

Assessment of Digital Tracking Systems and Tele-Counseling Interventions in Mitigating Widowhood Human Rights Violations in Anambra State

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Abstract: In Anambra State, widowhood sometimes is linked to gruesome violations of human rights such as 'mourning rites and property appropriation'. The culture imposed traditional taboos, such as on reporting, and weak institutional response, historically, inflicted what are called "abuses of widowhood", such as taking away the widow's property, compelling her to undergo mourning rites, and stigmatizing widows. To address these gaps, this research looked at the effect of digital platforms (reporting apps, SMS hotlines) and remote psychological support on documentation of violations, response time of law enforcement, trauma healing and legal empowerment. A descriptive survey design was used in quantitative data collection among 110 respondents of the region using structured 4 point likert scale questionnaire. The results indicate a consistent positive response; this reflects the use of digital tracking tools to enable confidential reporting, their effectiveness as a deterrent to grabbing and role as a major motivator for the increased law enforcement involvement. Similarly, tele-counseling was recognized as a crucial component to decrease psychological distress, the isolation of victims and to enable them to pursue legal action. The study, however, reveals the key limitations to equitable access, in particular low digital literacy, the lack of smart phones and cultural stigma, as well as poor rural network connectivity. The study suggests technological and virtual means of psychological solutions can offer a paradigm shift in justice and healing but must attend to the infrastructure divide. The recommendations include scaling up the community digital infrastructure, introducing digital literacy at the grassroots level, establishing professional tele-counseling along the recovery pipelines and strengthening policy enforcement for cultural violations.

Keywords: Anambra State; Digital tracking systems; Human rights; Psychological trauma; Tele-counseling interventions; Widowhood violations

Introduction

Digital tracking systems and tele counselling interventions are emerging technological and psychological approaches and have tremendous implications for the issues of entrenched system injustices in various development contexts. Widows and widowers are subjected to extreme cultural respect and deference, dispossession and humiliating traditional rites in an Anambra State context of patriarchy when their partner dies. The effects of these negative practices

are grave breaches of fundamental human rights, creating a vicious cycle of trauma, social isolation and institutional neglect.. The traditional systems of legal recourse and social support have failed to effectively reduce these abuses because of geographical isolation, fear of community stigmatization and delayed bureaucratic reactions (Umeh et al, 2021). The use of modern technological tools together with remote psychological services provides a revolutionary means to eliminate these institutional gaps and ensure the

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prompt delivery of justice and stabilization of the mental state of the most vulnerable people.

Digital tracking systems provide technological solutions that rely on mobile networks, cloud databases, and electronic interfaces to gather, store and monitor data securely over time (Agarwal et al., 2018). Tele-counseling interventions are a form of distance mental health service conducted through the use of telecommunications-based technologies, which help professionals provide remote psychological assistance, clinical therapy and crisis intervention (DeDiego et al., 2023). Thus, widowhood human rights violations are not only manifested in socio-cultural practices such as forced property dispossession, low status of women's fundamental rights and freedoms, degrading mourning rites but are also expressed in structural discrimination (Durojaye, 2013). From an operational perspective, in the socio-cultural context of Anambra State, digital tracking systems are mobile-based reporting software that can be used to record and monitor incidents of abuse against a grieving spouse. Tele-counseling interventions are understood as virtual psychological support channels to reduce trauma, anxiety and social isolation of impacted women. Additionally, the widowhood rights abuses include harmful traditional practices and land acquisition by perpetrators against the widows, spread across the local government areas of Anambra State.

There are many tools available to document and report rights violations in real time, thanks to modern technological advances. Using digital tracking systems (mobile reporting applications, SMS hotlines, cloud-based databases), victims, human rights monitors, and civil society organizations can securely and efficiently document incidents of abuse. In areas with strong traditional beliefs, residents may be intimidated into not reporting crimes to physical police stations (Egwudo et al., 2025). Digital portals overcome these physical and social limitations by enabling anonymous or confidential reporting, which helps to shield the complainant from direct community response. Digi-recording of incidents of property grabbing or forced rituals can create verifiable electronic trails that speed up the intervention of law enforcement agencies and national human rights institutions. This openness will minimize the chances of evidence being altered or locally covered up and increase accountability for traditional authorities that may otherwise flout statutory laws without consequence.

In addition to structural reporting systems, the emotional trauma of widowhood rights violations requires prompt and continued psychological counseling and support. Acute anxiety, clinical depression, social ostracism and prolonged grief disorders are common in survivors resulting from abusive traditional rites (Idoniboyeobu & Obiechina,

2018). Tele counseling interventions provide mental health intervention through the use of telecommunications infrastructure to provide remote psychological first aid, crisis intervention, and structured therapy interventions that respond to these severe mental health concerns. Due to the distance and mobility difficulties in rural areas of Anambra State, the grieving women are unable to get to the psychiatric clinics. Considering the above, the Geography disadvantage is eliminated by tele counseling system, where the trained counselor can provide confidential psychological assistance to the client in the comfort of his home (Iloakasia, 2024; Iloakasia & Augustine, 2025). This distance encounter restores emotional stability, strengthens the cognitive resistance and re-establishes self-esteem, giving victims the ability to start cases in court and assert their fundamental rights.

To assess the intersection of digital tracking and tele counseling, a thorough understanding of contextual moderating variables which impact the outcome of the intervention is needed. The level of digital literacy of the marginalised widows, along with their smartphone ownership, dictates their access to online tracking dashboards or remote therapy sessions (Akintoye & Odei, 2026). However, these digital solutions are not necessarily implemented smoothly in rural regions, given the social and economic disparities, and the availability of reliable telecommunication networks. Further, cultural resistance and traditional norms are often very strong and many doubt the effectiveness of external technological solutions, with community gatekeepers seeing modern monitoring devices as an assault on culturally important practices. To overcome these obstacles, specific digital literacy initiatives, community education and awareness raising and collaboration with local grassroots organisations are needed to foster trust and/or acceptance of technological change and its application in institutions.

This study on the assessment of digital tracking systems and tele-counseling interventions as mitigators of human rights violations by widows in Anambra State is a timely and pertinent study that fills a gap in current socio-legal and psychological research. While the number of studies on Nigeria's digital media transformation, gender power dynamics and media representations is increasing, academic research has not yet focused on how contemporary technology can be used to protect vulnerable widows in Nigeria. While there has been extensive research on media representations, gender power dynamics, and the transformation of digital media in Nigeria (Agoha et al., 2025; Agoha et al., 2024; Ilukwe, 2026; Okeke & Akas, 2023; Ume & Akas, 2021; Utoh-Ezeajugh & Ume, 2025b), the study of the practical use of modern technology in protecting vulnerable widows remains neglected. Most

of the literature available addresses artistry, theatre or macro-economic aspects such as copyright issues in creative industries (Nwadike & Ilukwe, 2023); cultural adaptations in drama (Ilukwe, 2021, 2025); and overall educational or business environments (Emeasoba et al., 2026a, 2026b; Okoro et al., 2025).

But there is a clear gap in understanding of how digital mechanisms can be used to actively challenge systemic human rights violations. Studies on the intersection of digital competencies and emerging tools with business education and economic contexts are growing in the literature (Onyiorah, 2025), while the studies on the application of educational technologies or pedagogical strategies are extensive (Emeasoba et al., 2026a), but the practical application of digital competencies and emerging tools in grassroots justice delivery and human rights defense is scarcely discussed. In addition, while performance arts and community-based theatre can sometimes be used to support legal and social justice concepts (Ilukwe & Ume, 2026), these artistic methodologies do not have the ability to be used as an instrument for real-time tracking nor have them the clinical precision that is needed to help reduce ongoing trauma.

Oppressive cultural practices are depriving widows of Anambra State of their properties, isolation and psychological trauma. In the field of communication which has been studied qualitatively in other broader cultural costume and identity studies (Utoh-Ezeajugh & Ume, 2025a), there is no active structural intervention nor psychological stabilization through distance. Thus, the need to examine the potential of using targeted tracking dashboards on digital platforms and specialized tele-counseling interventions to fill institutional gaps is critical. This study explicitly tackles this empirical gap by exploring the interplay of technological tracking and remote psychological support to achieve justice and mental wellness for marginalized widows, rather than engaging in theoretical media critiques, and into tangible technology-infused human rights protection.

Objectives

1. To examine the extent to which the deployment of digital tracking systems influences the mitigation of widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State.
2. To determine the impact of tele-counseling interventions on mitigating widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does the deployment of digital tracking systems influence the mitigation of

widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State?

2. What is the impact of tele-counseling interventions on mitigating widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State?

Method

The methodology is based on quantitative survey research design, the study was designed as quantitative survey research because it is a highly effective design for the study of participant perceptions, attitudes and evaluations about technological and psychological interventions. This system allowed for the systematic gathering of standardized, numerical data from the target population, making it possible to objectively evaluate in numbers and to interpret the data reliably.

The study population included key community stakeholders, legal advocates, human rights activists and residents of Anambra State, Nigeria who had first-hand knowledge of the traditional widowhood practices and human rights violations in the State. The number of respondents was 110, which was obtained through purposive sampling technique. The sampling method ensured that the participants had the contextual knowledge and insights needed to engage in the study.

Data was collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire with sections specific to the various research questions of the study. The method used for the evaluation of the respondents was the standard 4 point Likert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) to quantify their response.

More specifically, they measured the capacity of digital tracking systems to enable violation reporting, speed up police action, and prevent the grabbing of property; and they assessed the emotional support, trauma reduction, and empowerment of victims to seek legal recourse that occurred as a result of tele-counseling interventions. After field administration, the retrieved questionnaires were meticulously collated, edited, coded and processed. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The percentage scores were obtained for the individual items on the surveys, and frequency distributions and cumulative percentages were created for each survey item.

Result and Discussion

The demographic distribution of respondents according to gender is given in Figure 1. The total sample size is 110, male respondents are 42 (or 38.2%) and female respondents are 68 (or 61.8%). This distribution shows that more women are included in the research as compared to male which is relevant since the

focus of the research is on widowhood human rights violations. Representation of women is active so that the experiences and first perspectives of especially vulnerable groups are adequately represented. In addition, the use of male respondents gives a balanced perspective that represents community/institutional perspectives on digital tracking system and tele-counseling intervention in Anambra State.

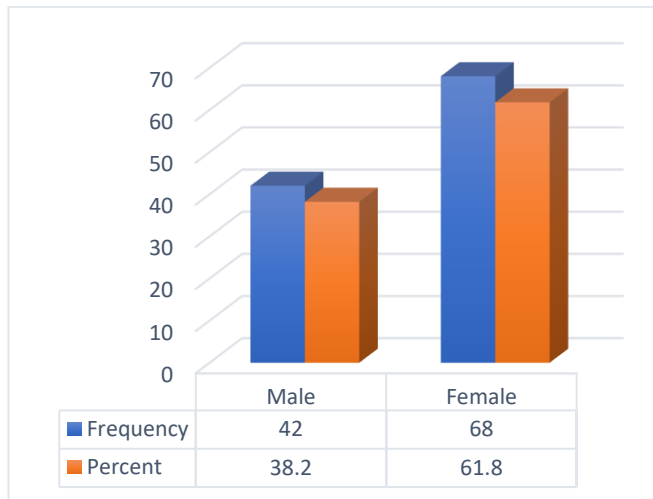


Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Research Question 1: To what extent does the deployment of digital tracking systems influence the mitigation of widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State?

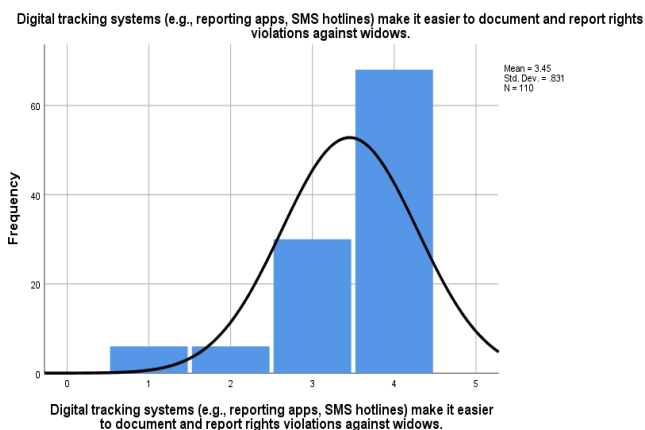


Figure 2: Respondents' Perceptions on Digital Tracking Systems Facilitating the Documentation and Reporting of Rights Violations

The results of the respondents' opinions on the ease of documenting and reporting widowhood human rights violations using digital tracking systems like the reporting apps and SMS hotlines are presented in Figure 2. The results of the data indicate that this proposition is overwhelmingly supported, 68 participants (61.8%)

strongly agree, and 30 participants (27.3%) agree, accumulating to a total of 89.1% agreement. On the other hand, 11% of respondents (a small minority) disagreed. This level of consensus shows that stakeholders are aware of digital platforms as being very effective in accessing justice in Anambra State considering the challenges associated with reporting in the traditional approach, with the assurance of confidential logging.

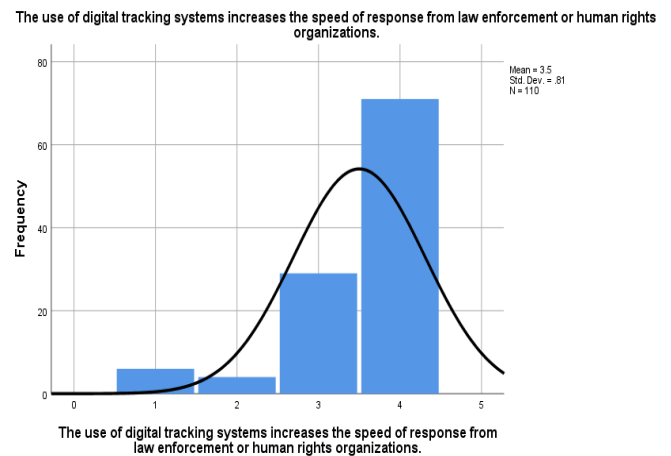


Figure 3. Respondents' Perceptions on Digital Tracking Systems Increasing the Speed of Response from Law Enforcement and Human Rights Organizations

Respondents' perceptions of digital tracking tools making it easier to respond to the law and human rights groups are represented in Figure 3. Strikingly, there is some support as 71 (64.5%) respondents strongly agreed and 29 (26.4%) agreed, with a strong 90.9% positive consensus. Only a small proportion of 10 (9.1%) disagreed, however. This overwhelming consensus highlights the strong acceptance of the fact that real-time electronic reporting has a major impact on reducing bureaucratic delays, allowing for quick institutional responses, the prevention of crime and the timely legal protection of vulnerable widows who are victims of rights violations throughout the region.

The respondents' views on whether there was a significant decrease in incidents of property grabbing and harmful traditional practices in their communities due to the use of digital tracking systems are presented in Figure 4. 89.1% (61/69) agreed or strongly agreed this impact was present. Meanwhile, just 11 of the participants (12%) disagreed. This general consensus mirrors the fact that e-monitoring devices are an important tool to deter cultural crimes, enable accountability of both rural and urban day-to-day transgressions of cultural rights, and safeguard the rights of widows.

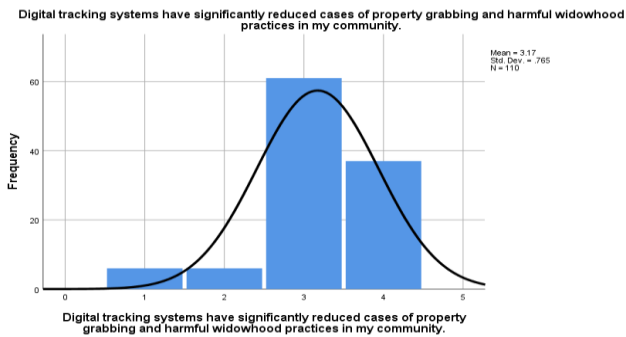


Figure 4. Respondents' Perceptions on Digital Tracking Systems Reducing Cases of Property Grabbing and Harmful Widowhood Practices

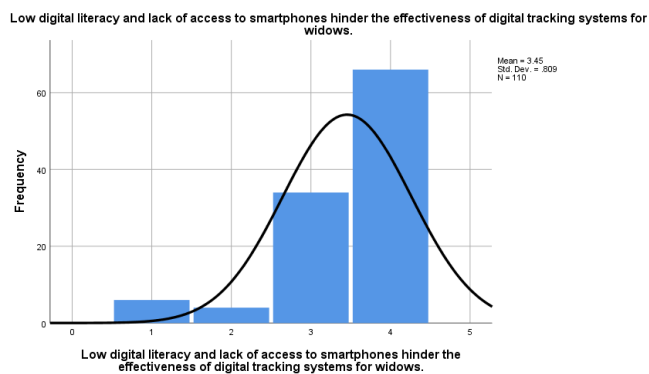


Figure 5. Respondents' Perceptions on Low Digital Literacy and Smartphone Access Hindering Digital Tracking Systems

Figure 5 shows the respondents' responses on if low digital literacy and the absence of smart phone access hinder the effectiveness of digital tracking systems for widows. 66 (60.0%) agreed strongly, while 34 (30.9%) agreed and 5 (4.7%) disagreed, with a total of 90.9% who agreed. Conversely, there were only 10 (9.1%) who disagreed. This extraordinary agreement underscores the importance of creating digital training as a basic pillar for the empowerment of vulnerable widows as well as measures to close the digital gap and improve access to devices.

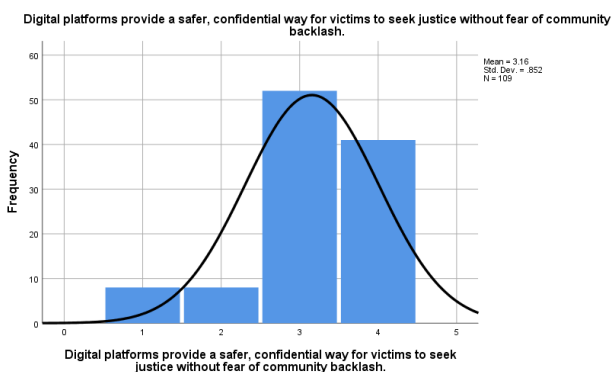


Figure 6. Respondents' Perceptions on Digital Platforms Providing a Safer, Confidential Way to Seek Justice Without Fear of Community Backlash

Figure 6 shows participants' assessments of the possibility for a victim to access justice through the digital platform without facing community retribution and in relative privacy. It is found that there is a significant consensus with the positive responses from 52 respondents (47.3%) and 41 respondents (37.3%) giving strong agreement, which is 84.6% respectively. However, 16 participants (14.6%) disagreed and 1 case was noted as missing. The wide consensus reflects the importance of ensuring anonymity and data security in digital applications and preserving the anonymity of vulnerable widows from social stigmatization and local threats when reporting human rights violations.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of tele-counseling interventions on mitigating widowhood human rights violations in Anambra State?

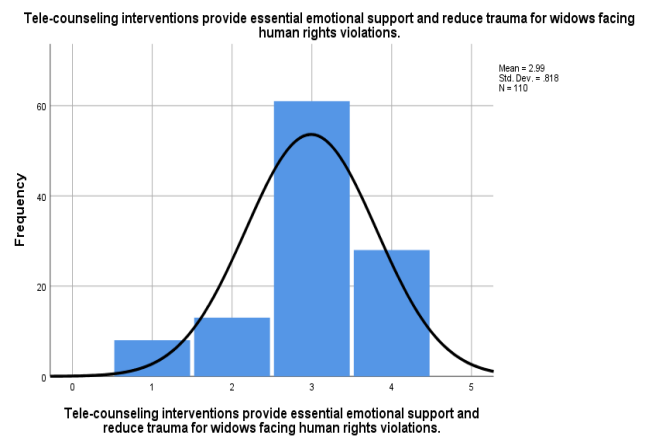


Figure 7. Respondents' Perceptions on Tele-Counseling Interventions Providing Essential Emotional Support and Reducing Trauma for Widows

Figure 7 shows respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of tele-counseling interventions to provide essential emotional support and reduce suffering from human rights violations for widows. Results reveal that overall, there is a high level of consensus (61 participants (55.5%) agree, 28 participants (25.5%) strongly agree = 81.0%). On the other hand, 21 respondents (19.1%) disagreed. This discovery shows how common it is for remote mental health services to be used to assist women in coping with psychological distress, social isolation and to develop emotional resilience following traumatic traditional practices.

Figure 8 shows the participants' assessments of the effectiveness of psychological support provided remotely in helping widows to deal with social isolation and stigmatization effectively. This was strongly supported by a majority, as 39 respondents (35.5%) strongly agreed with the statement, and 31 (28.2%) agreed, for a combined plus response of 63.7%. Forty

participants (36.4%) disagreed. The split in this division suggests that there are still a significant number of people who feel that virtual counselling is not as beneficial as in-person community support, perhaps because of issues with infrastructure, cultural stigma, or a desire for in-person support for more deeply entrenched feelings of isolation.

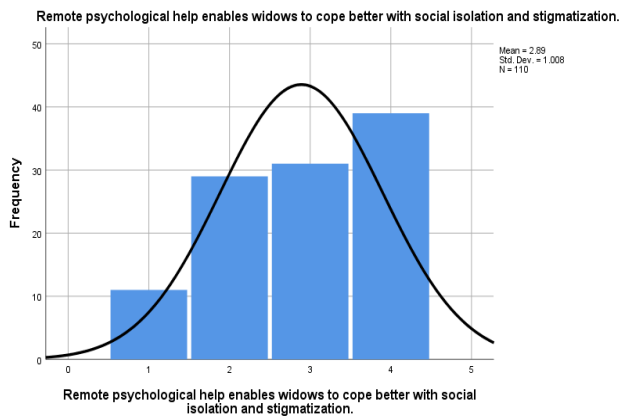


Figure 8. Respondents' Perceptions on Remote Psychological Help Enabling Widows to Cope with Social Isolation and Stigmatization

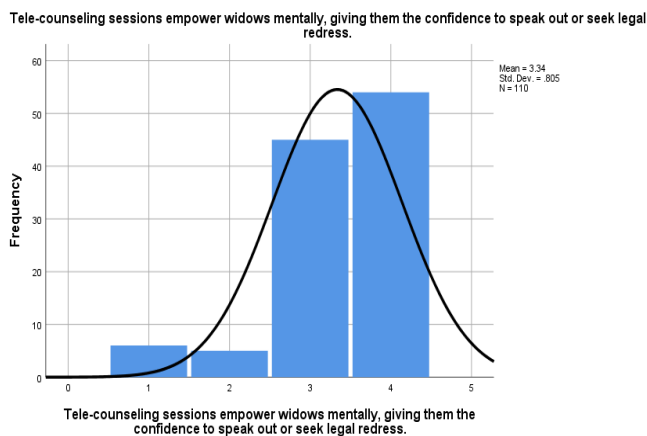


Figure 9. Respondents' Perceptions on Tele-Counseling Sessions Mentally Empowering Widows to Speak Out and Seek Legal Redress

Figure 9 depicts respondents' opinions about whether tele-counseling sessions help widows get mentally empowered, so they know they can speak out against abuse or seek legal justice. The data shows that the majority of respondents, 54 (49.1%), strongly agree, while 45 (40.9%) agree, giving a total favorable response rate of 90.0%. On the other hand, 11 (10.0%) disagreed. This support allays concerns that distance-based therapies can merely alleviate trauma, but that they can also develop resilience, allowing women in need to stand up to fear and exercise their legal rights against traditional practices that are oppressive.

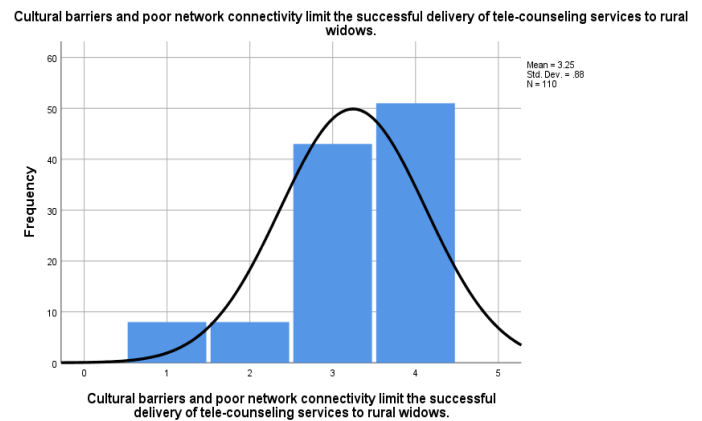


Figure 10. Respondents' Perceptions on Cultural Barriers and Poor Network Connectivity Limiting Tele-Counseling Delivery to Rural Widows

The participant responses on cultural barriers and poor network connectivity to effectively deliver tele-counselling services to rural widows are presented in figure 10. Results show a strong consensus, with 51 respondents (46.4%) strongly agreeing and 43 respondents (39.1%) agreeing, resulting in 85.5% of the respondents agreeing. Fewer, however, disagreed (16, 14.6%). The overall consensus shows that although there is huge potential for virtual psychological care, implementation in rural areas of Anambra State is hindered by serious infrastructural and socio-cultural challenges that need to be systematically tackled to ensure equitable access to virtual psychological care.

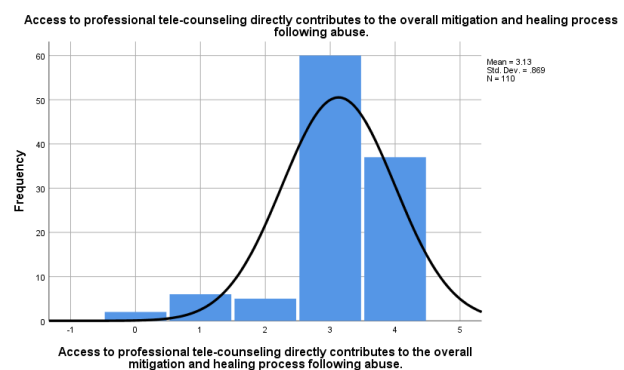


Figure 11. Respondents' Perceptions on Access to Professional Tele-Counseling Contributing Directly to Mitigation and Healing Following Abuse

Figure 11 shows participants' opinions on whether access to professional tele-counseling directly helps the overall mitigation and healing process following abuse. The results show a high rating of positive consensus, 60 respondents (54.5%) agree and 37 respondents (33.6%) strongly agree, totaling 88.1% of positive ratings. On the other hand, only a small minority of the 13 participants, who disagreed or wrote in blank answers, disagreed. The overwhelming agreement highlights the critical

importance of professional virtual counseling that can help bring back the psychological equilibrium and aid in the recovery of grieving and victimized widows in Anambra State.

Discussion

The empirical findings of the study highlight key issues in addressing the human rights violation of widowhood in Anambra State using digital tracking systems and tele-counseling interventions. The frequency distributions and figures for RQ1 show that digital tracking tools can make reporting violations easier and speed up law enforcement response time. This observation corroborated the report of Egwudo et al. (2025) on how digital health and digital tracking technologies, ease case management in Nigeria. Likewise, Vasudevan et al. (2025) highlighted that mobile tracking and targeted communication are key to enhancing primary service delivery. In a related study, Akintoye and Odei (2026) noted that the electronic tools have revolutionized the traditional support system. In addition, the overwhelming majority agreed that digital platforms offer means of fighting property grabbing without repercussions from the community, in as much as they offer secure and confidential platforms. Conversely, Egwudo et al. (2025) noted that the lack of adequate infrastructure can pose a challenge to such platforms, while 90.9% of the respondents identified low digital literacy and poor access to smartphones as significant challenges.

The data for Research Question 2 shows that the interventions in tele-counseling reduce trauma, social isolation, and mentally empower widows to seek legal remedies. This outcome aligns with Iloakasia and Augustine (2025), who set the groundwork that bereaved partners who receive professional remote guidance experiences deep grief and trauma after their sudden spouse's death can be processed through this guidance. Iloakasia (2024) corroborated that the model of counselling was effective in tackling domestic abuse and victimisation in a related study. In addition, DeDiego et al. (2023) stated that remote support extends ethical practice and overcomes physical limitations. But participants also shared that cultural barriers and lack of network coverage are also affecting service delivery in rural areas. However, Egwudo et al., (2025) pointed out that infrastructural challenges are much more pronounced in rural areas and significantly hinder the deployment of virtual healthcare, aligning with the 85.5% consensus on rural connectivity challenges in Anambra State.

The empirical results on digital tracking systems and tele-counseling interventions have significant implications in the context of reducing the incidence of human rights violations arising out of widowhood in

Anambra State. The data shows that digital platforms and remote, psychological support help to break down the old barriers to reporting, speed law enforcement response and reduce trauma. These insights are similar to the other media and digital communication research. For example, Obiakor (2024) and Obiakor and Adikuru (2022) found that digital and broadcasting networks influence public engagement and institutional responsiveness in the region. In addition, the mindset of relying heavily on digital apps for confidential reporting is indicative of how audiences are using interactive networks for civic engagement and safety, as seen with the political uses of WhatsApp by Obiakor, Ikegbunam, and Ezeaso (2023). The results also warn against the limits of technological effectiveness due to structural problems, as highlighted by Obiakor, Ikegbunam, and Ezeja (2024) and Obiakor, Ikegbunam and Ezeumenwa (2024) who stated that media exposure has significant impact on the perception and action of their audiences.

The same can be said in a related context, as digital exposure to localized events, like viral socio-political information, shaping community attitudes, as explored by Obiakor, Obiora and Okafor (2025) and Obiakor, Okelue and Okeke (2024). Furthermore, the psychological vulnerability of disadvantaged communities was found to be directly related to Obiakor, Okereke, and Agbachukwu's (2024) observation of audience responses to graphic digital video such as jungle justice. Furthermore, the administrative interventions and digital governor monitoring discussed by Obiakor (2024), Onwuka and Chinedu (2024) and Obiakor and Ikegbunam (2021) have shown that digital systems help increase the accountability of institutions. Lastly, reliable and widely accepted interpretations of leadership and policy actions in the broader public, as expressed by Obiakor and Adikuru (2024) and Uchenna (2025) further validate that digital literacy and trust are key factors in the uptake of technology in Anambra State, thus the need to close the structural gap in order to effectively protect vulnerable widows

Conclusion

In this study, the effectiveness of digital tracking systems and tele-counseling interventions in reducing human rights violations of widows in Anambra State was evaluated. The empirical results confirm that a framework for addressing deep-seated cultural infringements, dispossession of property and psychological trauma can be realised by implementing technological tracking mechanisms and remote psychological assistance. The assessment finds that digital tracking tools make violation reporting easier,

help law enforcement respond faster, and offer victims a safe and private space free from community repercussions. Likewise, tele-counselling interventions have proven to reduce acute trauma, lessen social isolation and mentally empower grieving women to be able to seek legal remedies.

The study, however, identifies key challenges to seamless deployment such as inadequate digital literacy, lack of smart phones and weak network connectivity in rural areas. Therefore, it is recommended that both government agencies and non-governmental organizations work together to provide affordable communication device and community digital hub in local government areas of rural communities in Anambra State to enhance access to tracking portals. In addition, grassroots sensitization and digital literacy initiatives must be undertaken to educate women and community human rights monitors about the proper use of reporting apps and tele-counseling platforms without risk.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest

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