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.