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ABSTRACT

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to a substantial gender divide that encompasses numerous aspects of life. Though this divide is a historic reality for Sub-Saharan Africa, the recent and current process of globalization has also had both negative and positive impacts on the gender divide. This paper provides a look at the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa from a theoretical and historical framework that goes on to explore various facets of life including economics, education, land tenure, legal rights, political participation, and health rights. In addition, one countermovement to the pervasive gender divide, African feminisms, is analyzed.

Introduction

Within Sub-Saharan Africa there exists a gender divide that is pervasive in numerous facets of life. A gender gap [1] (divide, schism, etc.) is a disparity between males and females in attainment and attitudes specifically in the social, political, intellectual, cultural, and economic realms ("Gender Gap"). The gender divide that is present in Sub-Saharan Africa is almost universally detrimental to the status and rights of women, resulting in their marginalized and subordinate position in society in comparison to their male counterparts.

In order to analyze the causal relationship between the gender divide and the status and rights of women, my research will look at the gender-divide from a theoretical and historical framework. I will then analyze the role the gender divide plays in the rights and status of Sub-Saharan Africa women in the realms of education, land rights, economics, government participation, legal rights,

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[1] This paper is not solely focused on issues of gender disparity, but also encompasses topics in which the concept of sex differences is analyzed. Though the two classifications "gender" and "sex" are used simultaneously in this project when referencing the differences between both males and females they are indeed distinct terms and concepts even though they are often intertwine and are frequently interrelated. Within this project (as reflected in the title) the term gender divide (gap, schism, etc.) is used as a blanket term for both of the distinct concepts.

and health rights. In addition, I will look at the role that counter movements (I focus on Africa feminisms) have played in the gender divide and its impact on the rights and status of women. Due to the fact that Sub-Saharan Africa is a large region composed of numerous nations (all with different political, cultural, and economic systems) my research will serve to show the general trends in the region and then focus on three specific nations: Nigeria (a more in-depth focus of the Yoruba people will also be included in my research, to provide understanding of the gender divide and the rights and status of women at the local level), Kenya, and Tanzania to provide an opportunity for in-depth analysis.

I specifically chose Nigeria, Tanzania, and Kenya for a few reasons. First of all, there is a significant body of research regarding the gender divide and its impact on the rights and status of women in these nations and thus provides a well informed and substation base of research for my project. In addition, these three nations all have different histories and, in the case of Tanzania a different colonial power. It will become evident throughout my paper how history plays a role in the current reality in Sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, I chose these nations for their geographical spread (Nigeria in West Africa and Tanzania and Kenya in East Africa). While Tanzania and Kenya are neighboring nations, Tanzania is further South than the other two and thus provides a geographic variety that is essential to a more in-depth look at a region as large as Sub-Saharan Africa.

Theoretical Framework

Leslie Sklair's global systems theory serves to explain some of the primary components of the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sklair's concept of "winners" and "losers" is found within the economic transnational practices, i.e. the realm which she contends composes the

foundational and key components of the system, the "building blocks" (93, 115). Sklair's contention is that globalization creates advantages and disadvantages to those involved in the informal and formal job sectors which result in those who benefit ("winners") and those who are disadvantaged ("losers"). This concept within Sklair's theory is specifically regarding jobs, however when analyzing the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa, this reality of the advantaged and disadvantage extends to other realms of existence such as education, health care and the legal realm.

Another concept in global systems theory that is pertinent to the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa and its influence on the rights and status of women is the concept of "hegemony" (which is borrowed from Antonio Gramsci) (Sklair 106). In global systems theory, the concept of "hegemony" is within the context of cultural-ideological transnational practices (according to Sklair, this arena is "the nuts and bolts and the glue that hold the system together") (106,115). "Hegemony" occurs when one ideology supersedes another, or is dominant within the society (Sklair106). In addition to being widespread, these pervasive ideologies are held by the ruling elite (Sklair 106).

This cultural-ideological concept of "hegemony" is made manifest in the ideology of patriarchy that is pervasive in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sklair 106). Though the ideology of patriarchy has influence in the economic and political realms (in some cases indirectly), it is primarily cultural. Patriarchy is consistent with Sklair's definition of "hegemony" because it is dominant within Sub-Saharan African society and it is held by the ruling elite (106). The dominance of the ideology of patriarchy is tangibly expressed in numerous facets of life in Sub-Saharan Africa,

including the political, economic, educational, and legal realms (the Yoruba example later in this paper gives specific examples of patriarchy's influence in these arenas).

Historically, Sub-Saharan Africa has been primarily patriarchal (though not exclusively, there are some matriarchal societies such as the Akan of Ghana) for centuries. A system of patriarchy is one which is dominated and ruled by males. The historical ideology of patriarchy has been integral in creating the present gender divide. By elevating the needs and wants of men over those of women and also by giving males positions of power that elude women, patriarchy has set the tone for the present gender divide which has been influential in the rights and status of Sub-Saharan African women. A patriarchal society was already in place when other historical processes (such as colonization and globalization) emerged and influenced the gender schism.

Historical (and Current) Overarching Processes

Though the scope of my research extends back to the 1940's it is important to note that the 20th century is not the era in which the gender divide began, only a time period when it was influenced and exacerbated by historical processes such as colonization and (the historical and current process of) globalization. The colonization of Africa was a movement by Europeans (that began in the late 1800s) to stake claims and rule portions of Africa for numerous reasons and justifications, but namely to gain economic resources and increase the colonizer's wealth. The factors of colonization that relate to the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa are the enforcement and exacerbation of economic gender roles, the imposition of western values (specifically resistance to cultural practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), and rampant sexism which has resulted in (among other things) higher illiteracy rates in women than men. All of these factors are a manifestation of global system theory's concept of "winners" and "losers"

(males primarily winning and females primarily losing) (Sklair 93).

During colonization, men (for their colonizer's perspective) were seen as the primary, if not only, economic contributors to the family ("Gender" 444). Due to this framework, women and men were segregated in their duties, with men doing tasks for profit, while women were "forcibly confined" and made to do household tasks that were in some cases demeaning (such as providing sexual satisfaction to males) ("Gender" 444). In addition to be being segregated in their duties the genders they were also spatially segregated. During colonization, migratory labor was common with men as the primary migratory workers (Schmidt 732-733). Males would travel to more urban areas for employment leaving the females and children in rural areas to primarily engage in activities such as subsistence farming (Schmidt 733).

In colonial times, men were given the role of overseeing and dominating the public realm, (work outside of the home, including, but not limited to, positions of political power) while the private realm (domestic duties including cleaning and food preparation) was reserved for women ("Gender" 443). This differentiation was very important because the roles in the public sector (held by males) were more highly valued (and paid) than the unpaid domestic duties of the private sector which were dominated by women ("Gender" 446). While these roles were not foreign to males and females (African women have a long history of tending to domestic duties), the ways in which they were enforced (by force) and delineated (abrasively) during colonization were certainly not the norm in pre-colonial Africa.

The western gendered division of labor and distinct economic gender roles that were both enforced and exacerbated by colonization paved the way for the current economic disparity between men and women in Sub-Saharan Africa. The gender roles implemented during colonization (men being given positions of power over women and using women for their own gratification and benefit) put into play a value system in which the genders are not seen as equally capable. This division of labor also laid the groundwork for the gender distinct positions held by men and women today, as well as the perceived value difference in labor that is present in modern-day Sub-Saharan Africa between the sexes.

By the mid-1940s, FGM (a common cultural practice still engaged in today by women in Sub-Saharan Africa) had been significant factor in the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa for over 20 years (Stearns 141). FGM is a practice that is done to adolescent girls in order to decrease sexual desire and ensure purity (Gruenbaum 530). Prior to colonization there was little concern by the outside world regarding African traditional practices but along with the colonial "civilizing" mission, missionaries from Western nations took a vested interest in practices such as FGM, which they saw as inhumane and "barbaric" (Stearns 141). Christian missionaries strongly opposed the emphasis that FGM put on secular aspects of sexuality (Murray 137). FGM's impact on the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa is multi-faceted. For almost 100 years it has been opposed by exogenous forces (such as missionaries), all the while being defended and encouraged by endogenous forces such as the African nationalist movement, specifically in the East African nation of Kenya (Stearns 146). FGM was a pivotal aspect and controversial issue for the Kikuyu people (the majority Kenyan ethnic group) during colonization and the subsequent nationalist movement. Individuals who conformed to Western Christianity also

adapted the Western values and internalize the belief the FGM was cruel and intensely opposed the practice (Murray 137).

The initial objection to FGM was religious in nature, but since has also been condemned by international organizations as well. The introduction of universalized human rights in the late 1940s (which condemn FGM) by international organizations, have given women the freedom and opportunity to have a say over their bodies and the practices in which they participate. This imposition of western values is a side effect of European's desire to civilize Africa. The implementation of such values effectively decreases the gender divide by giving women the same rights to their bodies as their male counterparts. On the other hand, the resistance to such universalizing forces by African traditionalists (who fear the social stigma of having daughters, wives, etc. uncut) serves to increase the gender divide by keeping women stuck in a position where they have no power over something as elementary as their own bodies.

Sexism was also an ideal that was encouraged and apparent in colonial Africa. Women were not given the same opportunities as men in realms such as education ("Gender" 446). Due to a lack of education, many women in Sub-Saharan Africa still, to this day are illiterate (Attoh 318). This led to women not having the required skills to work in the public sector and left them to work in limited and in some causes dangerous and exploitative industries (such as the sex trade) out of necessity.

The legacy of colonial-imposed sexism is seen today in that "illiteracy primarily affects girls, who are often taken from school for domestic chores or early marriages, and accounts in part for

the scarcity of elected women officials" (Kande and Ogungbile 28). In addition to having political implications, the sexism imposed upon African women during imperialism has had significant economic and cultural impacts on the present gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has limited the potential for women by stifling their access to education, a staple for paralleled development with their male counterparts. Illiteracy has also decreased women's economic opportunities, by limiting their potential for attaining a well-paying job and decreasing their productivity.

Globalization is another overarching historical (and current) process that has significantly impacted the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. Globalization is an increase in global economic interdependence and is also characterized by an increase in the exchange of cultural attributes, and an increase in political systems and elements transcending borders. This increase in international connections and the spread of values, people, etc. began after the colonial era in the 1970s. Globalization has in some circumstances continued the negative effects of colonization in Sub-Saharan Africa by building upon the foundation colonization established. It has had positive, negative, and mixed effects on the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. Though there are more facets to globalization, this project will primarily look at the implications of economic and cultural globalization on the gender divide and its impact on the rights and status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa. The effects of economic and cultural globalization vary between nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. The effects of globalization on the female population in Sub-Saharan Africa are also uneven based on where women fall in the social and economic hierarchies of their nations.

Globalization has increased women's access to some (not all) resources. These resources include things such as technical training and better medical facilities (Attoh 308; George 1725). Within the cultural realm, globalization has resulted in the promotion and spread of professional skills and has been beneficial to Sub-Saharan African women in the health field through the spreading of Western medical knowledge which (among other things) has resulted in decreased mortality rates in Sub-Saharan Africa (George 1725).

In addition to cultural globalization assisting within the health field, it has also served as a means to homogenize healthcare practices and in doing so has been detrimental to the retention of culture in Sub-Saharan Africa (George 1725). The promotion of Western medicine in countries such as the West African nation of Nigeria also has economic ramifications. Western medical supplies and goods are in higher demand than local medical supplies and goods because they are perceived as superior (George 1725). The introduction and permeation of Western medical practices within Sub-Saharan Africa are a clear and poignant example of the uneven and mixed results and ramifications of globalization in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Much in the same way that Western medicine is seen as superior to traditional medicine, the spread of western norms (perceived as superior to traditional African norms) through vehicles such as the media are also influential in the status of Sub-Saharan African women. Women in countries such as Nigeria are perceived to be more advanced if they adhere to Western codes of conduct and social norms (Okome 7). This strong correlation between the adaptation of Western values and a higher status for women shows how the spread of ideologies and norms, i.e. cultural globalization, directly impacts the social standing of Sub-Saharan African women.

In addition to the media, cultural globalization is also spread by international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs). There are numerous INGOs at work in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to advance the rights of women through economic, educational, and legal means. INGOs have been utilized in Sub-Saharan Africa "to deliver emergency relief or development services cost-effectively to those in need" (Lelei 170). INGOs have been key actors in the globalization process by spreading their moral codes around the world. In this activity, INGOs are an example of cultural globalization in two key ways. First, INGOs work as a means to advocate for marginalized populations (spreading the ideals of equality and freedom), they are a voice for the voiceless. Secondly, INGOs act as conduits for cultural globalization by spreading and impacting the values of peoples in other parts of the globe by imposing their moral values upon these populations.

Examples of both components of the impact of INGOs are seen in Kenya. In the United Kingdom (U.K.), a collaboration of INGOs and others have created labor codes, called "corporate social responsibility" (CSR) provisions (UNIFEM 67). The goal of CSRs is to hold companies accountable for their actions (regarding human rights, etc.), in various degrees depending on the stipulations within the specific CSR (UNIFEM 67). The CSRs created in the U.K. impact Kenya by allowing Kenyan operatives such as the Kenyan Women Workers Organization (KEWWO) the opportunity, through giving them legal jurisdiction, to apply pressure to the companies that purchase fresh cut flowers from Kenya's flower industry (an exploitative industry that will be discussed momentarily) (UNIFEM 67). In allowing Kenyan women the freedom and legal rights to demand companies comply with certain regulations and ethical work conditions, CSRs (in theory, in practice the results are not conclusively positive)

have the potential to improve the rights and status of women (UNIFEM 67). CSRs are an example of how INGOs work to provide a voice for the voiceless and encourage groups such as KEWWO to pursue the ideals of equality and fairness.

In addition to creating and implementing CSRs, the influence of INGOs in Kenya is seen in the Department of International Development (DFID), which is a program that is a component of Britain's foreign aid (Lelei 170). The projects that DFID engage in are focused on boosting involvement in elementary education as well as decreasing gender inequality primarily in education (in compliance with the millennium development goals) (Lelei170). In having a presence in Kenya, the DFID is spreading the Western values of education and gender equality to the Kenyan people. In spreading values that help marginalized individuals (in this case women) achieve their full potential, cultural globalization (in this instance) serves as a means to improve Sub-Saharan African women's quality of life.

The introduction of the global market into Sub-Saharan Africa is one factor of economic globalization that has negatively impacted the gender divide. While the opportunity of the global market could be incredibly beneficial for Sub-Saharan African women, thus far, they have lacked the technical training and the resources of external markets to succeed in the global economy (Attoh 308-309). The competition women face when they are paired with multinational corporations (that have more money, access to resources, etc.) is unmatchable for individuals or even small groups of women. The benefits of such economic opportunities are felt much more by men (who have been involved in the global market much longer, through the production of cash crops, than women).

Globalization (through increased trade and a higher demand for export crops) has increased the demand for female workers in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sobhy 13). Unfortunately this increase in job opportunities has not equated to a better living status for Sub-Saharan African women (Sobhy 13). Women are in higher demand, but they do not have the status and the power necessary to demand reasonable wages (Sobhy 13). So while increased international trade (a.k.a. globalization) leads to more opportunities for women in the workplace, this opportunity does not live up to its potential by not equating to economic prosperity.

Kenya's fresh cut flower industry is a prime example of the conflicting implications of globalization on women's' status. The flower industry in Kenya is a world leader (Miller 94). This industry is creating jobs for Kenyan women (who make up the bulk of laborers in the industry) (Miller 95). Unfortunately the jobs within the Kenyan flower industry are laden with human rights violations and inequalities. These issues include sexual harassment, meager wages, the nonexistence of maternity sabbaticals, and contact with dangerous chemicals, among others (Miller 95). In addition, managerial positions in the Kenyan flower industry are almost solely held by men, leaving women underrepresented (Nderitu). This industry shows how significant and mixed the effects of globalization are on the status of Kenyan women (helping them in some aspects and adversely affecting them in others).

Structural adjustment programs (SAPs) are another result of the historical and contemporary process of globalization. There are many components to these programs, but one significant and detrimental impact of SAPs that affects women is the "feminization of [Sub-Saharan] African poverty" (Johnston- Anumonwo and Doane 13). The high number of Sub-Saharan African

women in poverty results in a plethora of implications for Sub-Saharan African women which I will explore throughout this paper.

Though there are schools of thought (a great majority of them are neoliberal) that SAPs and the liberalization of markets (one of the key conditions of SAPs) will empower women and increase their potential within their societies, this endeavor by the international community to reduce debt in Sub-Saharan Africa has not played out favorably for the majority of women (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 11). This reality is seen in the East African nation of Tanzania where the output of women's labor significantly outweighs the returns the women receive (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 13). Tanzania finally agreed to SAPs in 1986 after a long resistance to international intervention (Earth 124). The conditions and resulting effects on Tanzania (among other things) were the cheapening of money, privatization of banks, liberation of trade, and removal of subsidies (Earth 124).

SAPs have a significant effect on women because they are influential and instrumental in numerous sectors of life which are in instrumental in determining women's quality-of-life. Some of the ways SAPs have impacted the rights and status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa is by causing women to work exceedingly extended hours, and decreasing their health and well-being (Earth 125). As mentioned above, SAPs in Tanzania withdrew subsidies, such as those previously implemented in the agricultural market and also devalued Tanzania's money. Both of these factors contribute to the need for women work increased hours (in some cases up to 18 hours daily) in order to survive (Earth 125).

In addition to being overworked, the SAPs in Tanzania also serve to impair the health of women by decreasing women's access to healthy food and by decreasing women's access to healthcare. In decreasing the strength of Tanzania money, SAPs make healthy food (typically more expensive than non-nutritious food) less accessible (Earth 125). In addition, the removal of subsidies in the healthcare industry is also detrimental in its effect on women's health by making healthcare less accessible (Earth 125). Overall, SAPs as an extension of globalization have done little to increase the economic status of women in Tanzania, a country in which women are still at or neighboring the primary level of subsistence (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 13). While globalization has had a significantly negative impact on the economic status of women in Tanzania, it has also played the role of liberalizing women by allowing them to gain a level of independence that eluded them prior to the debt crisis and the resulting SAP (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 15). The impact of the newfound independence Sub-Saharan African women experience due to international intervention is not universally negative or positive, but dependent on women's status prior to the intervention. The independence that globalization affords poor women does not typically correlate with economic gains, but leaves the majority of women in a state of survival to meet their basic needs (Johnston- Anumonwo and Doane 17). Middle-class women, on the other hand, do have opportunities to engage in new and higher level job sectors due to globalization (Johnston- Anumonwo and Doane 17).

The disparity between poor and middle class women that is seen in the economic sector in Tanzania (and paralleled at the regional level) was (and continues to be) exacerbated by the introduction of globalization that serves to marginalize and impede the progress of the poor while encouraging and accelerating the progress of Sub-Saharan women with economic and

social status. This is a clear manifestation of Sklair's concept of "winners" and "losers" in that middle class women are able to excel in the globalized market (due to their status and economic resources prior to globalization) while lower class women are unable to benefit from globalization because it is a force that serves to keep them impoverished (93).

The impacts of globalization are complex not only because they are uneven but also because they are not static. Globalization can be beneficial for Sub-Saharan African women one moment and the next serve to undermine the initial financial gains it offered. In the 1980s Kenyan women benefited from globalization through the production and distribution of sisal bags (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 16). Unfortunately, what globalization gave these women it also took away. The introduction of cheaper South Asian sisal bags put Kenyan women out of businesses because they were unable to compete in an international economy (Johnston- Anumonwo and Doane 16). This example shows how quickly the global economic climate can change and how vulnerable it makes marginalized populations, namely females.

It is been established that colonialism had a significantly negative effect on the gender divide and served as a means to exacerbate its effects on the status of women. Some scholars argue that a new form of colonization is happening in Sub-Saharan Africa by way of the implementation of trade liberalization (the third component of globalization I will discuss) by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Macleans et al. 104). Interventions by international organizations such as the IMF (including SAPs) have not been beneficial to nations in Sub-Saharan Africa (Macleans et al. 101). As members of the IMF, regulations and conditions are thrust upon Sub-Saharan African nations that result in (among other things) the liberalization of

trade in the region (Macleans et al. 101).

Trade liberalization in the region "has only led to the explosive growth of international financial capital and the dwarfing of local economies" in Sub-Saharan Africa (Macleans et al. 105). This has had decidedly negative impacts on women who are the majority contributor of labor for subsistence farming (more than 80%) and also play an irreplaceable role in the labor required for export crops (Macleans et al. 107). In negatively impacting local economies (the sector in which a large number of women are employed), trade liberalization significantly decreases the economic outlook of women.

The relationship between the negative impact trade liberalization has on a local economy and the decline of women's economic status is seen in Nigeria beginning in the 1980s. The introduction of trade liberalization in Nigeria was devastating to the nation's economic viability and the brunt of the negative impact was concentrated on the female population (Macleans et al. 101). In Nigeria, trade liberalization increased the number of women in poverty which negatively impacted their status (Macleans et al. 101). Though trade liberalization economically hurt the entire nation, it was women (more than men) who were most heavily and negatively impacted. In addition to impacting local economies, and thus affecting the status of women, trade liberalization also specifically impacts women by paralleling the outcomes of another component of globalization, the introduction of the global market. Trade liberalization affects women much in the same way as the introduction of the global market does, by creating a high demand for female workers, but not correlating that high demand with high economic revenues (Baliamoune-Lutz 302). Women are in high demand in the labor market in Sub-Saharan African

regions that undergo trade liberalization because they are easier to exploit than men (because they can be paid less and worked more). The reasons for this dynamic will become clear throughout this paper as I explore various facets of life from a gendered perspective.

The Educational Realm

Economic globalization has a notable impact on the level of access girls have to education (Macleans et al. 102). Globalization is a significant obstacle for Sub-Saharan African girl's education because it considerably increases the cost of education (Macleans et al 102). Globalization increases the cost of education by undermining the power of the state (through the implementation of SAPs and other factors previously analyzed), which is then no longer capable to implement policies and social services such as education to its population (Assié-Lumumba 51). In decreasing and eradicating educational subsidies, globalization increases school fees (Assié-Lumumba 51). There is a direct correlation (namely in female and poor populations) between decreasing the cost of education and higher enrollment due to greater economic access (Macleans et al. 102). Thus, in raising the price of education, globalization serves to decrease individuals access. In one all-girls school in northern Nigeria, nearly half of the students were dismissed from school because of an inability to pay for their education ("Gender in Nigeria" 32).

In some instances, the difficult economic reality of sending girls to school has been met with initiatives by their nations to combat the economic strain that the increased cost of education puts on families. In Nigeria, in 2004 the Universal Basic Education Act was put into force ("Gender in Nigeria" 27). The goal of this act was to make education free and decrease the disparity between genders in access and attainment of education, however, Nigeria still leads the world in the number of primary school age children not in school ("Gender in Nigeria" 29). Nigeria has

10.5 million children not attending school and the majority (53%) of these students are girls ("Gender in Nigeria" 29).

The gendered disparity in education is due to numerous factors (apart from globalization) including cultural practices (such as land inheritance and early marriage) ("Gender in Nigeria" 30). In Nigerian culture, educating males is seen as a better investment because they are the ones who inherit land and preserve the family name ("Gender in Nigeria" 30). The national preference for males over females is paralleled at the local level by the Yoruba people of Southwest Nigeria. The Yoruba see women as possessions and thus males are more likely to be educated than Yoruba females (Familusi 306). Early marriage is also a counterforce to high completion rates of school by females ("Gender in Nigeria" 30). Young women are prematurely withdrawn from school in order to engage in the Nigerian cultural practice of early marriage (and not long after typically have children of their own) thus impeding their ability to complete their education.

The impacts of the lack of access to education for women are multifaceted. One result of the impact of globalization on the lack of access of education for Sub-Saharan African females is the continuation of a high illiteracy rate from colonial times. Today in Sub-Saharan Africa, 76 women for every 100 men can read (Macleans et al. 108). Another result that comes from a lower level of education for women is a decrease in their level of productivity (Macleans et al. 116). By decreasing female productivity through education, Sub-Saharan nations deny the most successful workers (globally "an hour of female labor is six times as productive as an hour of male labor") in their societies the ability to reach their full potential (Macleans et al. 116). The necessity for female education in order to help them reach their potential is made manifest in

Kenya where literate women are 24% more productive than illiterate women (Macleans et al. 116). This figure shows how dramatic something like literacy can be for the status of women in society.

Ingrained gender roles also play a contributing factor in decreasing females' access to education in Sub-Saharan Africa. Young women contribute significantly to the economic well-being of their family through the primary role they play of subsistence food production (Macleans et al. 109). In this situation, where females contribute more to their family's economic well-being than their male counterparts, the opportunity cost of sending girls to school is greater than sending their male siblings to school (Macleans et al. 110). The constructed gender roles in Sub-Saharan Africa (and the resulting opportunity cost) coupled with the direct cost increase (that results from economic globalization) serve to exacerbate the gender schism in educational access by making it more advantageous for a family to keep their daughters at home than send them to school.

In women not having adequate access to education, they are relegated to the informal market which results in obstructing their ability to function in a significant capacity within the structure and development of their nations (Macleans et al. 114). Not only are women relegated to the informal market (the sector of the economy that is unregulated), but they are also marginalized within the informal market to the lower paying positions (Johnston- Anumonwo 10). The lower level of the informal sector has the most vulnerable jobs (jobs that are not stable) in which laborers are poorly paid (Johnston- Anumonwo 10). In addition, the national governments disregard the informal economy and its workers and rarely give them resources or the means to better their situation (Johnston- Anumonwo 10). In preventing women from functioning at full

capacity, the discriminatory education system and job market in Sub-Saharan Africa serve to combat the development potential of the region.

The Economic Realm

The gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa is vast and encompasses a plethora of facets of life. Economically, there is a significant divide in employment between the genders. This schism is present in numerous realms including the capacity in which males and females work, the gender-based pay differential, and also the disparity in the number of women compared to men in managerial positions. The disparity in working capacity is seen in the table below which shows the percentage of women laboring at their full potential in comparison to their male counterparts. The disparity is clearly delineated in the far right column (in which the gender gap is larger than any other region analyzed).

Differences in Employment, by Gender and Region

	% of women working at capacity for an employer	% of men working at capacity for an employer	Gap
Sub-Saharan Africa	18	27	-9
Americas	53	60	-7
Asia	38	45	-7
Middle East and North Africa	40	44	-4
Former Soviet Union	65	67	-2
Europe	68	67	+1

2011

GALLUP

Source: Marlar, Jenny, and Kyley McGenney. "Wide Gender Divide in Employment in One-Fourth of Countries." *Gallup World*. Gallup.com, 5 July 2012. Web. 19 Apr. 2013.

In addition to the capacity in which women work compared to males, there is a significant disparity in the pay that women receive in comparison to males. In Nigeria, for example, women receive $.60 for every dollar that males generate (Banque Mondiale 17). This pay differential is the result of many factors including males and females engaging in different sectors of the labor market (Banque Mondiale 17). While this pay disparity shows the value that Sub-Saharan African culture puts on the work of females in comparison to the work of males (which is impacted by historical processes such as colonization and the more recent phenomenon of globalization), it also shows that women are relegated to sectors of the market that pay significantly less than the jobs held by males. Being sidelined to the informal economy is a manifestation of the low level of economic status held by a great proportion of women in not only Nigeria, but in Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole.

In addition, women hold fewer managerial positions than men in Sub-Saharan Africa. In a report compiled by the United Nations Development Fund, it was found that one in every nine full-time males in Sub-Saharan African are in managerial positions in comparison to one in every twenty-six full-time females (UNIFEM 65). This huge gender-based disparity in management negatively affects the rights and status of women by giving them less power and influence in the workforce. In not having a comparable number of women in leadership positions in the workplace, women lack the opportunity to have equal rights and status in the workplace.

Within the economic realm (as Sklair initially intended) a direct manifestation of one of the key concepts of global systems theory is made manifest. Since men are more capable than women at holding upper-level positions (in the current economic system) and also at engaging in higher

sectors of the economy, they are the "winners", while females are the "losers" in the economic realm (Sklair 93). In being unable to take advantage of the current economic climate, the majority of Sub-Saharan African women have a low economic status due to the gender divide (Sklair 93).

The Arena of Land Rights and Inheritance

In addition to economic status, land tenure is another factor which impacts the status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Africa, land has been historically handed down in a patrilineal line of descent (from fathers to sons) (Yngstrom 24). This puts women unmistakably at a disadvantage because the only way they can gain access to land is either through their fathers or through marriage (Yngstrom 25). Not only is land not as accessible to women as it is to men, the rights women have over land are also not as complete as the rights of their husbands/fathers (Yngstrom 26). Historically, women have not had outright ownership of "their" (in actuality their husbands'/fathers') land, but have had the role of maintaining and cultivating the land to which they had no true claim (Yngstrom 26).

In Tanzania, this inequality has played out and continues to do so for women who gain the majority of their land rights through marriage (Yngstrom 26). The reliance women have on marriage for land serves to foster a relationship between females and males of dependency instead of independent coexistence (Yngstrom 30). The disadvantage women have in acquiring land makes them inferiors instead of equals to men, resulting in a low status for women due to their lack of land rights.

The reality of men holding land while they are married negatively impacts women's status, but can be even more detrimental to women's well-being should their husbands die or they seek a divorce. At the time of a divorce or husband's death, the gender disparity is a significant factor that plays into the well-being and prosperity of the widow or female divorcee. With property rights being solely attainable by males, females who lose their husbands (either through divorce or death) can be left with nothing (Van Hook and Ngwenya 177). Upon their husbands' death or through divorce Tanzanian women lose any claim they had to their husbands land during marriage, leaving them bereft (Yngstrom 32).

Though land rights are an arena in which women are not equal to men, land tenure reforms have been established in Tanzania (i.e. Tanzania Land Act of 1999) and other Sub-Saharan African nations, which promote gender equality in land rights (Yngstrom 33). Women's rights and claims to the land have been enhanced through these legal means in Tanzania, however, women have not yet gained equality in their access to land rights (Yngstrom 34). This type of land reform in theory promotes gender equality, however, realistically in Tanzania there is a disparity between theory and reality. Despite land reforms, Tanzanian women in many cases are still dependent on their husbands and male relatives to assure their claims to land) (Yngstrom 34).This discrepancy in land ownership limits women's rights and in some cases forces them into loveless and half-hearted marriages (for the purpose of survival).

The rights that women are denied, such as land holding, plays into and perpetuates the vicious cycle of poverty in which a significant portion of Sub-Saharan African women find themselves. Without access and the legal ability to own land, women, who universally make up the vast

majority of agricultural laborers in Sub-Saharan Africa, are left without a viable workplace ("Gender" 446). The marginalization of women in the realm of land ownership leaves them without the ability to provide for themselves and their family in a consistent and dependable fashion.

In addition to encouraging poverty by not providing women with a viable and dependable means of income and subsistence farming, the denial of land ownership to women affects their economic status in other ways. This is primarily done by impeding them from receiving loans from financial institutions (Van Hook and Ngwenya 182). Without land, women do not have a means of collateral in order to take out loans (Van Hook and Ngwenya 182). Loans serve as a potential starting point for further economic gains and sustainability. Loans can be used to buy animals that are beneficial for transporting goods, and also for producing food (such as meat, cheese, and eggs) (Van Hook and Ngwenya 182).

In a globalized world, loans also give individuals the opportunity to work in a large-scale capacity that better suits the global economic climate. Without adequate access to loans, women are not as able as their male counterparts to interact in the global economy. Kenyan coffee farmers provide a tangible example of the importance of loans in it international economy. In Kenya, where it is more difficult for women to get loans (and men hold the majority of loans), it takes women longer than men to acclimate to potential export ventures (Sobhy 14). In comparison to men, Kenyan women are less capable of engaging in large-scale coffee farming due to the discrimination they face when trying to acquire loans (Sobhy 14).

The Legal Realm

Much like the inequality in accessing economic resources, within the legal realm in Sub-Saharan Africa there is a significant disparity between the genders as well. Majority status is the position held by adults that gives them the ability to marry without their parents' permission, to hold property, to have custody of their children, and to take problems to courts to be hashed out (Van Hook and Ngwenya 174). Being a full-fledged adult through obtaining majority status eludes a substantial portion of the female population in Sub-Saharan Africa (Van Hook and Ngwenya 174). Legally women are not seen as equals to their male counterparts and upon marriage become incredibly reliant on their husbands who by default have majority status because of their gender (Van Hook and Ngwenya 177).

Within this legal system, women are susceptible to abuse and other negative implications (Van Hook and Ngwenya 183). In creating a family dynamic in which males are the head and women are subordinate, a significant and critical power discrepancy results (Van Hook and Ngwenya 183). Should a husband become abusive, women's lack of majority status encourages them and in some cases makes it seemingly inescapable for women to stay in abusive relationships.

Without majority status, should a woman leave her husband, she would to have no legal rights to her children. In addition, the majority of Sub-Saharan African nations do not have mechanisms implemented to assist women in abusive relationships, which serves as a deterrent for women to leave abusive husbands (Van Hook and Ngwenya 183). The wage disparity, discussed earlier also plays into women not being economically capable of leaving an abusive husband. The lack of well-paid positions for women in the workforce results in women not being able to procure a

living wage for them and/or their children (Van Hook and Ngwenya 184). This economic

disparity is a significant hindrance for women to leave abusive husbands and, coupled with the

previous factors, shows how the elusion of majority status negatively impacts the status, rights,

and well-being of Sub-Saharan African women.

When looking at the rights and status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa in a causal relationship

with the gender divide and while considering the process of globalization within the legal realm,

human rights must be discussed. There is no lack in international protocols, conventions, and

other types of legally binding contracts regarding the rights and status of women. Specifically

within Africa (which inherently encompasses Sub-Saharan Africa), there exist forms of

international law such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) as well

as the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa to the ACHPR that directly forbid the

discrimination of women and encourage equal rights between the sexes (Ssenyonjo 42-43). The

ACHPR and the subsequent protocol promote equality within the legal realm and also put the

responsibility on the nation-state to ensure the alleviation of discrimination toward women in

African nations (Ssenyonjo 43).

While the implementation of such legislation is encouraging and provides hope for gender

equality within Sub-Saharan Africa (as well as the entire continent), the legal provisions and

expectations stated in the ACHRP and the subsequent protocol are highly criticized for their

small scope and inability to effect true change on the African continent (Ssenyonjo 44). The

ACHRP and the ensuing protocol are seen by critics as not fully dealing with the issue by

focusing on certain aspects of gender inequality (such as the disparity in power within the

family) while not addressing others (Ssenyonjo 44). In addition to the lack of detail and scope in combating discrimination against females, three years after the protocol (that followed the ACHRP) had been brought into effect, less than half of Sub-Saharan African nations had ratified the protocol (Ssenyonjo 45). With few nations complying with legal measures to decrease discrimination against women, the potential to diminish discrimination through international legal means is lessened.

Though there has been a lack of support and willingness to comply with and ratify this protocol, "every [nation-] state in [Sub-Saharan] Africa is a party to at least one international treaty prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in the enjoyment of human rights or a party to an international treaty providing for the equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of all human rights" (Ssenyonjo 49). Though there are an abundance of international legal provisions in Sub-Saharan, there is also another legal factor (a competing legal system) that is an opponent to international legislature decreasing the gender divide. The other legal system operating in Sub-Saharan Africa is known as customary law, a legal system which is a means of perpetuating and enforcing patriarchy in Sub-Saharan Africa. Customary law thus is a force that undermines international and region efforts to decrease the gender gap.

Customary law was implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa during colonial times and was derived from pre-colonial values held by African nations (Van Hook and Ngwenya 175-176). Customary law it is a competing type of legal system with the national governments of Sub-Saharan African nations. Customary law is much more accessible for the female population (due to their lack of economic resources and status within their communities) then the standard legal system in Sub-

Saharan African nations (Van Hook and Ngwenya 175). Unfortunately for Sub-Saharan African women the legal system that is the most accessible to them also works to undercut and weaken their status in society and has many components that serve to combat their security and well-being (Ssenyonjo 53).

The pre-colonial values and traditions upheld by customary law that discriminate against women include practices such as female genital mutilation (previously discussed), the approval of physical abuse against women, premature marriage and the rights to inheritance being withheld from females (Ssenyonjo 54). Customary law is one of the key contributors to the gender divide in perpetuating sexist laws and rules. Customary law is an arena in which the gender disparity in Sub-Saharan Africa directly translates to negatively impact the rights and status of women through the legal system.

The Influence of Gramsci's "Hegemony" at the Local Level

Global system's theory's borrowed concept of "hegemony" (a pervasive ideology held by the elites of a society) is seen not only applicable to the implementation of patriarchy through customary law in Sub-Saharan Africa, but it is also made manifest in other aspects of society (Sklair 106). The effects and influence of "hegemony" is seen at the local level, in the Yoruba people of Nigeria (Sklair 106). The patriarchal structure within the Yoruba ethnic group of Nigeria serves as a vivid example of how "hegemony" influences the Sub-Saharan African gender divide (Sklair 106). Within the Yoruba society, women are discriminated against and seen as subordinates from the time of their birth (Familusi 300). The proverbs and cultural sayings of the society serve as a means for enforcing the elevation of males while undermining the status of women.

Proverbs within a society are a means of conveying and upholding the cultural and collective values of the people (Familusi 301). Thus, when a section of the population is discriminated against through proverbs, it reflects the marginalized population's status within their society. When looking at Yoruba Proverbs, women are seen as subordinate, corrupt, and detrimental to their families (namely by being married into their husbands family and no longer being a viable resource for the family into which they were born) (Familusi 302).

As in the case of land rights in Tanzania, Yoruba women are not treated favorably with regards to inheritance. Regardless of how old the male child is, he always has the first rights to his father's estate over his sisters (Familusi 301). In the hierarchy of rights to an inheritance, married women are also subsequent to single women because they are perceived to be in the charge of their husbands (Familusi 301). Another Yoruba practice that is discriminatory towards women with regards to inheritance is that even though women typically cannot be the beneficiaries of their fathers' inheritance (there are a few exceptions), they themselves can be inherited by the beneficiary of their fathers estate (Familusi 301).

Though legally speaking, Yoruba women are subordinate to men, they are not totally discarded and vulnerable. In Yoruba society, women are seen as the frailer gender (Familusi 307). In this context, men have a duty to protect their women (be they wives, daughter, mothers, sisters, etc.) (Familusi 307). This concern for the well-being and care of women shows that while they are not seen as equals (patriarchy denies women in Yoruba society selected rights and access to a certain level of status), women still have some value and status within the Yoruba community. Though there are many aspects of Yoruba culture that are unfair regarding women, Yoruba

culture is not universally discriminatory. Women are given positions of spiritual leadership in the Yoruba community and can lead rituals and other religious practices (Familusi 307). Even in the patriarchal structure of the Yoruba, women are given authority and a very advanced role in the spiritual community as well as in communal concerns. Though the influence (and in this case marginalizing power) of "hegemony" is apparent, Yoruba women are still able to be in leadership roles in their traditional communities (Sklair 106; Familusi 301).

The Arena of Political Participation

Unfortunately, the participation Yoruba women enjoy in traditional politics and spirituality is not paralleled in their and their fellow countrywomen's participation in the realm of Nigerian national (or even local level) government. Within the realm of political participation, Nigerian women fare poorly in comparison to men. The following table reveals the small number of seats women hold in government at both the legislative and executive levels.

Women elected to political office by region. Nigeria.

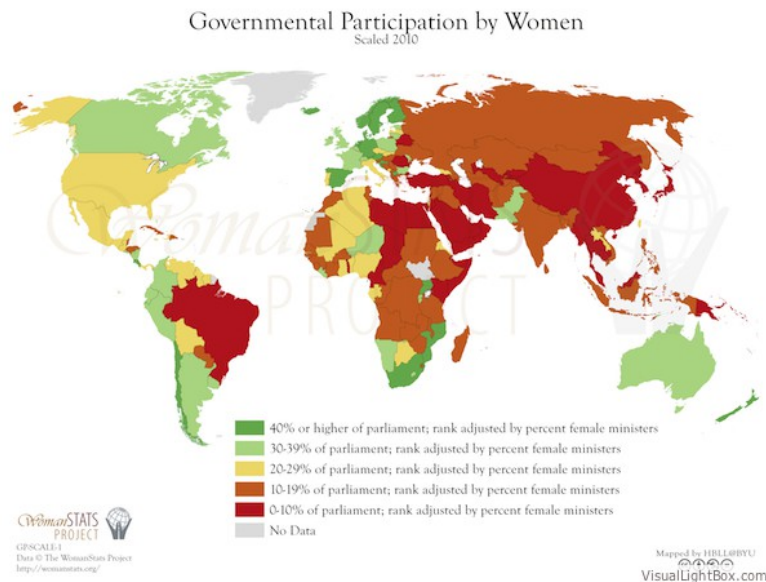| 2011	Governor	Senate	House of reps	State House of Assembly
North-Central	0	1	2	15
North East	0	1	4	4
North West	0	1	1	2
South East	0	2	6	21
South-South	0	1	4	12
South West	0	1	8	15

Source: *Gender in Nigeria Report 2012:Improving the Lives of Girls and Women in Nigeria*. N.p.: British Council Nigeria, 2012. (p. 55). PDF.

When looking at the preceding table, it is evident that women have no participation at the executive level (governor) however; women's participation at the other positions is not clearly expressed (because this table does not show the total number of legislative seats, i.e. Senate, House of reps, and State House of Assembly). One example of the lack of female participation from this table is the number of seats women hold in the House of Representatives (cumulatively 25 in all 6 regions). In Nigeria, there are a total of 360 seats in the House of Representatives ("Gender in Nigeria"). It is apparent that women are lacking in political participation (nationally females=25, males =335) when compared to their male counterparts in the House of Representatives. The lack of female participation in the House of Representatives is paralleled in the Senate and State House of Assembly. It is evident that there is a significant gender divide in political participation by women at the national level in Nigeria.

The disparity in female participation in Nigerian government shows that there is not only a difference in the actual numbers of females compared to males in government, but also that there is a significant power imbalance in the level of political power and participation women are given. With women being entirely excluded from the executive positions in Nigeria's government they are given less autonomy and jurisdiction (since the positions they hold are in arenas in which they must work alongside and compromise with men). With women only given a small portion of the seats in legislative positions their votes are seemingly useless, because they, alone, will never capture the majority vote necessary to pass or veto legislature.

The gender disparity is not only seen at the local and national levels, but also seen in the levels of political participation at the regional level by women in the subsequent map. Since there are only two genders, this map indirectly shows male participation in the percentages not shown. For

example, in the Eastern African nation of Kenya, (a nation which is red, signifying that women make up 0-10% of Parliament), the conclusion that can be drawn is that the remaining portion (and the majority) of Parliament (90-100%) is held by Kenyan males. This map shows a huge disparity in the number of women holding parliamentary positions as opposed to males.

Governmental Participation by Women
Scaled 2010

40% or higher of parliament; rank adjusted by percent female ministers
30-39% of parliament; rank adjusted by percent female ministers
20-29% of parliament; rank adjusted by percent female ministers
10-19% of parliament; rank adjusted by percent female ministers
0-10% of parliament; rank adjusted by percent female ministers
No Data

Source: "Government Participation by Women." Map. *Womanstats.org*. Woman Stats Project, 2010. Web. 19 Apr. 2013.

Although the preceding map shows a trend of males holding the majority of seats in Parliament in Sub-Saharan African nations, it also shows that there is a significant variety in the level of female political empowerment in various Sub-Saharan African nations. In addition, this map shows the unevenness of political participation between nations. Though Kenya, as previously mentioned, has a marginalized female population in Parliament, it's neighboring nation of Uganda has a much smaller gender divide in political participation in Parliament (with females holding somewhere above 40% of parliamentary seats). Though there are certainly exceptions to

the trend of women being significantly marginalized in Sub-Saharan African politics, the lack of political participation by women still exists in the majority of nations.

In democratic societies like Nigeria, political participation in government is meant to accurately reflect the consensus of the people. Democracy is at its heart focused on equality and accurate representation. However, when Nigeria's population is taken into account, with women making up almost half of the population and holding less than 1/3 of the seats in Parliament, the significance of the lack of political rights of women is brought into focus (CIA). Women not only have less political participation than men, but in addition, the level of political participation they do hold does not correlate with their numerical presence in their nation. This dual disparity shows the depth of the divide.

The disparity in political participation within Sub-Saharan Africa between the genders extends beyond holding political positions. Women are much less likely to engage in various aspects of politics than men such as contacting political candidates and registering to vote (Coffe and Bolzendahl 256). The disparity in political participation is significantly impacted by socioeconomic factors, namely the disparity between the genders in access to resources (Coffe and Bolzendahl 260). There is a positive correlation between women having a low level of access to resources a low likelihood for women to engage in politics (Coffe and Bolzendahl 249).

This lack of political participation has numerous ramifications for the status and rights of women. Some of the key consequences of women's lack of political participation in Sub-Saharan Africa are that they have a lack of legal rights, a continued dependence on men (specifically

male relations), and they are unable to adequately influence their current status. The lack of legal rights women hold in Sub-Saharan Africa have ramifications that are included in this text (those already reviewed in terms of majority status) and also extend beyond the scope of this paper. The continuation of dependency on men has implications that permeate and extend beyond the political realm. Due to their dependency on men (as the leaders of their government, and those who wield power) women have less direct access to resources (such as a lack of land rights which inhibits women from gaining access to economic resources). The small say that Sub-Saharan African women have is not constructed on their ability or competence, but based on the position and status their father, husband, or other male relative (Pereira 786). The lack of independent female participation in governance is a clear manifestation of the low level of political status and rights women hold which results from the gender gap.

The lack of political participation women hold also impairs women's ability to create future change. When looking at the level of women in Nigeria, only holding a marginal portion of the legislative positions in the government, it is apparent that their political status will change little without a decrease in the gender gap. Though women are present in the Nigerian government, when they only hold a small portion of the seats in Parliament, they can be easily out-voted in any change they desire to make regarding their status and rights.

In addition, by not holding any executive seats (such as that of the governor or president), women are continuously being checked by their fellow male political leaders. The result of such a climate is that though women seemingly have political status, they don't have true political power. The gender gap in political participation must be significantly decreased from women to

be able to change their current and future political rights and status. In not being accurately represented in all branches of government, Sub-Saharan African women's political rights are infringed upon by the gender divide.

The Healthcare Realm

Like political participation, healthcare is an arena in which Sub-Saharan African women lack access. The gender divide in healthcare (encouraged by the patriarchal system) negatively impacts women's ability to access healthcare and their understanding and knowledge of good healthcare practices. Women's limited access to healthcare and health education contributes to high HIV/AIDS rates among women, decreased level of reproductive rights. and high maternal mortality rates (Johnston-Anumonwo and Doane 13).

Women in Sub-Saharan Africa are more significantly affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic than anywhere else in the world (Sesay 3). Due to the social stigma that accompanies HIV/AIDS, women do not speak out about being infected with the virus and do not seek medical attention which results in the disease progressing (Sesay 3). The gender divide, heavily influenced by the patriarchal society in Sub-Saharan Africa directly affects women's ability to have a say in the risky behaviors that spread HIV/AIDS and also affects the way nations, such as Kenya deal with the disproportionately high number of female (in comparison to male) HIV/AIDS victims (Sesay 4). In patriarchal societies, such as Kenya, it is the males' priorities and issues that are dealt with by the government, while female issues are seen as less important (Sesay 4). This reality in Kenya directly shows the link between the gender gap and the low status women have concerning their health.

The disparity in power in Kenya (as in Sub-Saharan Africa) results in women receiving less access to both healthcare and health education. In women not receiving adequate health care and health education, their quality-of-life decreases and their lack of autonomous access makes them dependent on men for (in some cases incorrect and inadequate) medical and sexual reproductive information (Sesay 7). Ignorance regarding sexuality is something in Sub-Saharan African culture that is a prized attribute held by women (Sesay 7). The naïveté Kenyan culture esteems in women regarding their own sexuality results in women sacrificing and being denied their reproductive rights and voice.

The arena of reproductive rights is a large realm and includes numerous facets including health education, family planning, access to abortions, and more. This portion of rights is interconnected with the preceding lack of health education that enables high HIV/AIDS rates. In women being discouraged from learning about their own sexuality, Kenyan women are being denied their freedom through their limited access to knowledge. Reproductive rights are seen in the subsequent discussion on maternal mortality rates as well (in women's lack of access to contraceptives, which is a contributing factor in denying them the freedom to choose the number of children they will have).

The lack of adequate healthcare afforded to women, due in part to the gender gap, contributes significantly to high maternal mortality rates. Some Sub-Saharan African nations have maternal mortality rates as high as one in twenty-five women dying either in child birth or due to complications during their pregnancy (Banque Mondiale 16). In addition, an even larger percentage of women in some Sub-Saharan African nations will face long-term consequences

and health issues as a result of their pregnancy (Banque Mondiale 16).

There are numerous contributing factors to high maternal mortality rates (most of which are manifestations of women's limited health and reproductive rights). In addition to a lack of adequate healthcare, there is also a lack of access to birth control and other contraceptives. "Only 9% of women in S[ub] S[aharan] A[frica] have access to family planning" (Logie and Logie 170). With the majority of Sub-Saharan African women unable to control the number of children they have and also unable to control the general timing of their maternity, women are left significantly powerless when it comes to their maternal health.

High maternal mortality rates are also impacted by the lack of medical personnel in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is a manifestation of women's well-being in a patriarchal society being secondary to the welfare of men. Nearly half of all births in Sub-Saharan Africa are void of professional medical assistance (Logie and Logie 170). The lack of trained personnel to assist in the birthing process significantly impacts the safety and the well-being of both the mother and the baby. The plethora of illegal abortions in Sub-Saharan Africa annually also contributes to high maternal mortality rates. There are an estimated 40,000,000 to 60,000,000 abortions that happen in Sub-Saharan Africa every year (Logie and Logie 170). These abortions (which are primarily illegal) contribute to maternal mortality by causing 35% to 50% of maternal deaths in Sub-Saharan Africa (Logie and Logie 170). The high-rates of illegal abortions in nations like Nigeria result from a lack of access to legal abortions (Crowe). The examples provide proof that the gender gap results in a lack of health and reproductive rights as well as a decreased status for Sub-Saharan African women which makes their health needs subordinate to their male

counterpart. The lack of health and reproductive rights held by Sub-Saharan African women is not only disadvantageous to women's status and position within their communities and nations, but are also detrimental to their longevity and mortality.

African Feminism, a Countermovement

While the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa has had significantly negative impacts on women, the gender divide has also created unrest that has led to a movement that has been a means of liberating women from the oppression of the gender divide. This movement, that has impacted the gender divide in postcolonial Sub-Saharan Africa, is African feminism. African feminism was an endogenous movement that began in the 1970s ("Gender" 445). It is a separate movement from the feminist movements that took place in other continents prior to and during this era. While African feminism does acknowledge western feminism, it has different objectives and is governed by a similar, yet more pervasive prerogative that not only empowers based on gender, but also on other cultural classifications such as race (Nnaemeka 64).

African feminism is a combination of male and female advocates for women's rights over their lives, bodies, and decisions. Scholars have been working since the movement's advent to reframe the role of women in all aspects of life (economically, relationally, politically, etc.) and to bring to light historical movements created and executed by African women ("Gender" 448). African feminism is a force that permeates and incorporates various disciplines including the social sciences, humanities, and literature to establish and embrace gender equality (Nnaemeka 65).

African feminism is a movement that has been the result of the gender discrimination felt by women due to the gender divide. It has contributed to the present day status and rights of women

in Sub-Saharan Africa by bringing attention to the potential and accomplishments of women and making strides to lessen the disparity between the genders.

Conclusion

Numerous conclusions can be drawn from the information and evidence I have analyzed. First of all, Sklair and Gramsci's concepts in global systems theory are proven in the gender divide and its impact on the rights and status of women. Sklair's concept of "winners" and "losers" is apparent in all of the realms analyzed (even African feminism since it is a response to women continuously being the "losers") (93). Gramsci's concept of "hegemony" is seen at the local (in the Yoruba example), national (in Kenyan women's health rights), and regional (in the pervasive ideology of patriarchy which governs all levels previously mentioned) levels in Sub-Saharan Africa (Sklair 106).

Secondly, the negative impact of historical ideologies and historical processes is still seen on the current gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. The impact of the ideology of patriarchy has served as a means for her creating and perpetuating the gender divide and thus negatively impacting the rights and status of women. In addition, the historical process of colonization has served to exacerbate a gender divide that already existed and implemented sexist and unfair gender disparities in numerous realms including the arenas of education in economics that can still be seen to this day.

Thirdly, globalization has been both a beneficial and harmful influence on the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as the rights and status of women. Globalization has worked as a force to liberate women and increase job opportunities, however, the introduction of these new

opportunities for women has, for the majority of women, not resulted in a higher status in the realms of economics, politics, education, etc. Globalization has worked as a conduit of Western values to the Sub-Saharan African region. Much like economic globalization, this has had mixed effects in introducing alternatives which in some cases are beneficial and in others strip Sub-Saharan Africa of its culture and traditions.

Fourthly, the impact of the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa has an almost comprehensively negative impact on the rights and status of women. Though counter movements, such as African feminism, serve as the exception to this seemingly universal reality, it cannot be denied that the gender divide has deleteriously impacted the rights and status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the six realms of existence I analyzed, the trend of the gender divide negatively impacting women was unanimous.

Fifthly, the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa has caused and perpetuated women's dependency on men for resources (land, economic, etc.) and intellectual knowledge. By elevating men's access to economic resources, intellectual knowledge, etc. above that of women's, the gender divide presents Sub-Saharan African women with a difficult choice. Women can either not succeed in the realms analyzed in this paper, or quasi succeed (and in some cases merely survive) through dependency on their male family members for political power, land rights, etc.

Sixthly, the gender schism in Sub-Saharan Africa serves to undermine the status and rights of women. The gender divide does this by preventing women from changing their current status (due to the lack of power and politics, economics, etc.). In preventing women from reaching their

full potential, the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa is a counterforce to women achieving their rights and status within their region, countries, and local communities.

Finally, though my conclusion regarding the gender divide and its impact on the status of rights and women has been dismal until now, that does not mean that there is not hope and there is not potential for women to achieve and claim their just rights and status in Sub-Saharan Africa. The presence of the African feminist movement, and other counter movements provides a means to reshape the cultural narrative (of patriarchy) that is serving as a means to perpetuate the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa. Changing the culture's mentality and norms is a significant undertaking that will take years, if not decades to undo. However, the presence of a feminist movement within a region entrenched with gender inequality (such as Sub-Saharan Africa) is a beacon of hope for a future decrease in the gender divide and thus an elevation of the status and an acquiring of the rights of Sub-Saharan African women. For the sake of not only Sub-Saharan African women, but the region as a whole, my hope is that counter movements like African feminism will serve to decrease the vast gender divide and result in women attaining their inherent rights.

Limitations

There are numerous limitations to my research for a number of reasons. Sub-Saharan Africa's gender divide, the rights of women, and the status of women are all multi-faceted and complex entities. In order to incorporate all of these distinct but interconnected components, I had to merely skim the surface of research and only look at certain aspects of the causal relationship. In addition, in writing about the causal relationship between the Sub-Saharan African gender divide and the rights and status of women I knowingly did not take into account alternative factors

(other than the gender gap) that contribute to the current rights and status of women.

In my research I only focus on seven components of the gender divide. This leaves a large number of important aspects untouched. I discussed such things as education, economics, laws, and healthcare, but I didn't touch on critical things like participation in law enforcement, the military, the difference between the urban and rural gender divide and women's rights, and other key components that contribute to the gender divide and the rights and status of women.

Even within the realms I explored, I didn't look at all components of those realms. For example, within the realm of globalization, I didn't even touch (though conclusions can be inferred from the information presented) on the political aspects of the process. When I analyzed healthcare, I only looked at a few diseases and issues. I didn't even address things like malaria, the number of men compared to women in the healthcare field, and other significant components of the health rights and status of women. This partial analysis is true of all of the components of my paper.

In addition, as I mentioned in the introduction, these nations, the region, and even the women discussed are not homogenous. There is a myriad of diversity and exceptions that I did not account for. For example in Nigeria, there are numerous ethnic groups, languages, cities, religions, and other inconsistencies in the nation. To lump them all together and try to generalize is an exercise in futility. In addition to nations and regions not being homogenous, the status of women in Sub-Saharan African is not consistent. While the majority of Nigeria women are impoverished, one significant outlier is Folorunsho Alakija. Alakija is the richest Black woman in the world (worth $3.3 billion) and is a Nigerian oil business woman (Pasquali). Alakija shows

that while the general trend is that the gender gap negatively impacts the rights of women, at least within the economic sector, that reality is not true for all Sub-Saharan African women. It is very important to note that the research in this paper is a general overview of the majority of Sub-Saharan Africa women.

In choosing to research various aspects of the gender divide and not others, I know that my research (though incorporating numerous facets of life) does not encompass the entirety of the gender divide and the resulting rights and status of women. In contemplating the gender divide and the rights and status of women, I feel as though I am not talking about more components of the gender divide than I am discussing. However, that is the reality of research. In order to truly be able to get an understanding of a topic that is as vast as the gender divide in Sub-Saharan Africa, I had to narrow my scope, thus there exists some significant limitations in my research.

The final limitation I find in my research (like the rest of my paper, this list of limitations is not exhaustive) is my own lack of real-life experience with the gender divide, the rights, and the status of women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Though I am traveling to West Africa in two months, I have not yet stepped foot on African soil and thus have not experienced firsthand the gender gap and the resulting issues. When I do get to travel to Burkina Faso this summer, I am expecting to find further justification for the claims and argumentation of my paper as well as personal experience and a knowledge base that only real-life experience can give to further my understanding of the issues discussed in this paper.

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