

**INFLUENCE OF WIDOWHOOD PRACTICES ON THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL AND
PHYSICAL HEALTH OF WIDOWS IN SELECTED STATES OF SOUTH-EASTERN,
NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of widowhood practices on the physical, psychological and social health of widows in selected states of South-Eastern, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population consisted of all the 4,879 registered widows from the three selected states; Imo, Anambra and Abia. Sample size of 370 registered widows was purposively drawn from these states. Research instrument was a structured questionnaire tagged: Widowhood Practices and Health Questionnaire. Reliability was determined using cronbach alpha, the following scores were obtained: Physical Implication Subscale 0.77, Social Implication Subscale 0.76, Psychological Implication 0.643, Economic Implication 0.87. percentage, frequency were used to answer the research questions while Analysis of Variance and z-test were used to answer the null hypotheses. It was found out among others that widows were ritually shaved of their hair on pubic region and head, they were forced to swear to prove their innocence, forcing widows to marry their husbands' relatives and economic hardship. It was recommended among others that younger widows, that is, those bereaved before the age of 35 years should be encouraged to remarry, as a way of integrating them properly into a social inclined society like Nigeria.