

The Role of Technical Education Programme in Creating Job Opportunities for Technical Education Graduates in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study determined the role of technical education programme in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State. A sample size of 100 male postgraduate students out of a population 250 male postgraduate technical education students through purposive sampling technique was used for the study while 32 female postgraduate technical education students were used without sampling. The instrument used for data collection was a - 28 items questionnaire structured in a – 4 points rating scale which was validated by three experts in technical education and its reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained using Cronbach's Alpha co-efficient method. Men and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The major findings revealed that electrical/electronics technology skills such as ability to design and interpret drawings, ability to use modern equipment to detect electrical faults are skills that can create job opportunities for technical education graduates, building technology skills such as ability to design building plan, ability to interpret building plan are skills that can create job opportunities as supervisor or technician for technical education graduates upon graduation in Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others, that modern equipment, tools and machines should be supplied to all the technical training institutions workshops for effective teaching and learning process. In addition, institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should ensure that they liaise with industries around them to form partnership to ease the impartation of necessary effective skills that graduates of technical education needed for employment upon graduation.

Keywords: *Technical education, Job opportunities, Technology, skills, Graduates'.*

Introduction

At present there seems to be no contention that one of the major parameter for measuring a country's economic growth, development and self-reliance is the level of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Technical education is an aspect of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme that trains the recipients in technical related skills as well as general education at specific levels with the aim of preparing the youths for meaningful participation in the world of work (Madumere, 2021). According to Akinwumi (2022) technical education is an aspect of TVET that enables individual to acquire practical skills as well as basic scientific knowledge that will prepare individual for work in business and industry. Maduka (2019) stated that technical education basically is an aspect of education that mainly focuses on the enrichment of the capabilities that influence the effective psychomotor or cognitive domains of individual in readiness for entry into the world of work in order to satisfy their intrinsic and extrinsic value, work and aspiration.

The goals of technical education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in her National Policy on Education shall be to; provide trained manpower in the applied science, technology and business particularly at craft, advance craft and technical levels, provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, commercial and economic development, and give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals for self-reliance economically. Training of individuals that can help them to achieve the above stated goals through technical educational programme according to Ezeobi cited in James and Agwui (2018) are in Electrical/Electronic Technology, Building Technology, Metal work Technology, Wood work Technology, Auto-Mobile Technology and other related trades.

Several views and opinions (Kachukwu, 2019; Maxwell, 2021; Nwaigwe, 2018) reported that in past years many scholars have argued on the meaning and the place of technical education both at the levels of secondary and university respectively. These development have created moves in the inclusion of some vocational and technical subjects and courses in the curriculum of both pre-primary, post-primary and even tertiary institutions all with the view to achieve the needed employable skills in the development of the youth and the society at large.

Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) seeks to related education to employment, job creation and self-reliance. Therefore, Akinjide (2022) sees technical education as the type of education which develops the mental and physical qualities of individual thereby increasing their skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for utilizing the national resources required for economic development of the nation and for their own self-employment. According to Ovie cited in Abu and Bolaji (2019) identified some of the electrical/electronic technology skills required by individual in technical related areas for successful employment opportunities after graduation in the industries or self-employment to include; abilities to design drawing of a living house, ability to carry-out job specification according to electrical installation drawing, ability to interpret and revise drawing and documentation including layout and circuit drawing, ability to select and install single and double insulated cables inside ducts conduit and flexible conducts, ability to practice different type of installation for specific environment, ability to trouble shoot to check electrical faults using modern equipment and ability to repair faults in electrical/electronic equipments like radio, television, computer and others.

Building technology skills is another important and essential skills that can help individual that acquire these skills to either gain employment in establishments/industries or become self-employed upon graduation. Ukachukwu and Akpan (2019) stated that building technology skills will help the individual to design, interpret building plan to clients and also carry out setting out operation in a build site. Also Natom and Tolofiri (2018) stated that building technology skills will enable one to function in building construction industries as site manager, supervisor or technician. Malami and Sani (2017) identified building technology skills which the individual should possess for gainful employment to include; ability to design building plan, ability to interpret building plan to clients, ability to carry out setting of building plan in a building site, ability to carry out building estimate to clients, ability to supervise building work in a building site and ability to select and make use of required materials for a building project.

Another important and essential aspect of technical education programme that can also help an individual to acquire knowledge and skills for successful employment upon graduation in this era of technological advancement all over the world according to Giadon (2018) is Auto-mobile skills. Auto-mobile technology according to Kalu cited in Chukwuma (2019) is an aspect of technical education programme that deals with the study of auto-mobile engines. Any individual that acquired sound knowledge and skills in auto-mobile technology in carrying out operations like dismantling and coupling of engine parts can function as manager or supervisor in any of the auto-mobile industries. Kuson (2021) stated that for an individual to function as manager, supervisor or technician in an auto-mobile industry, such individual must be well versed in the following specific auto-mobile technology training which include; use of modern equipment to detect auto-mobile faults, communicate ideas, thoughts, information and message inform of reports, the skills to interpret faults, knowledge of the categories of equipment and their intended uses and differences, the concept and theory of specific automated workshop equipments, hand on equipment training and other related skills. These skills according to Okwenze (2017) has helped many graduates who has acquired these skills to secure employment in different auto-mobile industries and as well open up their own workshops in other nations Nigeria inclusive especially in this era that auto-mobile technology is increasing in many developed countries like Japan, America, Britain and China.

Statement of the Problem

Technical education graduates upon graduation are supposed to have three options according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013) in her National Policy on Education namely to: either secure employment in the industries, pursue further education at higher level or set up their own business and become self-employed or employ others. Unfortunately, most of these graduates seem to lack the expected knowledge and skills that will help them to gain employment. Giadon (2018) noted that knowledge and skills that technical education graduates are suppose to acquire during the period of training are often hindered during their training in the school because of some obvious problems. James and Agwi (2018) observed that the major reason why technical education graduates do not acquire the expected knowledge and sills that they need to acquire while they were in school is because of poor equipment and facilities, unavailability of instructional materials, outdated curriculum, lack of qualified technology educators, and many

others which have so much hindered effective teaching and learning of technical education courses. Nwaigwe (2018) pointed out that in recent times, there have been unprecedented outcry and complains from both educators and managers of industries on the suitability of our graduates in job placement. Therefore, it is as a result of these problems mentioned that led the researchers to investigate the role of technical education programme in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to investigate the role of technical education programme in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State. Specifically, the study was conducted to:

1. Determine the role of electrical/electronic technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.
2. Determine the role of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.
3. Determine the role of Auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the role of Electrical/Electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State?
2. What is the role of Building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State?
3. What is the role of Auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students regarding the role of Electrical/Electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students regarding the role of Building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant different between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students regarding the role of Auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey design. According to Nworgu (2015) descriptive survey design is aimed at collecting data or, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics feature or facts about a given population. The population of the study was 282 made up of 250 male and 32 female post-graduate technical education students in the Department of Technical

Education, Rivers State University, Nkpolu – Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolomini, Port Harcourt as at 2021/2022 academic session obtained from the office of heads of Department. Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain from the population of male students a sample of 100 male students while all the 32 female students were used in the study without sampling because their population size was considered manageable.

A self-structured 28-items questionnaire designed by the researchers titled “The Role of Technical Education Programme in Creating Job Opportunities (TRTEPCJOP) was the instrument used for data collection from the respondents. The instrument was constructed on a 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts in Technology Education Department from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt and two experts from Measurement and Evaluation Department, Rivers State University, Port Harcourt. The instrument’s reliability was ascertained with the use of Cronbach’s Alpha Correlation Method in which a reliability coefficient of 0.80 was obtained. A total of 132 copies of the instrument were administered to the respondents directly by the researchers with the help of five research assistants.

The total number of copies of the instrument retrieved after two weeks was 125 (95 male students’ and 30 female students’) and were used for the data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were the statistical tools used to answer the research questions. Standard deviation was used to show homogeneity in the responses of the respondents. Thus, it was decided that an item with a calculated mean value equal or greater than 2.50 (2.50 – 4.00) is regarded as “Agree” while an item is regarded as “Disagree” if the mean value falls below the criterion mean of 2.50. Z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In testing the hypotheses, the null hypotheses were not rejected if the calculated z-test is less and equal to the critical z-value. On the other hand were the calculated z-value is greater than the critical z-value the null hypotheses were rejected.

Results

The results of the study are presented in Tables 1 – 6 in line with the research questions and hypotheses.

Research Question 1: What is the role of Electrical/Electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates’ in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on the role of Electrical/Electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State.

S/ N	ELECTRICAL/ELECTRONICS TECHNOLOGY SKILLS	Male Students' N = 95			Female Students' N = 30		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n	\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n
1.	Ability to design and interpret drawings.	3.55	0.46	Agree	3.31	0.41	Agree
2.	Ability to carry out specification.	3.34	0.58	Agree	2.92	0.52	Agree
3.	Ability to interpret and revise electrical drawings	3.29	0.61	Agree	3.20	0.58	Agree
4.	Ability to select and install simple conduit	3.50	0.60	Agree	2.85	0.57	Agree
5.	Ability to practice different types of installation.	3.51	0.53	Agree	3.01	0.51	Agree
6.	Ability to use modern equipment to detect faults.	3.31	0.64	Agree	3.25	0.56	Agree
7.	Ability to repair faults in electrical/electronic equipment.	3.41	0.67	Agree	2.87	0.79	Agree
8.	Ability to carry out estimate for electrical jobs.	3.51	0.66	Agree	3.00	0.59	Agree
9.	Ability to prepare simple job order.	3.25	0.70	Agree	2.75	0.75	Agree
10	Ability to carry out linkage fault after installation.	3.27	0.72	Agree	2.93	0.51	Agree
Average Grand Mean/SD		3.30	0.62		3.01	0.59	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The data in Table 1 revealed that all the ten items on the role of electrical/electronics technology in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers state had their mean ranging from 2.75 to 3.55 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that all the ten items are of roles of electrical/electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers state. Furthermore, Table 1 revealed that male students' had a standard deviation ranging from 0.46 to 0.72 while the female students had a standard deviation ranging from 0.41 to 0.79. These indicate that the respondents were homogenous or close in their opinions.

Research Question 2: What is the role of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on the role of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State

S/ N	BUILDING TECHNOLOGY SKILLS	Male Students' N = 95			Female Students' N = 30		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n	\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n
11.	Ability to design building plan.	3.41	0.66	Agree	2.80	0.70	Agree
12.	Ability to interpret building plan to clients.	3.00	0.71	Agree	2.91	0.68	Agree
13.	Ability to carry out setting of a building plan.	3.52	0.61	Agree	2.70	0.75	Agree
14.	Ability to make accurate quotation for building construction work.	3.50	0.63	Agree	3.00	0.70	Agree
15.	Ability to supervise building projects.	2.85	0.68	Agree	2.61	0.71	Agree
16.	Ability to select and use building materials.	3.48	0.60	Agree	2.50	0.73	Agree
17.	Exhibit self-confidence in directing others in a construction site.	3.61	0.59	Agree	2.60	0.72	Agree
18.	Communicate ideas, thoughts, information and message information of reports.	3.25	0.69	Agree	2.72	0.65	Agree
19.	Ability to use different word processing package/software in designing.	2.95	0.70	Agree	2.59	0.68	Agree
20.	Ability to make use of modern equipments to carryout building work.	3.15	0.65	Agree	2.80	0.64	Agree
Average Grand Mean/SD		3.27	0.65		2.72	0.58	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The data in Table 2 revealed that all the ten items on the role of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State had their mean ranging from 2.50 to 3.61 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that all the ten items are of roles of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State. Furthermore, Table 2 revealed that male students' had a standard deviation ranging from 0.59 to 0.70 while the female students had a standard deviation ranging from 0.64 to 0.75. These indicates that the respondents were homogeneous or close in their opinions.

Research Question 3: What is the role of auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Responses of Respondents on the role of auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State

S/ N	AUTOMOBILE TECHNOLOGY SKILLS	Male Students' N = 95			Female Students' N = 30		
		\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n	\bar{x}	SD	Decisio n
21.	Skill to exhibit self-confidence on the use of modern equipment to detect faults on car engine.	3.30	0.61	Agree	2.66	0.60	Agree
22.	Ability to communicate ideas, thoughts, information and message inform of report.	3.00	0.64	Agree	2.58	0.63	Agree
23.	Ability to interpret engine faults.	3.52	0.59	Agree	3.00	0.57	Agree
24.	Knowledge of the categories of equipments and their uses.	3.41	0.60	Agree	2.91	0.59	Agree
25.	Ability to dismantle and couple car engine parts.	2.95	0.70	Agree	2.85	0.56	Agree
26.	Ability to interpret engine drawings.	3.60	0.57	Agree	2.81	0.68	Agree
27.	Knowledge of parts of car engine and their functions.	3.35	0.61	Agree	2.74	0.55	Agree
28.	Ability to supervise and direct others in automobile workshop.	3.44	0.58	Agree	3.05	0.59	Agree
Average Grand Mean/SD		3.32	0.64		2.93	0.60	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

The data in Table 3 revealed that all the eight items on the role of Auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State had their mean ranging from 2.5 to 3.60 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that all the eight items are of roles of auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State. Furthermore, Table 3 revealed that male students' had a standard deviation ranging from 0.58 to 0.70 while the female students had a standard deviation ranging from 0.55 to 0.68. These indicate that the respondents were homogeneous or close in their opinions.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students regarding the role of electrical/electronic technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis Responses Regarding Roles of Electrical/Electronic Technology Skills in Creating Job Opportunities for Technical Education Graduates' in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	P	Z.cal.	Z.crit.	Decision
Male Students'	95	3.39	0.62	128	0.05	0.04	1.96	Accepted
Female Students'	30	3.01	0.59					

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis on Table 4 revealed that z.cal (0.04) is less than z.crit (1.96). This indicates that the first null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students' regarding roles of electrical/electronics technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students' regarding the role of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis Responses Regarding Roles of Building Skills in Creating Job Opportunities for Technical Education Graduates' in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	P	Z.cal.	Z.crit.	Decision
Male students'	95	3.27	0.65	128	0.05	0.02	1.96	Accepted
Female students'	30	2.72	0.58					

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis on Table 5 revealed that z.cal (0.02) is less than z.crit (1.96). This indicates that the second null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students' regarding roles of building technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students regarding the role of auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis Responses Regarding Roles of Auto-mobile Skills in Creating Job Opportunities for Technical Education Graduates in Rivers State.

Respondents	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	P	Z.cal.	Z.crit.	Decision
Male students'	95	3.32	0.64	128	0.05	0.06	1.96	Accepted
Female students'	30	2.93	0.60					

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Analysis on Table 6 revealed that z.cal (0.06) is less than z.crit (1.96). This indicates that the third null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female technical education post-graduates students' regarding roles of auto-mobile technology skills in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates' in Rivers State.

Findings of the Study

The following are the findings of the study:

1. Ten electrical/electronics technology skills were identified by technical education post-graduate students as skills that can create jobs opportunities like, manager, supervisor or technician for technical education graduates upon graduation.
2. Ten building technology skills were identified by technical education post-graduate students as skills that can create immediate job opportunities like, manager, supervisor or technician for technical education graduates upon graduation.
3. Eight Auto-mobile technology skills were identified by technical education post-graduate students as skills that can create job opportunities like, manager, supervisor or technician for technical education graduates upon graduation.
4. There was no significant difference in the opinion of both post-graduates technical education students on building technology skills that can create jobs opportunities like manager, supervisor, engineer or technician for technical education graduates upon graduation.

Discussion of Findings

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that all the ten items were accepted as electrical/electronics technology skills that can create jobs opportunities such as manager, engineer, supervisor and technician for technical education graduates' in Rivers State because all the items met the benchmark mean of 2.50 and above. This finding is in line with Ovie cited in Abu and Bolaji (2019) who identified some of the electrical/electronics skills required by individual in technical related areas for successful employment opportunities after graduation to include: ability to design and interpret simple electrical installation drawings, ability to carry out job specification, ability to practice different type of installation for specific environment, ability to trouble shoot to check electrical fault using modern equipment, ability to repair electrical/electronics faults.

The result in Table 2 showed that all the ten items were accepted as building technology skills that can create job opportunities such as manager, supervisor and technician for technical

education graduates' in Rivers state. The finding is in line with Malami and Sani (2017) who identified some of the building technology skills required by individual in technical related areas for successful employment opportunities upon graduation to include: ability to design building plan, ability to interpret building plan to clients, ability to carry out setting of building plan in a building site, ability to supervise others in a building site. Similarly, the study also agreed with Nation and Tolofiri (2018) who is of the view that building technology skill will enable individual to function in a building contraction industries as site manager, supervisor or technician.

The result in Table 3 showed that all the eight items were accepted as auto-mobile technology skills that can create job opportunities such as engineer, manager, supervisor for technical education graduates' in Rivers State. The findings of this study also were corroborated in the findings of Kuson (2021) who opined that for an individual to function as a manager, supervisor or technician in nay auto-mobile industry or workshop, that such individual must be well versed in the following specific auto-mobile technology training that will help them to acquire the following skills: skill to use modern equipment to detect engine fault, skill to communicate ideas, thought, information and message inform of reports, knowledge of the categories of equipment and their intended uses, the concept and theory of specific automated workshop equipments, hand on equipment training and other related skills. Similarly, the study also agreed with Okwenge (2017) who is of the view that auto-mobile technology skills has helped many technical education graduates that has acquired these skills to either secure employment in the industry or became self-employed in other nations especially in this era of technological advancement especially in auto-technology in advance countries like Japan, America, Britain and China.

The result of three hypotheses tested showed that all hypotheses tested were not rejected. This further showed in the opinion of the respondents that there were no divergent opinion on the raised issues in the research bothering on role of technical education programme in creating job opportunities for technical education graduates in Rivers State.

Conclusion

The study has shown that technology related skills in electrical/electronics technology, building technology and auto-mobile technology can create job opportunities such as engineer, manager, supervisor and technician for technical education graduates' upon their graduation and based on the findings: It concluded that technical education is a panacea for unemployment and will help to create job opportunities for technical education graduates in particular. This point to the need for adequate provision of fund to procure modern tools, equipment and machines for effective training of students in technology related programmes in order to achieve the objectives of technical education programme in Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. Modern equipment, tools and machines should as a matter of urgent be supplied to all the technical training institutions in Nigeria for effective teaching and learning processing;

2. Modern technology is seriously needed to be integrated without delay in this era of technology advancement. This integration should be enshrined into the technical education programme curriculum in Nigerian universities;
3. Higher institutions should ensure that technical education students are normally posted to industries that is related to their area of specialization for their industrial training programme;
4. Institutions of higher learning in Nigeria should ensure that they liaise with industries around them to form partnership to ease the impartation of necessary effective skills that graduates of technical education needed for employment upon graduation;
5. The National Directorate of Employment (NDE) should intensify effort to re-orient unemployed graduates on the benefits of self-reliant skills and not solely relying on government for paid jobs.

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