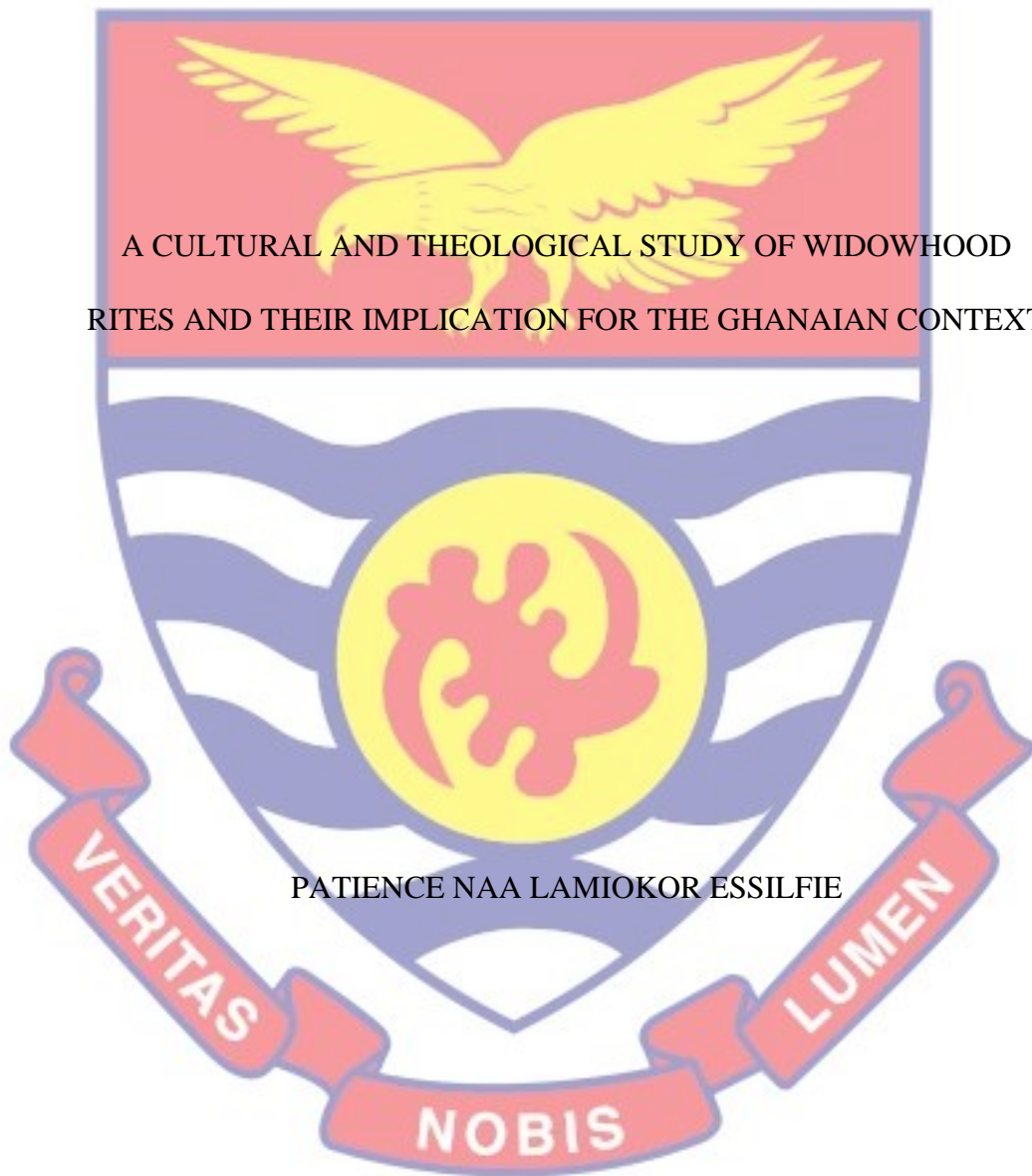


UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST



A CULTURAL AND THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF WIDOWHOOD  
RITES AND THEIR IMPLICATION FOR THE GHANAIAIAN CONTEXT

PATIENCE NAA LAMIOKOR ESSILFIE

2020



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RITES AND THEIR IMPLICATION FOR THE GHANAIAN CONTEXT

BY

PATIENCE NAA LAMIOKOR ESSILFIE

This thesis presented to the Department of Religion and Human Values, Faculty  
of Arts, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Religion and Human

Values

NOBIS

JUNE 2020

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ..... Date:

.....

Name: Patience Naa Lamiokor Essilfie

### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date:

.....

Name: Rev. Prof. Eric Nii Bortey Anum

Co-Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date:

.....

Name: Rt. Rev. Prof. Paul Appiah- Sekyere

## ABSTRACT

This thesis dealt with the issues surrounding the cultural perspective of widowhood rites in the context of Christianity in Ghana. The thesis, therefore, looks at the Christian attempt to find ways of participating in widowhood rituals in the Ghanaian context. The concern or gap this thesis tries to fill is the lack of clearly structured Christian widowhood rites that is informed by the cultural context.

The methodology used for this research was a sociological theory of legitimation and Theological Hermeneutics. A qualitative study was also employed in the collection and analysis of the field work and Werner Jeanrond's theological Hermeneutical tools were adopted. It was found that it appeared most widows were very uncomfortable allowing others to witness their rites. The women were of the view that many widowhood taboos and prohibitions get confusing sometimes and difficult to observe in the traditional setup. It was also noticed that most widows end up doing both the Christian and Cultural rites and will not necessarily want to be questioned about it, but just to fulfil all obligations. In view of this, I recommended that there is a need for the Church to collaborate more with the traditional setup in dealing with the entire widowhood rites. This can be in the form of having joint meetings with influencers and traditional opinion leaders to come up with some understanding in coming up with a common harmonized system that is acceptable to both. There could also be more clear legal rights for widows in Ghana as we saw in the Athenian society which can be easily implementable, since the Ghanaian perspective at the moment, lacks clarity and sometimes making it difficult to implement.

## KEY WORDS

1. CULTURAL
2. THEOLOGICAL
3. WIDOWHOOD
4. RITES
5. GHANAIAAN



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## DEDICATION

To my Husband and Children, Simon, Zuriel and Gabrielle Essilfie.





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