

GENDER JUSTICE, WORK AND EDUCATION IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

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OUR PANEL

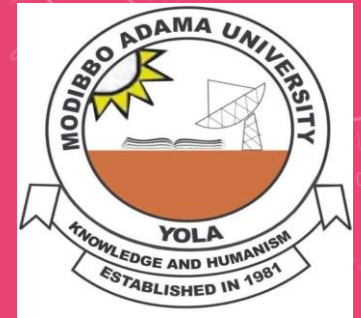
Paper 1 - Reworking gender, education and work in Sub Saharan Africa

Professor Barbara Crossouard and Professor Máiréad Dunne,
Centre for International Education, University of Sussex, UK



Paper 2 - We will have our say: education and work for young women in Northern Nigeria

Professor Dauda Moses and Safiya Aliyu Chin,
Modibbo Adama University, Yola, Nigeria



Paper 3 - Advocating for change in the community: education and work for young women in South Africa

Professor Relebohile Moletsane, Dr Lisa Wiebesiek, Nkonzo Mkhize,
University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa



Respondent commentary: Dr Paul Fean, Plan International



The background features a dark red color with several white circular and semi-circular patterns. Some of these patterns resemble clock faces or gauges, with numerical scales. A prominent scale on the left side shows numbers from 140 to 260 in increments of 10. Other patterns include concentric circles and dashed lines with arrows, suggesting a technical or scientific theme.

PAPER 1: REWORKING GENDER, EDUCATION AND WORK IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

BARBARA CROSSOARD AND MÁIRÉAD DUNNE
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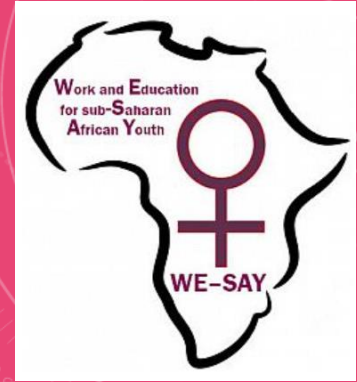
PAPER 1 OVERVIEW

- Introduction of our collaborative research project focused on work and education of young rural women in two SSA contexts
- Dominant theoretical lens (HCT) used to consider the relationships of work and education (and gender)
- Critiques of this lens
- Reworking how we understand gender, education and work
- Methodological implications of this re-working

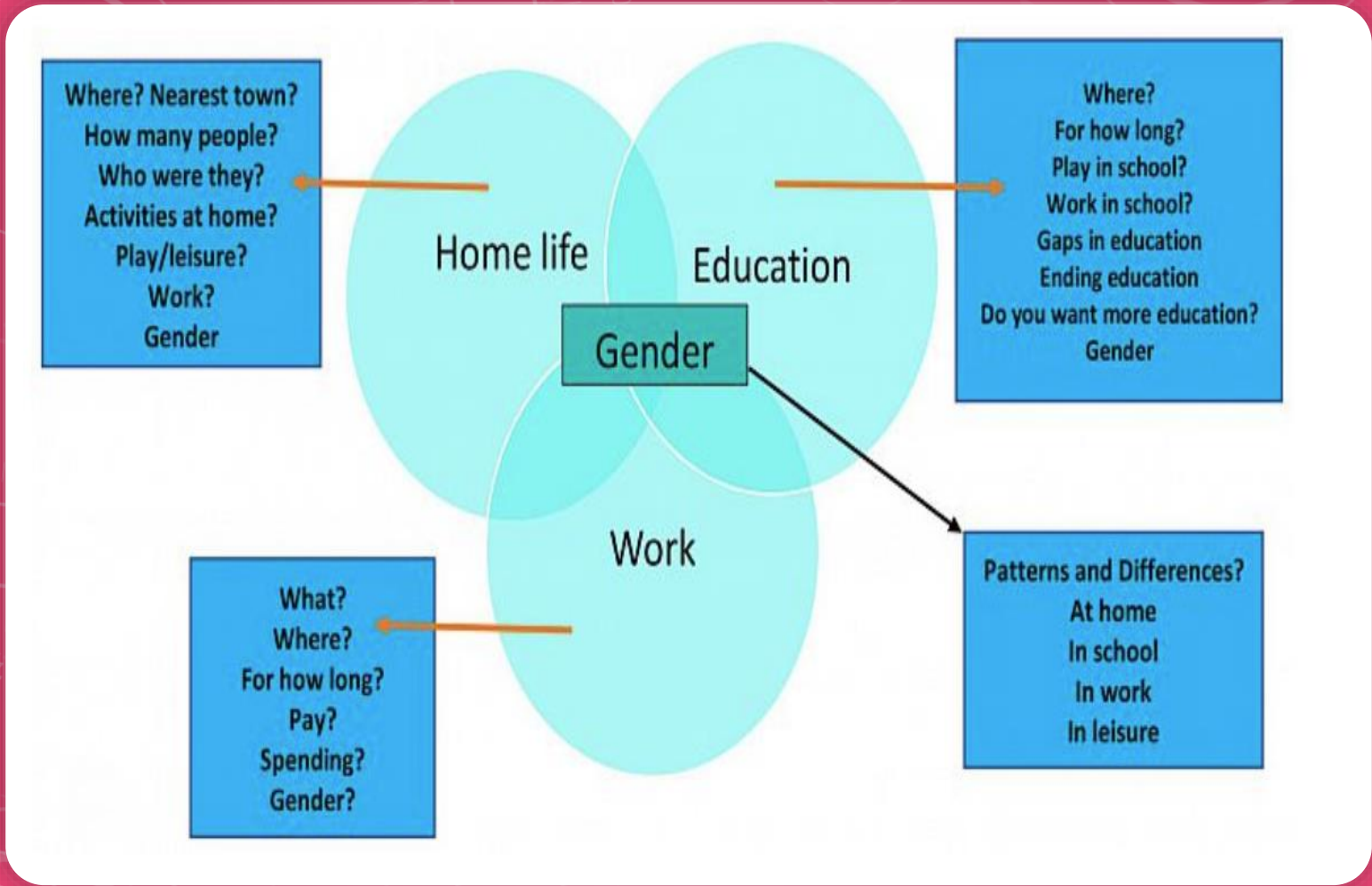
YOUTH, GENDER AND EDUCATION: CHANGING LANDSCAPES OF WORK IN RURAL SUB SAHARAN AFRICA

- Funded by the British Academy (Youth Futures)
- Collaboration between CIE , University of Sussex (Barbara, Máiréad) and Professor Relebohile Moletsane, University of KwaZulu Natal, Durban, South Africa and Professor Dauda Moses, Modibbo Adama University, Yola, Nigeria
- Used participatory visual methodologies (PVM) and life history interviews
- PVM involving a series of 6 workshops with 2 groups of young rural women in each context, focused on how they combine education and work, culminating in a community dialogue where they present their agendas for change to others in the community
- Project completion May 2023

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/research/centres/centre-for-international-education/projects/we-say>



YOUNG WOMEN NAVIGATING THE DEMANDS OF WORK, FAMILY, EDUCATION IN RURAL CONTEXTS OF SSA



UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND WORK

- **Human capital theory** has been the **dominant lens**
 - **Central in justifications for the development of education e.g. in World Bank and national policies**
 - **Developed by economists Schultz and Becker in the 1960s, based on the US context at that time**
 - **Focus on rates of return from investment in education/ schooling in terms of wider benefits to the national economy and to the individual (improved life chances/higher salaries)**

CRITIQUES!!

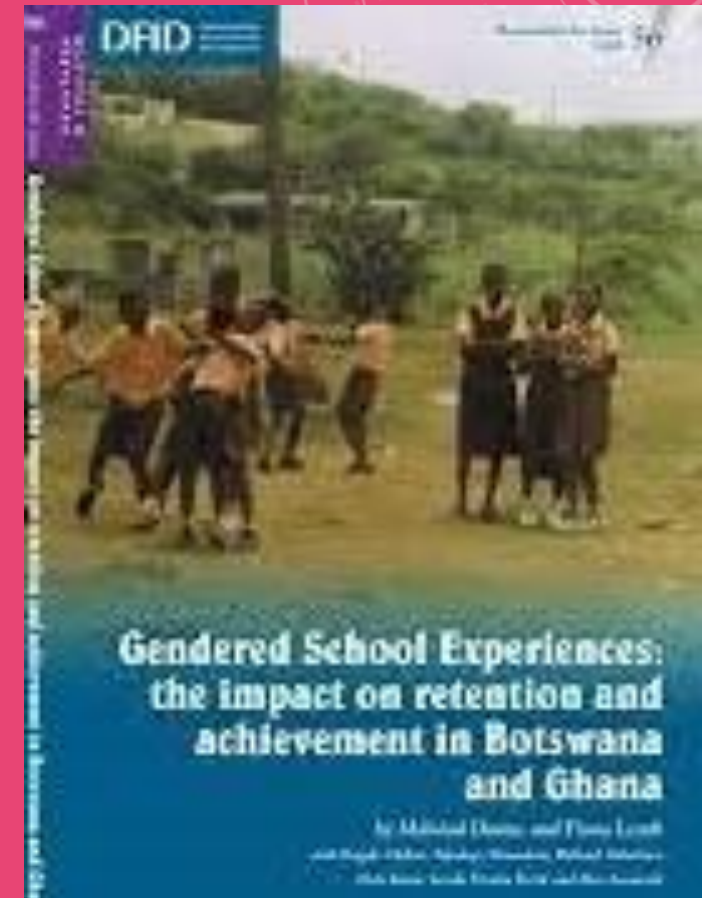
- The development of HCT reflected a very specific economic context – but now problematically assumed to be generalizable (Marginson, 2019) / used in a prescriptive way (Wheelahan et al, 2022)
- Its evidence base in Africa is flimsy (Bennell, 1996)
- Education is treated as a ‘black box’ (Resnick, 2006) in ways that fail to recognize :
 - the wider social and cultural capitals that contribute to educational success
 - the relationship of postcolonial societies to the global economy
 - the historical inequalities of education provision in colonial and postcolonial societies (McGrath et al, 2019; Crossouard and Dunne, 2021)

LIMITATIONS OF HCT FOR EXPLORING YOUNG WOMEN'S WORK IN SSA

- Assumes a **linear, staged trajectory** from education to work
- Assumes education is **benign and equitable!**
- Assumes western/**modern norms of childhood, youth, adulthood** (Dunne et al , 2021)
- Constructs all those who do not meet those norms **in deficit**
- Flattens **gender to an outcome, using a male/female binary**
- Privileges **formalized** forms of **wage labour**
- Misrecognises (women's) **unpaid reproductive labour** (Crossouard et al, 2022)

GENDERED EDUCATION AND WORK

- Schooling is ***not separate*** from work – many forms of work are demanded through the formal and the hidden curriculum
- Gendered paid and unpaid work takes place ***alongside*** schooling
- Schooling contributes to the instantiation and reproduction of gender norms - it routinely involves gender violence, symbolic and physical
- **It is not necessarily *benign*!!**
 - Organization of space is gendered – in classroom and playgrounds, boys and girls segregated, boys clustered around/controlling girls
 - Boys given tasks with more authority, while girls assigned domestic duties - girls clean classrooms and offices, boys ring the school bell, take on supervisory roles
 - Sexual harassment, sexual abuse, and sex for grades prevalent



REWORKING WORK AND EDUCATION - *GENDER REGIMES*

- Gender is brought into being through institutionalized power relations, forming a *gender regime* (Dunne, 2007)
- Institutions such as education (as well as family and work) are integral to such regimes
- They shape our sense of who we are, they normalise particular imaginaries of gender, intersecting with age, sexuality, SES, race, religion .. etc
- Gender regimes are *context specific* but have deep histories – they are not easily disrupted
- Individuals risk misrecognition if they go outside how gender is normally done/performed in a particular context

METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Our theorizing brings us to:

- Question the reduction of gender to a male female binary / the work done by statistical representations of 'gender'
- Pay nuanced attention to the gendered ways family, school and the workplace intersect i.e. the edu-workspace
- Privilege a research design that engages deeply with the processes through which different gender performances are valorised, others vilified.
- Use qualitative methods that can attend to local perspectives
- Prioritise research collaborations with partners living and working within the research context and the research sites



Dunne, M., & Humphreys, S. (2022). The edu-workspace: Re-conceptualizing the relationship between work and education in rural children's lives in Sub-Saharan Africa. *World Development Perspectives*, 27, 100443.

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