Parallel pathways: parents’ practices around the schooling of their children in rural Northcentral Nigeria

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Relevant RQ: What practices do Yoruba parents in rural Kwara engage in, in relation to their children’s schooling?

Research Context (Kwara State)
• ~2.3 million; 53%M 47%F
• Multi-ethnic, multi-religious
• Farmers, weavers, potters

Research Rationale
• Schooling challenges: access, quality, equity & outcomes, more severe in rural parts of the state
• Little qualitative evidence on parental practices around schooling in rural areas

Methodology & Methods:
• Constructivist: rich insight into participant/researcher co-constructed lived experiences in context
• Ethnography & case study
• Two rural communities, one local government area
• 7 parents per community
  • Community A: 6 Mothers, 1 Father
  • Community B: 6 Fathers, 1 Mother
• Interviews [semi-structured, photo-elicitation, go-alongs] & (participant) observations

Preliminary Findings:
• Schooling promises a worthwhile investment, imbied by parents – ‘our eyes are now open’
• Schooling’s reality = extreme rates of unemployment for tertiary graduates
• Promise + reality = parents hedge schooling bets by enrolling children in school AND informal apprenticeships at the same time – ‘so that our children will not starve’