

Raising Awareness on the Health Risks of Skin Lightening Practice and Chemical Exposure Using Cultural Lens Approach

Investigators

- Amira Adawe, MPH - The Beautywell Project

Project Summary

Skin lightening, whitening, and bleaching products are often marketed to racial and ethnic minority communities throughout the world. Over-the-counter (OTC) skin lightening products come in many different forms, including soaps, creams, lotions, and ingestible pills. It is critical to raise awareness of the health effects of OTC skin lightening products. Products can contain a range of harmful ingredients, including mercury and hydroquinone that promise to lighten skin or reduce dark spots, but these products can have a range of negative impacts on one's health. Many consumers are unaware of the dangers associated with the use of these products. In order to address this health disparity gap that is disproportionately impacting racial and ethnic minority communities, the researchers intend to expand the current outreach and education with cultural specificity and disseminate information via diverse formats such as infographics, short form videos, and local language news media. The primary objective for this project is to increase public awareness and develop educational materials on the dangers associated with using OTC skin lightening products containing mercury and hydroquinone.

Populations Served: Black or African American

Goals/Aims:

- Increase public awareness and education on the health dangers associated with using OTC skin lightening creams and products that contain mercury and hydroquinone.
- Evaluate and expand current OTC skin lightening education materials by simplifying and verifying translations, where needed, and add additional health education messaging.
- Develop a “train the trainer” curriculum to increase community knowledge and influence behavioral changes by training community leaders, health workers, and educators.

Publications/Abstracts/Posters, etc.

- Manuscript in preparation