
SINGLE PARENTING: A CONSTRAINT TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ENUGU STATE

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ABSTRACT: *The study investigated the impact of single parenting on the acquisition and development of technical education in Enugu State. The purpose of the study was to determine the consequences and, the constraints the concept of single parenting has imposed on the sustainable development of technical education in Enugu State. A total of 120 respondents made up of males and female students of selected technical colleges in each geopolitical zones of Enugu state were used for the study. Three research questions guided the study. Three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Data was collected using structured questionnaires. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient used to test the reliability of the instrument yielded 0.82. The study revealed that children from single parents suffer from financial troubles, family instability, emotional trauma, harsh socio-economic pressures and stigmatization. As a result of these constraints, children from single parents are characterized with low pace of comprehension, finds it difficult to purchase instructional materials, unable to attend enhancement programs, highly vulnerable to drugs and alcohol. The study also revealed that, these children get frustrated and drop out of school. It was recommended that there should be the creation of special scholarship board for children of single parents interested in technical education by the state and federal government as this will help to address the issue of right deprivation and handle the cases of poor skill acquisitions. Equally recommended is the development of appropriate counselling techniques and programs in all the technical colleges.*

KEYWORDS: *single-parenting, constraints, sustainable development, technical education*

INTRODUCTION

Technical education is defined as the activity of teaching scientific knowledge, principles and skills to the intending learners in line with the professional practice of engineering (Dym , Agogino, Eris, Frey and Liefer 2005). This form of education is typically accompanied by additional supervised training in other to dully equip the learner to function accordingly. Generally, education is seen as a basic force for societal economic and industrial development. Douglas and Kalyandurg (2012) asserted that no nation can develop to its full capacity in sciences and technology without an effective engineering craft and technical education. As such every

individual has a right to quality education and each learner learns better when exposed to balanced parenting. United Nations Education and Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO) further defined technical education as all the forms and levels of education process involving, in addition to general knowledge, the study of technologies, and related sciences, the acquisition of practical skills, know-how, attitudes and understanding related to occupations in the various sectors of the economy and social life (Douglas, 2004). It produces individuals for all types of industries. Uniamikogbo (2007) indicated that industrialization of a country could not have been possible if not for the introduction of technical education that prepares students to possess the needed technical skills for technological development of a given society.

Enoma (2010) and Okumadewa (2017) independently defined Sustainable development as the principles for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of the system to provide resources on which the economy and the society depends. The desired result is the state of society where living conditions are used to reinforce human needs attainment without undermining the integrity of the system. In another form, sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future to meet their own needs. In sustaining the development of any nation and its citizen, the place of technical education becomes vital. This is because, technical education is characterized with technical skill and knowledge acquisition which is the bedrock of solving environmental, health, food, economic, commerce and other developmental challenges. Technical education has been adjudged to play important roles in ensuring the rapid growth and development of a country's economy as well as improving the quality of life of its citizenry. As such, there is an important link between a country's economic growth and technical education capacity building. The present state of technical education has not been promising in Enugu State. This is because large number of students interested in this form of education pursuits are predominantly prohibited due to societal and family challenges basically occurring in the form of single parent's syndrome.

Until recently, single parenting is alien to Nigerian family culture. Where they exist at all, they are ignored as exceptional phenomenon. However, the aggressive influence of Western culture has impacted so much on traditional family system in Nigeria. This coupled with increasing socio-economic demands on traditional family life and the attendant social complexities have worked to erode strong positive family values associated with traditional Nigerian families. Consequently, single parenting hitherto considered an aberration in the recent past is now gaining societal acceptance; but not without its negative tendencies.

Single parenting according to Nwachukwu (1998) is a situation in which one of the two individuals (i.e., mother or father) involved in the conception of a child becomes solely responsible for the upbringing of the child. Single parenthood arises when either the male or female parent decides to produce and raise a child or children outside of wedlock. It could also come about as a result of

divorce, separation of various kinds or death of any of the spouses (Hill, Yeung, and Duncan 2001; McLanahan, 2009). Thus, leaving the responsibility of raising the child to the surviving partner. Single parenting was defined in a broad manner as a situation in which one of the two individuals, involved in the conception of the child is being responsible for the upbringing of the child (McLaran,1986). Single parenthood may arise when either the male or female decides to produce and rear a child or children outside wedlock Ortese (1998).

Children from single-parent homes are likely to suffer deprivation and denial of some rights and opportunities. In the last few decades, scholars, psychologists, educationists, and counsellors have made attempts to determine the extent of the influence of single parenting on the emotional and physical development of the child (Ortesse, 1998; Harkness, 2016; Fomby and Osborne, 2017; Susan Harknes, Gregg Fernandez-Salgado, 2020). Some of the studies reviewed focused more on adolescents and teenagers raised by female single parents in the western clime. Therefore, it became pertinent to comparatively examine the same relationship in African context where extant studies of such correlations are very minimal if not lacking. This is one of the areas this study contributes to knowledge. Similarly, as against most local and international studies (Nwachukwu 1998; Cheng, Dunn, O'connor, & Golding, 2006; Bronte-Tinkew, Scott, & Lilja,2010) that is limited in scope, this study seems encompassing in scope as it covers causes, possible effects and constraints of single parenting in South-eastern part of Nigeria. It is noteworthy that to the knowledge of the authors, no study done in the scope of single parenting had considered the educational development of technical students. This makes this study very unique as it addresses the need for development of a socially deprived sect in the society. This is the implication of the study.

Not much effort has been put into adopting a more holistic approach to evaluating comprehensively the totality of relationship between the psychological well-being and type of academic career pursuit of children raised by single parents. It is worthy to note here that, parents are mainly responsible for the educational and career development of their children. However, divorce and separation of various kinds or death of one spouse may leave the role in the hands of a single parent (Harkness, 2016; Fomby & Osborne, 2017).

Constraint according to Webster's English dictionary is the state of been physically restricted from engaging or doing something, e.g. a limitation. It is a condition imposed on someone from achieving some particular objectives. The constraints envisaged in the concept of single parenting in relation to sustainable development of technical education was what necessitated this study.

Statement of Problems

Technical education has been adjudged to play vital roles in the continued existence of mankind. It provides positive opportunities for economic and technological development of a society.

Despite its fundamental functions in addressing societal, educational and technological developments, there exists a high degree of constraints towards acquiring this type of learning. Consequently, this has contributed to scarce churning out of technical personnel's that will drive the state economic goals in different industries and firms. It is therefore expedient to investigate the constraints single parenting as a factor has imposed on the sustainable development of technical education. Deprived privileges to acquire technical education and poor skill acquisition that is prevalent in our societies traceable to children from single parents constitutes the problems to which this study was set to study.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to investigate the constraints the concept of single parenting has imposed on the sustainable development of technical education in Enugu State. Specifically, it sought to ascertain the following:

1. Causes of single parenting in Enugu State
2. Effects of single parenting on sustainable development of technical education.
3. Constraints single parenting pose on technical education development.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the common causes of single parenting in Enugu State?
2. What are the effects of single parenting to the sustainable development of technical education in Enugu State?
3. What are the constraints single parenting poses to the development of education in technical Enugu State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significance mean difference between the responses of males and female students of Technical colleges in Enugu State on the causes of single parenting.

H02: There is no significance mean difference between the responses of males and female students of Technical colleges in Enugu State on the effects of single parenting to the sustainable development technical education.

H03: There is no significance mean difference between the responses of males and female students of Technical colleges in Enugu State on the constraints single parenting poses to the continued development of technical education.

METHOD

The research adopted was descriptive survey design. Structured research questionnaire used for the data collection were first face validated by three experts from the departments of industrial technical education, Science education and psychology of the University of Nigeria Nsukka. This approach was considered appropriate for the study because it would enable the collection and analysis of data from respondents considered to be the exact representation of the entire group. A total of 120 male and female students of selected technical colleges in Enugu state were used for the study. Three research questions guided the study and three hypotheses were formulated which were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Relevant literatures on the purpose of the study were reviewed. The data collected with the instrument were analyzed using mean (\bar{X}) and standard deviation (SD). While the mean and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions, the t-statistic was used to test the null hypotheses. The midpoint response category of 3.50 was used as a decision point. Any item with a mean value of 3.50 and above was considered agreed. The decision rule for the t-test was based on the critical value at 0.05 level of significance. Whenever the p-value. was equal or greater than 0.05, the null hypotheses were accepted. Whereas, when the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypotheses was rejected. A pilot study was conducted to determine the reliability of the instrument using 20 respondents randomly selected from the Government Technical College Ania-Ohafia in Abia State. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was used to test the reliability of the pilot study.

Area of the Study

The study was carried out in Enugu state, South-East Nigeria. Three government technical colleges situated in the three senatorial districts of the state were used for the study. They included Government Technical College Nsukka, Government Technical College Enugu, and Government Technical College Iwollo. The choice of these colleges was motivated by the fact that they are the building blocks for sustainable technical education development.

Population for the study

The study population was limited to senior secondary school students only in the selected technical colleges. To ensure that a representative sample was selected from the population, the researcher defined certain selection criteria used in selecting participants for the study. Students in senior secondary classes who are from the ages of 15 and above which are considered as the age of reasoning were sampled for the study. A total of 120 students were randomly selected from the 3 chosen government technical colleges in the state. Though random sampling were used, the researcher ensured parity in the number of students selected from single homes, intact homes and those with adequate knowledge of the concept of single parenting.

Instrument for Data Collection

A 25-item 5-point Likert scale type questionnaire was developed for the study. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A provided personal information of the respondents which included; gender, age and type of home living in. While part B was a 25-item on the causes of single parenting, effects of single parenting on engineering education students and, constraints single parenting poses on continued acquisition of engineering education

Validation of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation. Draft copies of the questionnaire were given to three experts in the departments of Science Education, Industrial Technical Education and Psychology in the university of Nigeria, Nsukka. Their suggestions and recommendations were dully incorporated into the draft questionnaire. Cronbach Alpha value obtained from the pilot study was 0.82

Method of Data collection and Analysis

The researchers administered and collected the instrument by hand. Descriptive statistics were used to test the mean and standard deviation in order to answer the research questions while the inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses. Raw data initially coded was fed into the SPSS program which thereafter analyzed the mean, standard deviation and ANOVA. The cut-off point set for accepting or rejecting an item was set at 3.50 and above. Hence, items with mean values of 3.50 and above were accepted while items with mean values less than 3.50 were not accepted. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Out of a total of 120 questionnaire distributed, 117 of them were retrieved making up a 97.50% return rate.

Results

Table 1: Mean and SD rating of male and female students of technical colleges in Enugu State on the common causes of single parenting

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Divorce	4.54	0.62	Agreed
2.	Brake up at birth	4.19	0.89	Agreed
3.	Abandonment	4.15	1.01	Agreed
4.	Separation	4.19	0.76	Agreed
5.	Child birth by single woman	4.38	0.67	Agreed
6.	Single person adoption	3.69	1.26	Agreed
Grand Mean		4.19	0.87	

Table 1 above shows the responses of male and female students of Technical Colleges in Enugu State on the causes of single parenting. Respondents agreed to all the items as shown in the Table I with mean values ranging from 3.69 to 4.38 respectively. Findings indicated that divorce, brake

up at birth, abandonment, separation, child birth by a single woman and single person adoption are the common causes of single parenting in our society.

Table 2: Summary of ANOVA Analysis for Test of Significance in the Mean Scores of Males and Female Students of Technical Colleges on the Common Causes of Single Parenting in Enugu State.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Causes of Single Parenting	Between Groups 94.654	1	94.654	8.944	.003
	Within Groups 1217.039	115	10.583		
	Total 1311.692	116			

The result in table 2 showed that the F-value for the group stood at 8.944 with significant of F at .003 which is less than .05 set for the test. Hence the null-hypothesis was therefore rejected. The result showed that male and female students of technical schools hold different views on common causes of single parenting in Enugu State.

Table 3: Mean and SD rating of male and female students of technical colleges in Enugu state on the effects of single parenting to the sustainable development of technical education in Enugu State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
7.	Slow pace of comprehension	3.73	0.89	Agreed
8.	Difficulties in purchasing instructional materials	4.25	0.65	Agreed
9.	Difficulties in attending enhancement programs	4.02	0.76	Agreed
10.	Development of low self-esteem	3.65	1.14	Agreed
11.	psychological imbalance	3.73	1.01	Agreed
12.	Non-challant attitude to learning	3.33	1.14	Disagreed
13.	frustration	4.00	0.77	Agreed
14.	Delivery of unplanned babies while in school	4.17	0.95	Agreed
15.	Drop out of school	3.96	0.82	Agreed
16.	Vulnerability to drugs and alcohol	3.83	0.91	Agreed
	Grand Mean	3.87	0.90	

Table 3 shows respondents rating on the consequences of single parenting to the sustainable development of engineering education in Enugu State. Items nos.7, 8,9,10,11,13,14,15,16 had mean values of 3.50 and above on the effects traceable to single parenting on the sustainable development of engineering education while item nos. 6 had a mean value less than 3.50. the findings revealed that respondents agreed with all the consequences itemized by the researchers

through which technical education is being affected due to the effect of single parenting except for item nos. 12 (non-challant attitude) which the respondents did not agree as part of the consequences.

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA Analysis for Test of Significance in the Mean Scores of Males and Female Students of Technical Colleges on the Consequences of Single Parenting to the Sustainable Development of Technical Education in Enugu State.

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Consequences of Single Parenting to the Development of Technical Education	Between Groups	10.170	1	10.170		.555
	Within Groups	2108.411	115	18.334		.458
	Total	2118.581	116			

The result in Table 4 showed that an F-ratio of .555 with associated probability value of .458 was obtained with regards to the difference in the influence of gender on the consequences of single parenting to sustainable development of engineering education. Since the associated probability is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected. Thus, the result showed that males and female students of technical schools hold same views on the effects of single parenting to the development of technical education in Enugu State.

Table 5: Mean and SD rating of male and female students of technical colleges in Enugu state on the constraints single parenting poses to learners which led to the unsustainable development of technical education in Enugu State.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
17.	Impositions of financial troubles	4.69	0.51	Agreed
18.	Presence of family instability	4.33	0.75	Agreed
19.	Imposition of harsh socio-economic pressure	4.15	0.87	Agreed
20.	Presence of periodic conflicts btw parents	4.29	0.68	Agreed
21.	Imposition of emotional trauma	4.22	0.69	Agreed
22.	Loss of self-confidence	4.27	0.74	Agreed
23.	Leads to developmental challenges	3.67	1.21	Agreed
24.	Leads to stigmatization	3.50	1.11	Agreed
	Grand Mean	4.14	0.82	

The data in Table 5 above shows the responses of males and female students of Technical Colleges in Enugu State on the constraints single parenting poses to learners of engineering education. Respondents agreed to all the items as shown in the Table 5 with mean values ranging from 3.50 to 4.69 respectively. This indicated that all the items listed by the researchers as constraints single

parenting poses to learners of technical education which have continuously led its unsustainable development in the state were all agreed upon by the respondents.

Table 6: Summary of ANOVA Analysis for Test of Significance in the Mean Scores of Male and Female Students of Technical Colleges on the Constraints Single Parenting Poses to the Continued Development of Technical Education in Enugu State.

Model		Sum Squares	ofDf	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Constraints Single Parenting Poses to the Development of Technical Education	Between Groups	16.772	1	16.772	1.706	.194
	Within Groups	1130.920		1159.834		
	Total	1147.692	116			

The results in Table 6 also showed that the F-ratio of 1.706 with associated probability value of .194 was obtained with regards to the difference in the mean responses of male and female students of technical schools on the constraints single parenting pose to the continued development of technical education. Since the associated probability of .194 is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no significant was accepted. This implies that males and female students of technical schools hold same views on the constraints listed by the researcher.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study from Table 1 - 2 revealed that divorce, brake up at birth, abandonment, separation, child birth by a single woman and single person adoption are the common causes of single parenting in the society. The findings were in agreement with the findings of Mclaran (1986) in a study on the consequences of single parenthood for subsequent generation where it was established that broken homes caused by the aforementioned factors has dire consequences for the children raised in them. These consequences she according to Mclaran is extended all through their lives.

The findings of Table 3 and 4 showed that slow pace of comprehension, difficulty in the purchase of instructional materials, development of low self-esteem, psychological imbalance, frustration, vulnerability to drugs and alcohol are among the consequences of a broken home which hinders the acquisition of technical education in Enugu State. This is in direct agreement with a study on the effects of single parenthood on educational aspiration and student's disengagement in Korea. It was discovered that students with a divorced or single parents, regardless of gender of the parents are much less likely to aspire to a four-year university education and most likely to be disengaged than their counterparts with intact parents (Park 2008).

The findings of Table 5 and 6 suggested that constraints such as financial troubles, family instability, harsh socio-economic pressures, emotional trauma, stigmatization, periodic conflicts between parents and loss of self-confidence hinders the sustainable developments of technical education especially to children of single parent home. This study is in agreement with the findings of a study on the investigation of economic activities of single parent families. Ozturk (2015) found out that 56.3% of the single parents cannot finance their children education; 74.80% become indebted to their employers thus resulting to low self-esteem and emotional trauma while, 57.10% cannot make savings or investments. The findings of the above researchers helped to support the justification of the results of this study.

CONCLUSIONS

The study identified that divorce, separation, child birth by a single person etc. constituted the core causes of single parenting in Enugu State. It was also discovered that slow pace of comprehension, vulnerability to drugs and alcohol, difficulty in the purchase of instructional material are among the consequences single parenting offer to children of broken homes. Finally, it was also revealed that impositions of financial troubles, presence of family instability, stigmatization etc. are constraints single parenting pose to children of broken homes towards the acquisition of technical education in Enugu state. The findings of the study are very relevant in repositioning technical education acquisition in Enugu state. This is because technical education has been proved to be the yardstick for technological development of a society. Thus, this is the major contributions of this study.

Recommendations

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

1. There should be the creation of special scholarship board for children of broken homes interested in technical education by the state and federal government. This will help to address the issue of right deprivation and as well, address the cases of poor skill acquisitions.
2. There should be an integration of marriage counselling into sex education in secondary schools and technical colleges as part of curriculum development. This will help to curb the menace of divorce and separation which has been proved to be the chief causes of single parenting in Enugu state.
3. Establishment of non-governmental organizations (NGOS) to cater for the education of children from broken homes should be strengthened.
4. There should be the development of appropriate counselling techniques and programs in all the colleges and secondary schools as this will go a long way to impede the speed at which single parenting is gaining acceptance in the society, seeing that it constrains the development of technical education of children of such background.

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