

# Acquisition of Economic and Soft Skills among OVC in Southwestern Nigeria

\*Salami, I. A., Akinjobi, A., Adeniyi, O. A., Salami, O. M., Rabi, A., Olaleye, D. O. and Sulaimon K. T.

Dept. of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan

\*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8090181>

Received: 13 September 2024; Accepted: 24 September 2024; Published: 12 October 2024

## ABSTRACT

The achievement of the goal of primary education in Nigeria, which targets giving every child the opportunities to develop life manipulative skills, has been a challenge among primary school leavers, most especially the Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC). In most cases, the limited resource accessible to the homes has not allow giving the OVC educational opportunity to secondary level. Despite the introduction of some pre-vocational subjects such as Home Economics and Agriculture into the primary school, there is no empirical or physical evidence to show that the pupils are equipped with much life manipulatives skills such as economic and soft skills. This study adopted descriptive survey to investigate the acquisition of economic and soft skills among OVC in some selected southwestern states of Nigeria. The study reveals that the economic skills of the OVC pupils were fairly developed (mean = 1.52). The economic sub-skills of endurance (Mean = 1.57) and self-dependence (mean = 1.51) were the most and least developed respectively. The soft skills of the OVC pupils were fairly developed (mean = 1.76) among other findings. Appropriate recommendations were proffered to enhance the development of economic and soft skills among the OVC in southwestern Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Orphan and vulnerable children; Soft skills; Economic skills; Primary school pupils; Southwestern Nigeria

## INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of primary education in Nigeria is to provide an opportunity for the child to develop life manipulative skills that will enable effective functionalism within the child's capacity in society. One might argue that what kind of 'effective functionalism' is expected of children of 11 years or thereabout who just completed primary education? But with the current age of technology explosion, besides laying foundation for lucrative and effective functionality at early years, there is the need for the children to develop positive orientation towards acquisition of life manipulative skills for self-reliance and self-dependent future. It is expected that in this age, primary school leavers should have acquired some developmentally appropriate craft skills, toys making, buy and selling ideas, ICT appreciation and operation skills, social capital creation skills among others.

Embracing the need to actualize this goal, amongst others have a variety of advantage to the present-day Nigeria, one of which Nanjwan, Eke and Plang (2019) submitted that it can make a decisive contribution to and have a widespread impact on poverty reduction. Consequently, some pre-vocational subjects such as Home Economics and Agriculture were introduced into the curriculum of primary education. However, achieving this goal among the regular primary school leavers, who gain the full attention of the parents and government, remains unattainable. Following the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the World Bank anticipated a jump in poverty headcount rate from 89 million in 2020 to 95 million in 2022 with a decline in population growth per economic growth (World Bank, 2022).

The worst-hit in Nigeria are the Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in different homes (Orphanage, Special children and Juvenile). Because of inadequate resources and facilities available to the homes, coupled with protection, safety and security challenges facing Nigerian society at large; many of these children have no

opportunity for secondary or tertiary education where they will be full trained to acquire job-related or life manipulative skills. Studies have also revealed that the OVC in Nigeria are not exposed to basic education that inculcates basic soft and economic skills (Mwoma and Pillay, 2016; Fleming, 2015).

In amplifying a need for urgent action from the economic dilemma facing the country, such that no one would be left behind, the World Bank Country Director for Nigeria asserted that it is clear that much need to be done to help lift millions of Nigerians out of poverty, including boosting and reforming education at the foundational phase, bolstering productive learning contents and jobs, and expanding social protection for every individual including the vulnerable (World Bank, 2018). Generally, it is believed that inculcating soft and economic skills in an individual will be beneficial to the society (Edu, 2016) but even beyond their application to business activities, they can be useful in closing the inequality gap that exists between the privileged children and those in marginalized groups such as OVC. There is the tendency for skill acquisition to be instrumental in their economic self-sufficiency through life. In consequence, this will help to develop human resources by making them more productive and useful to the society and in turn lead to massive economic expansion and advancement.

Several studies have submitted that primary school leavers in Nigeria lack necessary skills that are expected to form bases for the acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup>-century lucrative job requirement (Nwambam and Eze, 2017; World Bank, 2018). It has been established that some school leavers lack the requisite knowledge and skills for some industrial and technologically based jobs (Nwambam and Eze, 2017). Furthermore, the World Bank also revealed that Nigerian pupils attend school without learning what is needed for survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to prosper in life (World Bank, 2018). For instance, there is this argument in some quarters that, Nigeria is a country with a lot of mineral resources and arable land but mining and agriculture is either not taught at all or sparingly taught in Nigeria schools but language, most especially foreign language, is taught to the learners every day of the week.

### **Economic and soft skills**

Economic skills, in this study, can be described as the ability and knowledge that has to do with generating and managing money. Economic skills go hand-in-hand with soft skills which are essential for sustainable economic hard skills. Re-introduction of acquisition of economic and soft skills in pre and primary schools in Nigeria is highly important now when there is no clear demarcation between child labour and learning through real-life practical activities. Salami (2018) identifies some economic skills that should be exposed to children as; determination-for-success, invention, endurance, persistency and self-dependent. These skills are also known as economic hard skills. A child who is determined to succeed in life through legitimate job will engage in invention and be ready to endure any challenges that comes his/her ways. Such a child will persist in the production and will demonstrate self-dependent for such success to be achieved.

Soft skills on the other hand, are the personality traits of an individual that can improve one's social skills and support the creation of social capital. These skills help professional individuals to work and succeed more among peers. Salami (2018) identifies some of these skills that can be exposed to pupils as responsibility, flexibility, team spirit, integrity and courtesy. According to Tynan (2015), "soft skills are those human traits that are similar to 'people skills', 'non-cognitive skills' or 'emotional intelligence'". Also, Laureta (2018) identifies and classifies soft skills in three areas: personal, social and methodological soft skills. Personal soft skills are abilities that pertain to the individual alone, for example, commitment and tolerance to stress. Social soft skills are abilities required to relate to another person, such as team spirit, leadership and negotiation, while methodological soft skills are techniques or procedures used to solve a problem, question or situation. In addition, Salami (2018) submits that soft skills encompass the human character which supports human revenue-generation activities.

### **Theoretical background**

This situation, that is, inadequate acquisition of skills among primary school pupils, has led to the proposition of an educational theory known as Fun-rigor Theory of Child Development (Salami, 2018). To achieve such functional education that cuts across Science, Social Science and Language (SSL) for every child, particularly the OVC, this study hinges on the philosophy of Fun-rigor Theory (F-R Theory) which states that *injection of*

*some developmentally appropriate real-life rigors to the day-to-day fun activities of children will bring about the development of economic skills (determination-for-success, invention, endurance, persistence, self-dependent) and soft skills (responsibility, flexibility, team-spirit, integrity and courtesy) in the children hence, assure of success.* In this theory, 'Rigor', is the developmentally appropriate challenges that a child is allowed to face during his day-to-day activities at home and at the pre-school centres. There are some activities that the children are capable of doing but parents or childhood educational practitioners, in the name of caring and loving, used to do for the children. F-R theory uses rigor to mean such activities like a child laying the bed, tidy the room, sweeping, washing carrying school bags, walking to the school. At preschool centres and primary schools, such activities like cleaning the learning centre or classroom, arranging chairs and tables, washing the toilets, and many more activities that are age appropriate. 'Fun' activities are recognized as the play activities the children engaged in as stimulations for learning. These activities might be the self-chosen ones by the children and/or structured ones given by the parents or caregiver/teacher but must be actual activities that the children enjoy doing. The to-be developed skills with the activities are the economic skills (determination-for-success, invention, endurance, persistence and self-dependent) and other supporting soft skills (responsibility, flexibility, teamwork, integrity and courtesy) are needed to be legally successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Issues on OVC (Orphans and Vulnerable Children) in Nigeria**

Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Nigeria once estimated the number of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) nationwide to 17.5 million. However, it is particularly difficult to provide accurate figures of OVC living in institutions and other residential childcare facilities (Nnama-Okechukwu & Okoye, 2019). This is because many of these homes are neither registered nor properly regulated, but according to UNICEF (2017), about "2.7 million vulnerable children or 120 children per 100,000 between the ages of 0 and 17 years are estimated to be living in institutional care and other alternative child care arrangement globally". Although some religious bodies, international child welfare organisations, and philanthropists operate residential homes for abandoned, physically challenged orphans, as well as other categories of vulnerable children in need of care and protection, there is data gap, especially on the care provided to vulnerable children in these homes (Connelly & Ikpaahindi, 2016).

Studies show that OVC often face many challenges in their development while living in institutionalised homes. This may be due to the fact that homes often lack individualised care and a suitable environment which could help them fulfil their potentials to become contributors to the economy of the society. Studies have reported that 95% of OVC do not receive any type of medical, emotional, social, material or any school-related assistance (Munoz-Guzman, et al., 2015; Connelly & Ikpaahindi, 2016; Ojo & Olayinka, 2019). In a study conducted in Plateau State, Nigeria, education, food, shelter, health care, protection and economic empowerment were noted to be the most critical needs of OVC, in Nigeria (National Population Commission, 2014). This finding was also supported by Tagurum (2015) and Bamgboye et.al. (2020). More so, the situation with orphaned and vulnerable children is different from that of other children because they are frequently stigmatised. This stigmatisation is seen, especially in little provision of life skills in their education (Eniji & Archibong, 2021). It was added that, asserts that orphans and vulnerable children may continue to lack access to qualitative schooling because of additional costs of education, inability to go to school full-time, lack of educational capacity, lack of educational quality among others.

National Standards for Improving the Quality of Life of Vulnerable Children in Nigeria states that Nigeria has made progress in responding to the needs of OVC, but it can be noted that the progress is infinitesimal if compared to the dire needs of about 17.5 million Nigerian children who are categorised as Orphans and Vulnerable Children (FMWA&SD, 2014). Although a number of programmes/interventions to alleviate OVC's needs have been implemented in Nigeria, there is still a gap in some critical areas, such as their educational needs (Biemba, et al., 2009; Shann, et al., 2013; Bamgboye, 2017). Therefore, Bamgboye et.al. (2020) claims that emphasizing the early intervention in the life of OVC can result in increased educational attainment which is associated with a range of positive opportunities and outcomes, such as improved future employment opportunities.

Nigerian government, both the federal and state levels have made primary education not only compulsory but free of charges so as to create equal access to this basic education (FRN, 2013). Most OVC homes are expected

to leverage on this opportunity to ensure the children are given education. In other hands, some homes have access to several developmental partners and non-governmental organisations that support them to give education to the children in privately owned schools. The crux of this paper is the extent to which the primary education given to the children actually equip them to be self-reliance. One of the goals of primary education is to provide opportunities for the child to develop life manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limit of the child capacity. To what extent is this goal being achieved among the primary school leaving certificate holders? How much of the economic and soft skills are impacted in the pupils before completing the primary education. The only way answers can be provided for these questions is to carry out an empirical study on acquisition of economic and soft skills among the primary school pupils, hence this study.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to determine the extent to which orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) acquire economic and soft skills during the primary education. Specifically, the study addressed the objectives:

1. To determine the extent to which the OVC acquire economic skills
2. To identify which of the economic sub-skills is more acquired by the OVC
3. To determine the extent to which the OVC acquire soft skills.
4. To identify which of the soft skills sub-skills is more acquired by the OVC.
5. To determine the difference between the economic and soft skills among the class of OVC pupils.

### **Research questions**

1. To what extent do OVC in primary school acquire economic skills?
2. Which of the economic sub-skills is more acquired by the OVC pupils?
3. To what extent do OVC in primary school acquire soft skills?
4. Which of the sub-skills of soft skills is more acquired by the OVC pupils?
5. Is the differences between orphans and pupils with special needs in economic and soft skills significant?

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study were orphans and vulnerable primary II pupils in southwestern Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select the sample of the study. Simple random sampling techniques was used to selecting three states out of the six in southwestern Nigeria namely, Ogun, Osun and Oyo states. Next, purposive sampling technique was used to select two major schools each, for orphan and people with special needs from the selected states. The schools, which must have more enrolment in their Primary II class, were identified by the Educational Officers in the Ministry of Women Affairs and State Universal Basic Education Board. At the end, six schools were selected and all the Primary II pupils in the schools were involved in the study. The enumeration gave a total of 95 orphans and vulnerable pupils (53% were orphans and 47% were Mild Intellectual Disability). Orphans in this study included maternal, paternal and double orphans, while the vulnerable were the mild mentally retarded pupils.

### **Inclusion Criteria**

1. Orphanage schools must have around 20 children enrolled in the Primary II class.
2. Special schools must have around 20 children with mild intellectual disability in their Primary II class.

3. Consent must be given by legal guardians.

Two instruments were developed and used for data collection, these are Primary Pupils Economic Skills Rubric (PpESR) and Primary Pupils Soft Skills Observation Schedule (PpSSOS). PpESR has two sections, namely Section A and B. Section A measures the demographic information of the pupils while Section B has five sub-sections with five items in each of the sub-sections. The instrument was validated and to test the reliability, it was administered to some selected pupils outside the sample while engage in hands-on activities of their choice. Enough materials were provided and the children were asked to choose materials and produce whatever they like. PpESR reliability coefficient was determined using Guttman Split-half technique and a coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. PpSSOS on the other hand has two sections. Section A measures demographic information of the children while Section B focuses on selected soft skills indicators namely responsibility, flexibility, team spirit, integrity and courtesy. These were measured with five items each using a 4-point Likert scale of low (1), fair (2), good (3) or better (4). This instrument were administered alongside the PpESR during the field-testing exercise. The reliability of PpSSOS was tested using Guttman Split-half and the coefficient of 0.85 was obtained. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

**RESULTS**

The results of the data analysis is hereby presented in the order of the research questions.

**Research question 1:** To what extent do OVC in primary school acquire economic skills?

Table 1: Level of Economic Skills Development in the OVC Pupils

S/N	Item	N	Mean	Std. D	Remark
<b>Determination for success</b>					
1	Starting and completion of the project	95	1.590	.660	Fair
2	Consistently engage with the project	95	1.474	.616	Fair
3	Confident of successful completion	95	1.547	.579	Fair
4	Focusing	95	1.474	.650	Fair
5	Being positive	95	1.526	.727	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.522</b>		
<b>Endurance</b>					
1	Coping with time demand	95	1.548	.665	Fair
2	Coping with difficulty	95	1.579	.693	Fair
3	Clashing with other activities	95	1.568	.595	Fair
4	Coping with boredom	95	1.621	.639	Fair
5	Coping with technical-know-how	95	1.516	.562	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.566</b>		
<b>Persistence</b>					
1	Resilience: What happened when you get it wrong?	95	1.558	.614	Fair



2	Prioritisation: What did you do when it is time for your regular play?	95	1.600	.591	Fair
3	Goal Setting: Why did you start the project?	95	1.432	.647	Low
4	Self-motivation: Who encouraged you to complete the project?	95	1.579	.723	Fair
5	Learning from failure: What did you learn when you made mistake?	95	1.484	.666	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.531</b>		
Self-dependence					
1	Which type of help did you get?	95	1.558	.725	Fair
2	If you want to do it again, how will you like to do it?	95	1.411	.610	Low
3	How did you get the materials you used?	95	1.390	.589	Low
4	What part of the project did anyone help you?	95	1.558	.578	Fair
5	If you are given another project, how will you do it?	95	1.632	.602	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.510</b>		
Product					
1	Attempt on the project	95	1.537	.616	Fair
2	Meeting Specification	95	1.463	.580	Fair
3	Quality	95	1.484	.666	Fair
4	Element of self-initiation	95	1.400	.554	Low
5	Economic value (Can be sold)	95	1.411	.536	Low
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.459</b>		
Weighted average			<b>1.518</b>		Fair

Note: The scale used is, 1 = low, 2 is fair, 3 is good, 4 is better

Table 1 shows that the economic skills of the OVC pupils was fairly developed (Weighted Average, WA = 1.52) with the threshold of 2.0. This level of development is so close to *low* development. The same cases were recorded for all the five indices of economic skills. For instance, the pupils' level of determination for success is 1.52, which is also *fair* but close to *low*; endurance development is measured at 1.57; the level of persistence development is 1.53; that of self-dependance is 1.51 and that of product development is measures at 1.52.

This level of development might have been as a result of teachers inability to deliberately expose the pupils to those activities and situations that will develop this skill and the sub-skills in the pupils. Again, the schools over concentration on cognitive development at the expense of other learning domains might have accounted for the low development of the pupils in economic skills. This result corroborates the finding of Artykbaeva (2020) that economic skills are not exposed to pupils in elementary school but little of it is exposed to high school students. Nagy (2023) submits that introducing financial knowledge to children early will change their behaviour and

attitude to economic skills will change and subsequently, increase later success in this area of life. This, Nagy claimed is possible because children are capable of and willing to absorb new concepts better than adults.

**Research question 2:** Which of the economic sub-skills is more acquired by the OVC pupils?

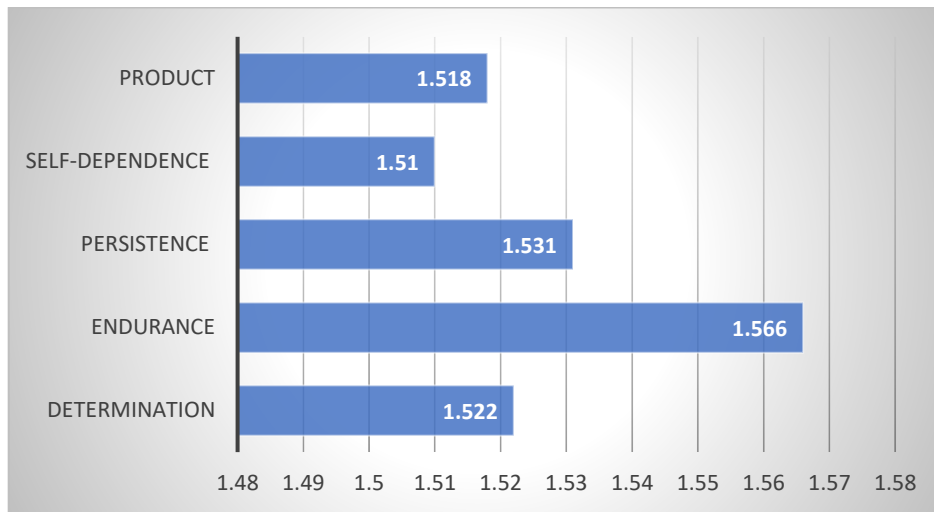


Fig. 1: Level of Economic Sub-skills Development among OVC Pupils

Figure 1 reveals that *endurance* has the highest development mean score (Sub-weighted Average, SwA = 1.57) among the OVC pupils, followed by *persistence* (SwA = 1.53), followed by *determination for success* (SwA = 1.52), followed by *product* (SwA = 1.52) and the last is *self-dependance* (SwA = 1.51). As discussed earlier, this result is expected because the primary schools in Nigeria prioritised the development of cognition and neglect the development of other areas of holistic development of the pupils. The development of 21<sup>st</sup> century life manipulative skills are not emphasized in the curriculum of this level of education. Manolescu and Manolescu (2017) submitted that education for quality is emphasized in over the acquisition of economic skills which is the determinant of lucrative jobs in this ICT age.

**Research question 3:** To what extent do OVC in primary school acquire soft skills?

Table 2: Level of Soft Skills Development in the OVC Pupils

S/N	Item	N	Mean	Std. D	Remark
<b>Responsibility</b>					
1	Would joyfully do things around the class even when not asked to do so	95	1.874	.531	Fair
2	Would engage in activities with total commitment	95	1.747	.564	Fair
3	Accept mistakes even in group work	95	1.621	.587	Fair
4	Ready to do other’s job in order to complete the assignment	95	1.684	.606	Fair
5	Does not put blame on others when things goes wrong	95	1.705	.617	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.726</b>		
<b>Flexibility</b>					
1	Listen and accept others’ correct opinions	95	1.895	.751	Fair
2	Will accept a changed task or role	95	1.800	.629	Fair

3	Easily take to given instructions	95	1.832	.724	Fair
4	Always looking for better way of doing things	95	1.695	.707	Fair
5	Shows interest when learning new activities	95	1.800	.766	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.804</b>		
<b>Team Spirit</b>					
1	Enjoys doing activities with others	95	1.779	.622	Fair
2	Show likeness to other team members	95	1.874	.551	Fair
3	Does not get angry or moody when corrected	95	1.726	.660	Fair
4	Easily take up leading roles in activities	95	1.705	.650	Fair
5	Does not insist on being the leader always	95	1.621	.687	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.741</b>		
<b>Integrity</b>					
1	Being honest when mistake has been made	95	1.642	.683	Fair
2	Always tells the truth even when it could lead to being punished	95	1.895	2.166	Fair
3	Does things the right way even when no one is watching	95	1.600	.659	Fair
4	Insist on perfection even in a group work	95	1.526	.616	Fair
5	Like to keep promise	95	1.684	.606	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.669</b>		
<b>Courtesy</b>					
1	Always greet others with respect	95	2.116	.599	Fair
2	Would always use the word: 'thank you' 'please' . and 'sorry'"	95	1.916	.630	Fair
3	Does not shout or abuse others even when provoked	95	1.726	.721	Fair
4	Does not deliberately get others angry	95	1.716	.663	Fair
5	Does not get into physical fights with others, but rather report to the teacher when offended	95	1.779	.655	Fair
Sub-weighted average			<b>1.851</b>		
Weighted average			<b>1.758</b>		

Note: The scale used is 1 = low, 2 is fair, 3 is good, 4 is better

Table 2 shows that the soft skills of the OVC pupils was fairly developed (Weighted Average, WA = 1.76) generally so also are the five indices of soft skills. For instance, responsibility sub-skill was measured at 1.73; while flexibility was rated at 1.80; team spirit was measured at 1.74; while integrity of the pupils was measured at 1.67 and lastly courtesy of the OVC pupils was measured at 1.85.



This result is also expected as majority of the teachers in primary schools hardly concern themselves personality and social skills acquired or demonstrated by the pupils. The teachers are not to be blame totally for this considering the treatment given to the primary school teachers in the country. The workplace environment, the remuneration and retirement package given to primary school teachers made many of them to concentrate of how to make more income and the teaching job been handled like just a hobby. Another challenge in primary education that might have led to low acquisition of soft skills is the adoption of teacher-centred method of teaching. In most cases, the pupils are in a classroom, sitting down, listening to the teacher and writing notes. In this type of learning environment, pupils do not have opportunity to demonstrate their skills for the teachers to make corrections or encourage such. This might be the same reason Salami and Omotoso (2024) argue that the adoption of teacher-centred method of teaching in primary schools has been denying the pupils from acquiring the expected science process skills.

**Research question 4:** Which of the sub-skills of soft skills is more acquired by the OVC pupils?

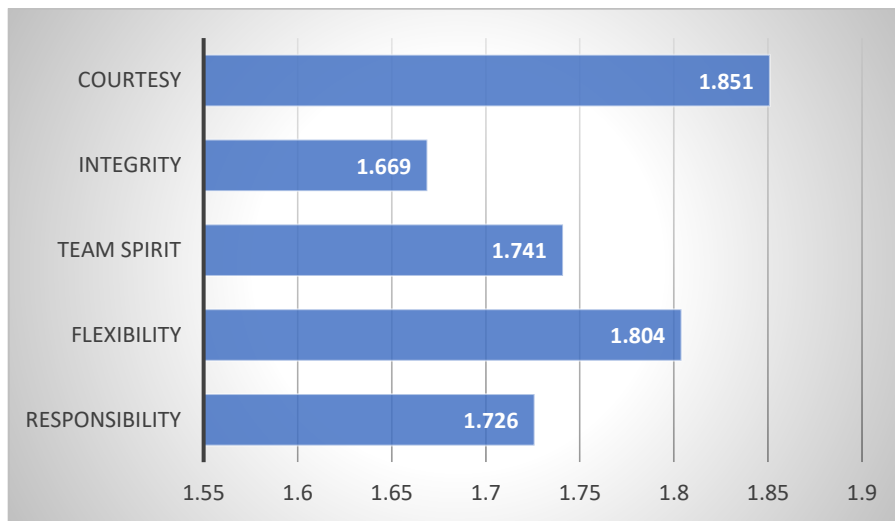


Fig. 2: Level of Soft Skills Development among the OVC Pupils

Figure 2 shows that *courtesy* has the highest development mean score (Sub-weighted Average, SwA = 1.85) among the OVC pupils; followed by *flexibility* (SwA = 1.80); followed by *team spirit* (SwA = 1.74), followed by *responsibility* (SwA = 1.73) and the last is *integrity* (SwA = 1.67). The neglect of the development of other skills besides hard skills like mathematics and language skills in Nigerian primary schools should be the concern of every stakeholder to this level of education if the societies will change from developing to develop in the nearest future. This study has shown empirically that the soft skills, just like the economic skills, are hardly develop in the pupils. Learning Resources (2024) submits that teaching soft skills are as important as the teaching of the hard skills in the traditional school subjects.

**Research question 5:** Is the differences between orphans and pupils with special needs in economic and soft skills significant?

Table 3: Test of Significant Difference between Orphans and Special Educational Needs Pupils in their Economic and Soft Skills

Variable	N	Mean	Std. D	t	df	Sig.	Remark
ECONOMIC SKILLS Orphans Pupils with Special Needs	50	40.240	11.785	1.982	93	.050	Significant
	45	35.378	12.112				
SOFT SKILLS Orphans Pupils with Special Needs	50	42.420	7.423	-1.465	93	.146	Not significant
	45	45.667	13.588				

Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference between orphans and pupils with special educational needs (PSEN) in the economic skills development ( $t = 1.98$ ;  $df = 93$ ;  $p=0.05$ ). The mean scores show that orphans pupils have higher economic skills (mean = 40.24) than PSEN (mean = 35.38). But there is no significant difference between orphans and pupils with special educational needs (PSEN) in the soft skills development ( $t = 1.47$ ;  $df = 93$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). The mean scores show that the soft skills of the PSEN is higher (45.67) than that of the orphans (42.42) but the difference between them is not significant.

The finding that orphans had higher economic skills than PSEN might be as a result of the health status of the pupils. The orphans are healthier and can actually make use of their body parts like hands and legs better than the PSEN. This might have accounted for their demonstration of economic skills better.

In the other hand, PSEN most times, demonstrate better soft skills than the normal children. PSEN demonstrates better courtesy, responsibilities and integrity better than people that are not PSEN. This might have accounted for the lack of significant difference between the PSEN and the orphans in the soft skills acquired in primary schools.

## CONCLUSION

Basic education given to primary school pupils, most especially the orphan and vulnerable children, is not equipping them enough with needed life manipulative skills such as economic and soft skills. For this education to help make the OVC self-reliance, self-dependent and self-sustainable at the end of primary education, there is the need to adopt a different teaching strategy that can impact in the children, appropriate economic and soft skills. Such strategy(ies) must be the one that is based on contextualise educational philosophy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Childhood educators and other stakeholders to primary education like teacher trainers, Universal Basic Education Commission and other government agencies should see to the change in the adopted pedagogy in primary schools. It is high time another strategy that can equip the pupils with skills needed to survive in this new age be introduced at this level of education. This can be achieved by examining several locally developed pedagogies in Nigeria and introduce them to the pre-service and in-service pre and primary school teachers with adequate monitoring and supervision.
- ii. Provision of learning resources needed for hands-on/mind-on strategies should be provided to the primary schools. This can be achieved by the following ways
  - a. Government, both federal and state, should budget for and make fund available for learning resources in pre and primary schools.
  - b. Primary school teachers should be given Instructional Resources Allowance (IRA) every month and there should be a yearly training and re-training on improvisation of low-cost and no-cost resources.
  - c. Community and parents should be educated and given opportunity to bring to the school, some discarded materials at home that can be used for teaching and learning.
- iii. Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC) primary education should be taking serious by the state government because, the homes that are raising these children might not be able to provide more than primary education. So, the primary education should equip them with needed survival skills such as economic and soft skills.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. TET Fund for the award of 2021 NRF Research Grant
2. Project Identification No.: TETF/ES/DR&D-CE/NRF2021/HSS/EHC/00013/VOL.1

## Authors' Biography

1. Ishola A. SALAMI is a Reader in the Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan. He bagged Ph.D. Certificate in the year 2014. He has supervised 5 doctoral students and has over 70 publications to his credit.
2. Adenike A. AKINJOBI is a Professor of English Language at the Department of English, University of Ibadan. She bagged Ph.D. Certificate in the year 2004. She has supervised over 10 Doctoral students and she has over 50 publications to her credit.
3. Nathaniel A. OMILANI is a Ph.D. holder and a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Science and Technology Education, University of Ibadan. He has over 20 publications to his credit.
4. Oluwatosin A. ADENIYI is a Reader in the Department of Economics, University of Ibadan. He bagged the Ph.D. Certificate in the year 2010. He has over 50 publications in reputable outlets.
5. Adebunmi O. OYEKOLA is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Counselling and Human Development Studies, University of Ibadan. She bagged her Ph.D in the year 2015. She has over 20 publications to her credit.
6. Esther O. OYEFESO is a lecturer in the Department of Special Education, University of Ibadan. She had her Ph.D. Certificate in the year 2018 and she already had over 10 publications to her credit.
7. Lawrence O. OGUNNIYI is an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan. He is currently a Ph.D. student in the same Department.
8. Oluwafikayo M. SALAMI is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Health Education, University of Ibadan.
9. Aishat RABIU was a Master Degree student in the Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan. She is currently a Ph.D. student at Lagos State University, Lagos State.
10. Deborah O. OLALEYE is a Master's Degree student in the Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan
11. Bukola OLALEKA is a Master's Degree student in the Department of Counselling and Human Development Studies, University of Ibadan.
12. Joy ESEBANMHEN is a Master's Degree student in the Department of Counselling and Human Development Studies, University of Ibadan.

## REFERENCES

1. Artykbaeva, S. (2020). The formation of economic representations of students of primary school. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, 8 (3), 20-22. <https://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Full-Paper-THE-FORMATION-OF-ECONOMIC-REPRESENTATIONS-OF-STUDENTS-OF-PRIMARY-SCHOOL.pdf>
2. Bamgboye, E., Odusote, T., Olusanmi I., Akinyemi, J., Bidemi, Y., Adebowale, A, et al. (2020). Socio-economic status and hunger among orphans and vulnerable children households in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Afri Health Sci.* 2020; 20(2): 923-931. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ahs.v20i2.47>
3. Bamgboye, E. A., Odusote, T., Olusanmi, I., Nwosu, J., Phillips-Ononye, T., Akpa, O. M., Yusuf, O. B., Adebowale, A. S., Todowede, O. & Ladipo, O. A. (2017): School absenteeism among orphans and vulnerable children in Lagos State, Nigeria: a situational analysis, *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies*, DOI: <http://www.doi.org/10.1080/17450128.2017.1325545>
4. Biemba, G., Walker, E., Simon, J., Costello, J., Beard, J., & Brooks, B. (2009). Nigeria research situation

- analysis on orphans and other vulnerable children – Country brief. [www.ovcsupport.net/s/library.php?id=1052](http://www.ovcsupport.net/s/library.php?id=1052)
5. Edu, D. O. (2016). Relevance of integrating entrepreneurship into technical vocational education and training programme for quality workforce and development in Nigeria. *Education Today*, University of Calabar, 12(1); 25 -33.
  6. Eneji, R. & Archibong, E. P. (2021) Social Challenges to the Education of Orphaned and Vulnerable Children in Eleme, Nigeria *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 12(4): 184-189.
  7. Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (2014). National Standards for Improving the Quality of Life of Vulnerable Children in Nigeria. [file:///C:/Users/Dr.%20Salami/Downloads/National%20Standards%20for%20Improving%20the%20Quality%20of%20Life%20of%20Vulnerable%20Children%20in%20Nig\\_2014\\_1661901438.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Dr.%20Salami/Downloads/National%20Standards%20for%20Improving%20the%20Quality%20of%20Life%20of%20Vulnerable%20Children%20in%20Nig_2014_1661901438.pdf)
  8. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). National Policy on Education. NERDC, Ikeja Lagos.
  9. Fleming, K. E. (2015). Improving access to education for orphans or vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015, Education for All 2000-2015: achievements and challenges. UNESCO. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002324/232423e.pdf>
  10. Learning Resources (2024). Teaching soft skills to elementary school students. <https://www.learningresources.com/blog/teaching-soft-skills-to-elementary-school-students/>
  11. Manolescu, E. and Manolescu C. M. (2017). Development of economic thinking of students from middle school through technological education. A presentation at Edu World 7th International Conference 2016. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317154081\\_Development\\_Of\\_Economic\\_Thinking\\_Of\\_Students\\_From\\_Middle\\_School\\_Through\\_Technological\\_Education](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317154081_Development_Of_Economic_Thinking_Of_Students_From_Middle_School_Through_Technological_Education)
  12. Munoz-Guzman, C., Fischer C., Chia, E., & LaBrenz, C. (2015). Child welfare in Chile: Learning from international experience to improve family interaction. *Social Sciences*, 4: 219-238.
  13. Connelly, G., & Ikpaahindi, S. (2016). Alternative childcare and deinstitutionalization: A case study of Nigeria. [www.celesis.org](http://www.celesis.org).
  14. Mwoma, T. & Pillay, J. (2016). Educational support for orphans and vulnerable children in primary schools: Challenges and interventions *Issues in Educational Research*, 26(1), 82-97. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier26/mwoma.pdf>
  15. Nagy, J. (2023). Economics in primary schools: an empirical experiment from Hungary. *Secondary Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1062099>
  16. Nanjwan, J. D., Eke, V. U. and Plang, E. N. (2019). Vocational skills and its importance to persons with special needs in Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 4 (10): 771 -773.
  17. National Population Commission (2014). Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2013). National Population Commission and ORC Macro International, Calverton MD, 2014.
  18. Nnama-Okechukwu, C & Okoye, U. O. (2019). Rethinking institutional care using family-based alternative child care system for orphans and vulnerable children in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Work in Developing Societies*, 1(3): 39-57.
  19. Nwambam, A. S and Eze, P. I. (2017). Education and school leavers' unemployment saga: Implication for educational planning in Nigeria. *Educational Research and Reviews*, 12(9): 549-553.
  20. Ojo, S & Olayinka, S, A., (2019). Efforts at meeting the needs of Orphans and Vulnerable children in Vulnerable households in selected communities of Nasarawa Eggon LGA of Nasarawa State (An Assessment of Centre for Women Youth and Community Action (NACWYCA-NGOs). *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 24(10): 39-47.
  21. Salami, I. A. and Omotoso, G. C. (2024). Science process skills of pre-primary pupils in Oyo State: Effects of indoor and outdoor experiential learning. *Ibadan Journal of Child Development and Educational Foundations*, 5: 36-49.
  22. Salami, I. A. (2018). Fun-Rigor Theory of Child Development: Implication for Repositioning Childrearing and Childhood Education Practices in Africa. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327288020\\_Fun-Rigor\\_Theory\\_of\\_Child\\_Development\\_Implication\\_for\\_Repositioning\\_Childrearing\\_and\\_Childhood\\_Education\\_Practices\\_in\\_Africa](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327288020_Fun-Rigor_Theory_of_Child_Development_Implication_for_Repositioning_Childrearing_and_Childhood_Education_Practices_in_Africa)
  23. Shann, M. H., Bryant, M. H., Brooks, M. I., Bukuluki, P., Muhandi, D., Lugalla, J., & Kwesigabo, G. (2013). The effectiveness of educational support to orphans and vulnerable children in Tanzania and

- Uganda. International Scholarly Research Notices in Public Health, 2013. Article ID 518328. <https://www.doi.org/10.1155/2013/518328>
24. Tagurum Y. O., Chirdan O. O., Bello D. A., et al. (2015). Situational analysis of orphans and vulnerable children in urban and rural communities of Plateau State. *Ann AfrMed*.14(1):18-24.
25. Tynan, W.G. (2015). “Why Do Kids Need to Learn 'Soft Skills'?”. [http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/healthy\\_kids/Why-do-kids-need-to-learn-soft-skills.htm](http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/healthy_kids/Why-do-kids-need-to-learn-soft-skills.htm)
26. World Bank, World Development Report (2018). Learning to realise education promise. Washington DC: World Bank. <https://worldbank.org/en/publication/wdr2018>
27. World Bank, (2022). Nigeria poverty assessment: A better future for all Nigerians. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099730003152232753/pdf/P17630107476630fa09c990da780535511c.pdf>