

Beth Ketema (PhD) Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences

This presentation introduces a proposed PhD study exploring oral health-related quality of life (OHRQoL) among Ethiopians with refugee backgrounds in Aotearoa New Zealand. Oral health experiences of refugee-background communities remain underrepresented in Aotearoa's oral health research, particularly among smaller African refugee populations. The study examines how cultural, psychosocial, and structural factors shape oral health experiences, oral health behaviours, and access to care.

Guided by an Afrocentric research framework (Asante, 2003), the study uses a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative phase will involve Ethiopian participants in Auckland completing culturally adapted Amharic and English versions of the Oral Health Impact Profile (OHIP-14) and selected World Health Organization (WHO) oral health survey items. This phase will examine OHRQoL and undertake further psychometric validation of the adapted tools using descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The qualitative phase will build on the survey findings through culturally grounded Buna discussions (traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony) and church-based focus groups where many community members regularly gather, conducted primarily in Amharic. Data will be analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) to explore participants' lived experiences, perceptions of oral health, and barriers to accessing care.

In this presentation, I will outline the study design and explain how integrating culturally adapted measurement tools with an Afrocentric research framework aims to generate meaningful evidence for improving oral health equity among refugee-background communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Keywords

Refugee health, Oral health-related quality of life, Afrocentric research, Ethiopian communities, Mixed-methods

References

- Asante, M. K. (2003). *Afrocentricity: The theory of social change* (Rev. ed.). African American Images.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 18(3), 328–352. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238>
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.