

**Title of Article:** Gender, Widowhood and Property Inheritance in Africa

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**Outlet:** Paper under peer review for publication in Perspectives on Gender and Sustainable Development in Africa Prof. O.I. Aina (Edited), Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

**Date:** 2012

**Abstract:** The challenges associated with the traditional practice of widowhood and property inheritance is an acknowledged social problem in many societies across the globe, be it rural or urban. While it is more entrenched in the rural areas, the practice affects many urban women in African societies especially as it is common with those who die in the cities but are to be buried in rural areas (“hometown burial”). The problems arising from widowhood and property inheritance have created an endless vacuum and numerous problems resulting in enmity, hatred, distrust and disunity that are unhealthy for societal development. Above all, it has rendered many widows psychologically and economically incapacitated. It is against this premise that this paper examines gender, widowhood and property inheritance in the African context with a view to identifying areas of convergence and divergence. Relying purely on empirical data and relevant examples from Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda, the study identifies the cultural explanation of death, gender construction of death, conceptual and social experience of widows/widowers, the culture of male supremacy/dominance, case studies from the African continent and the future of widowhood practices and property inheritance, policy interventions and militating factor against women in widowhood and property inheritance. The study concludes that gender, widowhood and property inheritance are socio-cultural issues that must be given more attention in developmental planning and programmes.

Key words: **Gender, Widowhood, Property inheritance, Culture, African societies**