



Female Refugees' Access to Mental Health Services in Ethiopian Border Regions: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract

Female refugees in Ethiopia's border regions often face significant mental health challenges due to trauma from conflict zones, displacement, and limited access to services. The research employed qualitative interviews with 50 female refugees from Somalia, Sudan, and Eritrea living near the Ethiopian border. Data was analysed using thematic content analysis to identify common issues and gaps in service provision. Female refugees reported a strong preference for traditional healing practices over formal healthcare options, highlighting a significant unmet need for culturally sensitive mental health services within their community. The findings underscore the urgent need for integrated mental health care that incorporates local cultural practices and addresses language barriers to ensure equitable access among female refugees in border regions. Implementing culturally tailored mental health programmes combined with traditional healing methods can enhance service uptake while reducing stigma associated with formal healthcare interventions.

Keywords: *Ethiopia, Refugee Studies, Gender Studies, Qualitative Research, Mental Health Services, Conflict Trauma, Access Barriers*

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