONG PATIENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS WHO CONSULT  
AFRICAN TRADITIONAL HEALERS IN THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY OF THE VHEMBE  
DISTRICT.**

**BY**

**LUFUNO MASHAMBA**

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**SUPERVISOR: DR FJ TAKALANI**

**CO-SUPERVISOR MRS MD MUSHWANA**

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## Abstract

### Introduction

Levels of non-adherence to African traditional medicine in person with mental illness in rural African settings have been shown to be comparable to those found in high-income countries. Improved understanding of the underlying reasons can help to inform intervention strategies relevant to the context. Predominant reasons for non-adherence specific to a low-income country setting include inadequate availability of food to counter appetite stimulation and the perceived strength of mental illness medication. Non-adherence was defined as failing to take prescribed medication and delays in seeking medical care, failure to keep appointments and also failure to follow instructions effectively.

### Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to explore the traditional healers' perceptions of non-adherence to African traditional medicines among patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healers in the Thulamela municipality of the Vhembe District in the Limpopo province.

### Objectives

- To determine the traditional healers' perceptions on non-adherence to African traditional medicine in patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healers.
- To explore the factors associated with non-adherence to African traditional medicine among patients who consult African traditional healers
- To establish the consequences of non-adherence to African Traditional medicine in patients with mental illness who consult traditional healers
- To determine the strategies for reducing non-adherence to African traditional medicine among patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healers

### Research questions

- What are traditional healers' perceptions of non-adherence to African traditional medicines that occur in our community among patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healers?
- What are the risk factors associated with non-adherence to African traditional medicine among patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healers?
- What are the consequences of non-adherence to African Traditional medicine amongst patients with mental illness who consult African Traditional medicine?
- How can non-adherence to African traditional medicine be reduced among patients with mental illness who consult African traditional healer?

## **Significance**

The significance of this study is in the field of family counselling within the South African context in which mentally ill patients are dealt with. Policy review was also an important aspect to consider, taking into account issues such as individual freedom and accept attention in so far as the patient was aware or informed of the consequences of the decision and is within the law. With the expected outcome this research should produce articles and the results will also be presented at national and international conferences.

## **Research methodology**

The research design chosen for this study was an exploratory research design. The purpose of this design was to become familiar with a phenomenon or acquire new insight into it in order to formulate more precise or develop problem hypothesis. Purposive sampling was used in this study to select traditional healers. The researcher used Thematic content analysis. It identifies the question also chooses the sample for analysis. Purposive sampling was used to select traditional healers The researcher used this approach to qualitative data to identify and review the information presented from the relevant literature and participant's information.

## **Findings of the study**

Improving adherence in mental illness may have a considerable positive impact on patients and society and this can be achieved by correcting the identified multitude of factors driving nonadherence. Traditional healers shoulder a larger burden of patients with mental health problems, this calls for all those who share the goal of improving the mental health of individuals to engage with traditional healers.

## **Recommendations of the study**

There should be development of curriculum that could be used by elementary and post secondary school on the topic of traditional healers.

**Key words:** African traditional medicine, mental illness, non- adherence; perceptions, traditional healers.