



The Roles of Parents in Technical Education of Children in Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the roles of parents in supporting the technical education of their children in Delta State, Nigeria. Parenting is the process of nurturing, guiding, and protecting children to ensure their holistic development into responsible adults. Technical education, in this context, prepares learners for skilled occupations such as artisanship, technical trades, or technician-level employment. Two research questions guided the study. The study employed a descriptive survey design. The population consisted of all parents whose children were enrolled in the seven technical colleges in Delta State. A sample of 350 parents (50 per school) were selected using Taro Yamane's formula. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled "Parents' Roles in Technical Education of Their Children Instrument" (PRTECI). The instrument's face validity was confirmed by three experts, and its reliability yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.82. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that while parents provided emotional support and attended school events, they rarely monitored academic progress or collaborated with teachers. Major challenges identified included financial hardship, lack of awareness, and preference for conventional academic careers. The study concluded that insufficient parental involvement negatively affects students' technical education outcomes and social development. It recommended that parents be sensitized on the importance of technical education and encouraged to take an active role in their children's career preparation.



Introduction

Children are widely regarded as the future leaders of any society, and investing in their education is among the most crucial responsibilities of parents and the community at large. In an era of rapid technological change and economic transformation, technical education has emerged as a vital avenue for equipping the younger generation with the practical skills and competencies needed to thrive in various sectors of the economy. Technical education refers to the kind of education that prepares individuals for skilled craftsmanship, artisanal trades, and technician-level employment in fields such as electronics, fabrication, electrical installation, and mechanical engineering. According to Okoye and Omorodion (2023), technical and vocational education plays a pivotal role in national development by providing skilled workforce essential for industrial and technological advancement.

However, the successful acquisition of technical education by children is influenced not only by institutional factors but also by the home environment, especially parental involvement. Research shows that the family remains the primary agent of socialization and development. Parental influence significantly affects a child's educational attainment, behavioural disposition, and future career choices (Sheridan, 2018). Parental roles include emotional support, educational supervision, moral guidance, and the provision of material resources. In the context of technical education, these roles are particularly vital, as children are required to develop behavioural traits such as discipline, perseverance, self-reliance, innovation, and task commitment to succeed in skill-based learning environments.

In Delta State, like many other regions in Nigeria, technical education faces several challenges, including low enrolment, poor infrastructure, inadequate awareness, and societal bias



in favour of conventional academic careers. The role of parents in mitigating these challenges cannot be overstated. Parents' ability to support, guide, and motivate their children has a direct impact on their participation and performance in technical education. Unfortunately, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that many parents in Delta State may be unaware of the value of technical education or lack the resources and knowledge to support their children effectively.

In addition, the social development of children enrolled in technical colleges is often shaped by parental modelling and home-based reinforcement. Positive parental behaviours—such as monitoring progress, attending school events, and engaging with teachers—are essential for promoting confidence, responsibility, and social competence in children (Kiral, 2019). These competencies are crucial not only for academic success but also for the child's integration into the workforce and larger society.

Despite the growing recognition of technical education as a tool for youth empowerment and national development, there is limited research focused on the specific roles of parents in this educational pathway, particularly in Delta State. This study therefore aims to fill this gap by examining the parental roles and the challenges they face in supporting their children's technical education.

Statement of the Problem

Technical education is central to equipping young people with the practical skills required to contribute meaningfully to economic development and technological progress. In Nigeria, and particularly in Delta State, the need for skilled artisans, technicians, and innovators is urgent given the high unemployment rate and overdependence on theoretical education. Yet, there exists a persistent gap between the demand for technically skilled manpower and the output from technical institutions. While infrastructural deficiencies and inadequate funding have been identified as



major contributors to this gap, insufficient parental involvement remains an overlooked but critical factor.

Parental influence is essential in shaping children's academic choices, motivation, and future aspirations. However, many parents in Delta State show limited engagement with their children's technical education. Cultural and societal perceptions often prioritize conventional academic careers over technical and vocational training. In some cases, parents lack awareness of the opportunities embedded in technical education, while others are hindered by economic constraints, lack of time, or rigid gender expectations. These challenges potentially weaken children's morale, limit their educational success, and impair their social development.

Furthermore, several students in technical colleges struggle with behavioural issues, poor academic performance, and low self-esteem, outcomes that may be linked to inadequate home support and weak parent-teacher collaboration. If not addressed, this neglect could lead to broader societal issues, including youth unemployment, social delinquency, and a widening skills gap in Nigeria's labour market.

Despite the strategic role of parents in children's education, there is limited empirical data on the specific ways in which parents in Delta State support or fail to support their children's technical education. This study seeks to investigate the roles parents play in their children's technical education, the challenges they encounter, and how these roles influence children's educational and social outcomes.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the roles of parents in the technical education of their children in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the specific roles parents play in supporting their children's technical education.



2. Examine the challenges faced by parents in fulfilling their roles in their children's technical education.

Research Questions

To guide the investigation, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What roles do parents play in supporting their children's technical education in Delta State?
2. What challenges do parents face in fulfilling their roles in the technical education of their children in Delta State?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to gather data on the roles of parents in the technical education of their children and the challenges they encounter. This design was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to systematically collect and analyze data from a defined population without manipulating any variables. The population consisted of all parents whose children were enrolled in the seven government-approved technical colleges in Delta State, Nigeria, during the 2023/2024 academic session. Using Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula, a sample of 350 parents was drawn from the population. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure equal representation from each of the seven technical colleges, with 50 parents selected per college. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Parents' Roles in Technical Education of Their Children Instrument" (PRTECI). The instrument was developed by the researcher based on literature and expert input. It consisted of two sections: Section A: Demographic information of respondents. Section B: 19 items addressing two major areas: Parental roles in technical education (Items 1–9). Challenges parents face in supporting technical education (Items 10–19). The items were rated using a 4-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. The face validity of the instrument



was established by three experts in the fields of educational psychology and technical education. Suggestions were incorporated to enhance clarity and relevance. To determine reliability, the instrument was pilot-tested with 30 parents outside the study area, and the internal consistency was computed using the Cronbach Alpha method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating high reliability. The researcher, assisted by two trained research assistants, administered the questionnaires during Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings at each of the technical colleges. Of the 350 questionnaires distributed, 348 were completed and returned, representing a 99.4% return rate. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. A benchmark mean of 2.50 was used to determine the decision rule: Mean \geq 2.50 = Agree (significant role or challenge), Mean $<$ 2.50 = Disagree (insignificant role or challenge).

Results

Research Question 1:

What roles do parents play in supporting their children’s technical education in Delta State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Parental Roles in Technical Education

S/No	Item Statement	Mean	Std	Decision
1	I encourage my children to be obedient.	3.50	0.88	agree
2	I provide emotional support and encouragement	3.23	1.16	agree
3	I help my children set realistic goals and develop a study plan.	1.50	0.74	disagree
4	I monitor their progress and offer guidance when needed.	1.25	0.82	disagree
5	I assist with technical assignments or projects.	2.50	1.27	agree
6	I collaborate with teachers to address educational concerns.	2.01	1.59	disagree
7	I attend school events related to technical education.	3.00	0.89	agee



8	I spend quality time with them at home.	1.53	1.08	Disagree
	I pay school-related fees on time.	2.00	1.11	disagree

Parents in Delta State demonstrated agreement on roles such as encouraging obedience ($X = 3.50$), providing emotional support ($X = 3.23$), assisting with technical assignments ($X = 2.50$), and attending school events ($X = 3.00$). However, they disagreed on important academic roles such as goal-setting, progress monitoring, collaboration with teachers, spending quality time, and timely payment of fees. This suggests a partial commitment to their children's technical education.

Research Question 2:

What challenges do parents face in supporting their children’s technical education in Delta State?

Table 2: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Challenges Faced by Parents

S/No	Item Statement	Mean	Std	Decision
10	Lack of awareness about technical education.	3.56	1.07	Agree
11	Busy work schedules.	2.50	1.15	Agree
12	Heavy family responsibilities.	2.70	1.14	Agree
13	Preference for conventional academic fields.	2.52	1.29	Agree
14	Gender stereotypes about technical careers.	3.90	0.69	Agree
15	Inadequate infrastructure in technical schools.	3.00	0.97	Agree
16	Lack of qualified technical teachers.	2.50	1.10	Agree
17	Distance and poor accessibility to technical colleges.	3.50	0.74	Agree
18	Lack of financial resources	3.90	1.10	Agree
19	General financial hardships.	3.67	1.13	Agree



In table 2 above, all items were rated above the 2.50 cut-off, indicating that parents face numerous challenges. Key issues include financial difficulties, gender stereotypes, lack of awareness, and inadequate school infrastructure. These barriers collectively hinder effective parental support for technical education.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal that while parents in Delta State play supportive emotional and moral roles such as encouraging obedience and attending school events, they fall short in academic guidance and consistent engagement with their children's learning processes. This aligns with Sheridan (2018), who emphasized that a balanced parent-teacher relationship enhances students' academic and emotional growth. The inability of parents to monitor academic progress or collaborate with teachers, as highlighted in this study, may weaken students' performance and confidence in technical subjects.

Additionally, the data indicates that most parents face a complex web of challenges, including financial constraints, cultural biases favoring academic over vocational paths, and a lack of awareness about the value of technical education. These findings echo those of OECD (2014) and Kaspi-Baruch (2013), who reported that socioeconomic background and parental perceptions significantly influence children's educational outcomes and career preferences.

Notably, gender stereotypes were rated highly among the challenges. This suggests a continued bias against female participation in technical fields, a concern that has implications for inclusivity and gender equity in technical education. Financial hardship was the most significant barrier, supporting Uwaezuoke (2020), who noted that poverty affects not only educational access but also the quality of parental involvement.



Overall, the study underscores the need for strategic interventions to increase parental awareness, promote technical education advocacy, and provide targeted support to families to reduce barriers to children's educational success in technical fields.

Conclusion

This study examined the roles of parents in the technical education of their children in Delta State, Nigeria, and the challenges they face in fulfilling these roles. The findings revealed that while many parents provide moral support, encouragement, and attend school events, they are less involved in academic monitoring, teacher collaboration, and financial support. Additionally, parents face significant challenges such as lack of awareness, financial hardship, cultural biases against technical education, and gender stereotypes. These gaps in parental involvement may contribute to poor academic performance, low enrolment in technical colleges, and underdevelopment of technical manpower in the state. The success of technical education depends not only on the efforts of schools and government, but also on active and informed parental engagement. Therefore, strengthening the role of parents is crucial for improving students' outcomes in technical education and for achieving broader economic development goals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and educational authorities should organize community-based sensitization programs to educate parents about the importance and potential of technical education for national development and youth empowerment.
2. Parents should support their children's interest in technical fields by encouraging them to engage in holiday skill acquisition programs, creative projects, and technical hobbies at home.



3. Government should introduce targeted scholarship schemes or financial assistance programs for students in technical colleges to ease the financial burden on parents.
4. Stakeholders should advocate for gender-inclusive technical education by addressing cultural and gender stereotypes that discourage female participation in technical careers.
5. Schools should foster stronger parent-teacher relationships through regular meetings, progress updates, and joint problem-solving strategies to better support students' development.

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