

Nigerian Women Interview

Zarau Baiba

Note: Baiba is her husband's first name. Zarau is barren, which is a considerable disgrace in the Nigerian culture. She was one of three wives. Her husband died many years before. She was raised and currently lives in a remote village.

This interview was conducted in Hausa and translated by a Nigerian post-graduate student. A summary of the responses follow.

Demographics

1. Age: She didn't know her age, so the two Nigerian I was with estimated that she was about 70-75 years.
2. Age at which married: The Nigerian men said that she was probably married when she was 13-15 years.
3. Education: None
4. Husband's profession: Farmer

Behavior

B1. Daily Schedule:

- A. *What is your daily schedule?* In the morning I do not take tea like I used to. I boil the food that remains from the previous night and take that food. I take the corn to the grinding machine to grind it. Then I cook the gote for lunch. I go to the bush to gather firewood. That is how I earn my income. At 6 I have soup. In the evening I sit together and discuss with people.
- B. *What activities do you spend the **most time** on each day?* Getting firewood.

B2. Non-Daily Routines

- A. *What are the activities that you regularly do, but not everyday?* If there is no drinking water, I go to fetch water. [The well is about a block or so away.] I use the water to wash plates. If there is no money for the grinding machine, I grind the corn with a stone.

B3. Responsibilities around the house

- A. *Before he died, what duties are your husband responsible for?* It has been so long I hardly remember. He cultivated the land.

B4. Holidays

- A. *How do you celebrate festivals?* Every year we do the traditional idol worship. We prepare wine, cook, have food, dance.

B5. Money

- A. *What do you spend money on?* Buy food. When my husband was alive, he would buy the food. Since I have no husband, I have no food.

Values

V1. General Societal Views

- A. *What makes a good woman?* She does not fight with the husbands. That is what I know.
- B. *What makes a good man?* He supplies the food.
- C. *Think of differences between men and women. What are things that women should do that men shouldn't?* [Originally misunderstood the question.] Husband has the right to get a new woman, a new wife, a concubine. A woman does not have this power. A woman cannot plow the farm. [After probing] A man cannot go to the kitchen to cook.
- D. *Do you think it is better to be a man or a woman?* Man. The woman has so much work to do.

V2. Rites of Passage

- A. *When is a person called a woman?* When she is married.
- B. *How did your life change once you became an adult?* There are changes, another way of life. A woman does not have the right to move on her own. She has to get permission. A girl can go out whenever she wants.

V3. Marriage

- A. *Did you look forward to marriage?* Yes, so I can settle in one place.
- B. *How did you find your husband?* I cannot tell. [Then later.] My husband saw me in the house so he began to come in and have courtship.
- C. *How much was your bride price?* In those days, there was no money. We valued tobacco that was locally produced. They would make it in a special way and take it to the inlaws and then they would give the hand and the woman would be married.

V5. Community

- A. *Did you live with the other wives when your husband died?* We lived together for awhile then I left.
- B. *What do you do with the other women in your village?* Cooperate to work on the farm. If they do something in their household, the next time they will do it in the other household.