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## Healing Bereavement through Rituals: A Review of the WeppaWanno Widowhood Purification Practices

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### ABSTRACT

This paper explores the traditional widowhood rites in Mid Western Nigeria' s WeppaWannoland, as a spiritual and psychosocial process of purification and healing for loss induced trauma. The choice of WeppaWannoland in this investigation stems from this people' s peculiar and extensive purification ritual which is designed to heal the bereaved in three-dimensions-spirit, soul and body. The investigation focuses on the differential impact of bereavement practices on WeppaWanno widows, for there are two distinct marriage statuses prevalent in the society, and to set the scene for comparing the merits of indigenous rites with Western bereavement practice and resulting respective experience. This work incorporates indigenous health and healing along with psychoanalytical approaches in making sense of the bereavement rituals. In this investigation, I shall be drawing largely from a pool of data from ethnographic field work carried out between 2001 and 2004 in WeppaWannoland, and other related materials.

### KEYWORDS

Healing; Widowhood; Trauma

### Cite this paper

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