Assessing Soft Skills Development Among Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Nigerian Primary Schools: A Focus on Social Studies

Ishola A. Salami[1], Esther O. Oyefeso[2*], Adenike Akinjobi[3], Folashade Owolabi[4]

[1, 2, 3, 4] University of Ibadan. Nigeria

Article Info	Abstract
	Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Nigeria face significant challenges, necessitating the development of soft skills to enhance their self-reliance and employability after school. This study aimed to assess soft skills such as courtesy, flexibility, team spirit, responsibility, and integrity among primary school pupils. A descriptive survey design was used, with multi-stage sampling in Ogun, Osun, and Oyo States, targeting schools for orphans and those with special needs. A total of 95 Primary II pupils were included in the study. Data were collected using the Primary Pupils Soft Skills Observation Schedule (r=0.85) and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics at a 0.05 significance level. The highest mean score was for courtesy (1.85), followed by flexibility (1.80), team spirit (1.74), responsibility (1.73), and integrity (1.67). It is recommended that social studies education should intentionally focus on developing these essential soft skills, incorporating project-based activities alongside cognitive learning. *This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.*

Corresponding Author:

Esther O. Oyefeso
University of Ibadan. Nigeria
Email Author: estheroyefeso@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Humans have an innate desire to interact with others actively. Being sociable is a core of our existence, evidenced by interactions at an early stage of life. Primary socialisation, which begins from birth till about age five, involves learning about the predominant language, culture, and values, as influenced primarily by the family. After this stage, secondary socialisation commences as the child becomes more aware of his or her social settings, especially the school setting at lower primary school, where he or she is actively influenced by peers and the media. Socialisation at these stages is determined by gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status (Jasper, 2022). This process enables the child to conform to societal norms, values, beliefs and expectations.

The development of soft skills is expected to be one of the key outcomes of the typical socialisation process of an individual, as soft skills are often learned informally during socialisation. Soft skills are commonly called people skills needed for life to ensure effective relationships with fellow humans. They refer to a person's ability to relate with others, manage relationships and interact socially. Doyle (2022) further elaborates that these skills are non-technical and can be learned from school and other environments, which include interpersonal (people) and communication skills, flexibility, responsibility (dependability), team spirit, courtesy (respect) and integrity. These skills significantly impact how smooth a person's relationship with others will be.

Beardmore (2019) created a consensus list of soft skills based on their priority as reported by studies. Five of these were incorporated into this study. These are responsibility, flexibility, team spirit, integrity and courtesy (Wonderlic, 2016; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2015). Responsibility is the duty or obligation to fulfil tasks, make decisions, and be accountable for the consequences. It also implies the ability to reflect on our ability to make choices which serve the individual and the general interest of society (StudyCorgi, 2023). It means the ability to Joyfully do things without being asked, engage with total commitment, and accept mistakes even in group work. It also involves being ready to do another's job to complete a given task and not blaming others when things go wrong.

Flexibility is similar to adaptability, which is smoothly adjusting to changes. Esoftskills (2023) views flexibility as an essential 21st-century soft skill, indicating the ability to alter oneself best to suit the demands of a current scenario or environment. This shows the potential to make the best of any situation one finds oneself in, especially with the right attitude. Common ways of viewing flexibility include being open to new ideas and changes (as opposed to the conventional way of doing things), being ready to adjust to face challenges, especially when things are not going as earlier envisaged as well, and being able to keep going even when conditions are tight and not convenient. It also involves listening and accepting others' correct opinions, willingness to go ahead even when tasks or roles are changed, ability to quickly take to given instructions and looking for a better way of doing things even when conditions are not ideal.

Team spirit is another crucial soft skill needed to have a successful life. Children often have to do things together (especially play) and must learn to work together. Mastering this from childhood will hopefully translate to better relationships later in life. It has indicators such as enjoying activities with others, showing likeness to other team members, easily taking up leading roles in activities, and not always insisting on being the leader (ability to be a good follower as the case warrants). Integrity is also vital in life as a soft skill. It implies being honest when a mistake has been made, always admitting the truth even when it could lead to being punished, doing things the right way even when no one is watching, always insisting on perfection even in group work and keeping to one's promise(s).

Chadwick (2019) submits that integrity is that individual that align his/her conduct with the was known to be excellent. Chadwick describes a person of integrity as an individual who displays a principled dedication to values and beliefs and someone who always reflect ethical standards and do the right thing regardless of the situation. Attributes of integrity include authenticity, consistency regardless of external conditions, honesty, lack of duplicity and hypocrisy, acceptance of mistakes and faults and sincerity (Chadwick, 2019).

This study also focused on courtesy as a soft skill. Courtesy implies respect and is a highly rated attribute in the African continent, as well as in the Western Nigerian culture. Fatherland Gazette (2021) highlighted instances where courtesy is highly needful and is not merely a matter of choice but is often demanded under certain circumstances. This is revealed in the greeting and choice of words (when referring to an older person). Children in Western Nigeria are always required to greet others with respect and use the words: 'thank you,' 'please,' and 'sorry" even from a young age. Courtesy also includes avoiding shouting or abusing others (using foul words) even when provoked, not deliberately getting others angry, and not getting into physical fights with others, but rather reporting to the teacher (or other higher authority) when offended.

Soft skills are unmistakably very relevant for peaceful human co-existence. At some point, it was popularly believed that cognitive skills alone were vital to success. However, this mindset is increasingly being eroded. Commonly, both skills have been known to be associated with better employment and income. Miyamoto, Huerta & Kubackara (2015) found that soft skills are associated with higher future cognitive and non-cognitive skills. In other words, students who are calm, respectful, emotionally stable, believe they can achieve their goals and persevere in pursuing them are better able to make the most of opportunities and use their skills to gain more knowledge as they grow older. Soft skills may help disadvantaged groups like orphans and vulnerable children (such as those with special needs and minority ethnic groups) adjust better to their new environment as they are better equipped to interact with those around them, share their difficulties and learn more culturally relevant ways of adapting to their new environment, thereby overcoming their disadvantages (Miyamoto et al., 2015).

Thomas-Odia (2023) highlighted that the majority of the estimated 17.5 million Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) in Nigeria are grossly disadvantaged for several reasons. They typically live in institutions like orphanages (lacking family care and secure attachment), making social integration challenging later in life. Vulnerable children in this study were those with mild intellectual disability. Intellectual disability is a state of incomplete mental development that causes deficits in cognitive and adaptive functioning, with onset during the developmental period. These individuals are at a disadvantage, especially in low- and middle-income countries like Nigeria, where the government does not adequately provide for them. Within the context of this study, these children are orphans and pupils with mild intellectual disability who attend primary schools but may have more difficulties adjusting in comparison to the typical child. Orphans, in this context, refer to pupils who have lost one or both of their parents. Pupils with mild intellectual disability, on the other hand, are pupils who have significant limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive skills as a result of incomplete mental development. To increase these pupils' chances of success in life, they must develop adequate soft skills to navigate confidently and effectively.

Soft skills may also benefit disadvantaged groups like those from poor socio-economic backgrounds, with skills like perseverance and self-control being indispensable to their later success in life despite poor background. Santos and Primi (2014) reinforced that poor and minority groups that develop solid and soft skills may have an advantage over wealthier peers for whom academic success has become more accessible. Specifically, social inclusion in Nigeria would be possible if the soft skills of the vulnerable (such as orphans and pupils with mild intellectual disability) are developed (Salami, Omilani, Sulaimon & Rabiu, 2024). Shaping of personal traits and development of soft skills commence during early childhood period. Parents therefore have

superior influence their children's aptitude in soft skills. Parents, as a child's first link to the world model should assess their child's soft skills level based on interactions with others. Subsequently, parents model appropriate soft skills and guide their children (Melser, 2019). Orphans however may not have the privilege of parental guidance towards improvement of their social skills, especially orphans who have lost both parents. Orphans who have lost just one parents may also be disadvantaged because single parenting comes with its accompanying stress which may limit parent-child bonding and subsequent soft skill development in the child (Galić & Zubić, 2018). On the other hand, pupils with mild intellectual disability are often disadvantaged, lacking appropriate soft skills because of their delay in mental developments with accompanying significant deficits in intellectual and adaptive functioning. This implies that, even when parents are available to model appropriate soft skills to them, the innate limitations of these pupils significantly impair their ability to learn soft skills. On the other hand, the burden of caring for these pupils with intellectual disability may reduce the time available for these parents to model soft skills to their children. It is therefore important to pay particular attention to intentionally developing soft skills in these disadvantaged population as early as possible.

Early research and experience suggest that teaching soft skills is best commenced in early childhood when the brain is most receptive to this type of thinking and learning. This is expected as the period from birth to the first eight years of human development is known as the formative years, where the highest proportion of human personalities is developed. Soft skills interventions also have the potential to help those from disadvantaged backgrounds overcome some of the obstacles they face (Santos and Primi, 2014).

Social studies, as a school subject in lower primary classes, is one of the pivotal subjects in the Nigerian basic education curriculum aimed at enhancing the acquisition of knowledge and assimilation of values needed for effective interaction with social processes and society (Jacob et al., 2022). Social studies teaching promotes citizenship and values education and skill development and has been known to help build individuals with healthy social and emotional skills. The curriculum is designed to imbibe soft skills such as respect, problem-solving, teamwork, and civic responsibility (Bagley, 2023).

In Nigeria, learners are expected to be enrolled in the compulsory basic education scheme encompassing six years of primary education and three years of lower primary education. Learners are exposed to a carefully designed social studies curriculum each school year. In Nigeria, the Social Studies curriculum aims to build balanced minds towards ensuring empathy, respect, and other values such as team spirit/cooperation, integrity, diligence, and a spirit of national consciousness and patriotism The Nigerian social studies curriculum has gone through reviews to ensure it meets current societal needs. One significant aspect of this review has been to incorporate aspects aimed at promoting and improving human relations through a better understanding of others within the immediate environment and beyond (Edinyang and Ipuole, 2014). The social studies teaching-learning process aims to improve social skills (as well as soft skills) through social activities incorporated into the teaching-learning process. These include class discussions, demonstrations and team-based activities.

In Nigeria, however, the Social Studies teaching-learning process is not optimal, creating doubts about how well it achieves the set-out aims and objectives. Adeyemi and Onigiobi (2020), reported that in Nigeria, these challenges include poor teaching methods, Lack of and or

inadequate instructional materials/resources (preventing full implementation of the curricula); poor motivation in terms of remuneration for teachers; inconsistencies of government policies concerning education; politics of ethnicity and political crises amongst others.

The choice of measuring soft skills through teaching of social studies is in line with one of the goals of the Social Studies curriculum, which is to enhance learners' soft skills. Boven (2022) emphasized the potential of social studies in enhancing soft skills, especially when the subject is taught using project-based teaching strategies. Social Studies teaching should provide opportunities for learners to know about their environment and how to interact with it, developing appropriate attitudes and soft skills. These attitudes and soft skills should empower pupils of social studies subject to become active, informed and responsible citizens in the society. Social Studies helps learners develop their sense of self and community inter-independence, encouraging them to affirm their place as citizens in an inclusive, democratic society (Essien, Gimba and Agbor, 2019). It is therefore, essential to determine if this aim is being met despite the current challenges. This guides future policy and intervention planning to improve children's soft skills, especially during childhood. There is; however, a paucity of literature revealing the current level of soft skills in Nigerian lower primary pupils, as most studies have focused on the adult population. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the soft skills (responsibility, flexibility, team spirit, integrity, courtesy) of lower primary pupils (orphans and vulnerable children) exposed to the social studies curriculum in Nigeria. Also, differences based on gender (male and female) and ethnic group (Yoruba ethnic group and minority ethnic groups) were examined. This population is expected to represent the least possible outcome regarding soft skills as they constitute a marginalised group highly in need of soft skills to navigate life.

This study is anchored to the Fun-rigor Theory of Child Development (F-R Theory), developed by Salami Ishola Akindele in 2018. The theory states that injection of some developmentally appropriate real-life rigours 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 (Salami, 2018). The theory establishes why children's education should not be by fun activities alone but with some developmentally appropriate rigour activities to inculcate the economic and supporting soft skills into the learners.

The study aims to identify the extent to which orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) acquire soft skills during Social Studies lessons and activities in the lower primary classes. Specifically, the study has the following objectives:
1. To determine the extent of soft skills indicators acquired by the OVC during Social Studies lessons and activities in the lower primary class.
2. Identification of the particular soft skills indicators that are more acquired.
3. Investigate other school factors that significantly influence the acquisition of soft skills.

METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study were orphans and vulnerable primary II pupils in southwestern Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select the study sample. Simple random sampling was adopted to select three out of the six states in southwestern Nigeria. From each state, purposive sampling was

adopted to select two schools (One each for orphan and pupils with special educational needs). The schools that must have more enrollment in their Primary II class were identified by the educational officers in the Ministry of Women Affairs and State Universal Basic Education Board. From each school, all pupils in Primary II class were involved in the study. At the end, a total of 95 orphans and vulnerable pupils (53% were orphans and 47% were Mild Intellectual Disability) formed the sample of the study. Orphans in this study included maternal, paternal and double orphans, while the vulnerable were Pupils with Special Educational Needs (PSEN), specifically, the mild mentally retarded pupils.

The inclusion criteria for the study are:

1. Orphanages must have children enrolled in the formal educational school system
2. Special schools must have children with mild intellectual disability
3. Consent must be given by legal guardians

Data were collected using the Primary Pupils Soft Skills Observation Schedule (PpSSOS), a self-designed observation schedule to measure soft skills possessed by each pupil. PpSSOS has two sections. Section A is on demographic information consisting of the category (orphan or special), state, gender and ethnic group. Section B focuses on selected soft skills indicators: 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). A maximum score of 20 is obtainable in each indicator of soft skills, and a maximum of 100 points is the total attainable point. PpSSOS was validated through the process of Validity and reliability. Three copies of PpSSOS were given to experts in the arear of Early Childhood Education, Special Education and primary school teachers, to examine the face and content validity of the instrument. After due corrections were made on the instrument, it was subjected to field testing where 20 primary school pupils in other schools were observed and rated using the instrument. The psychometric property 0.85 was obtained using inter-rater technique.

To administer PpSSoS, different Social Studies activities, based on the topics already treated with the pupils, were presented, and adequate materials to work with were supplied. Two Research Assistants (RAs) were trained to conduct observations using PpSSOS in each selected school. Data were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics of t-test, Analysis of variance and Pearson product-moment correlation were also used to test the generated null hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
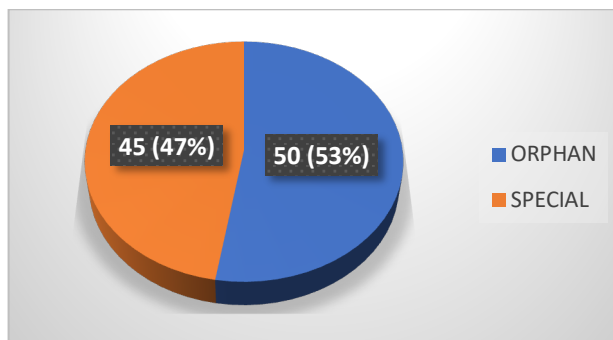
Results
Part A: Demographic analysis

Figure 1. Distribution of Pupils based on the Areas of Needs

Figure 1 shows that more orphans (53.0%) participated in the study than children with special educational needs (47.0%).
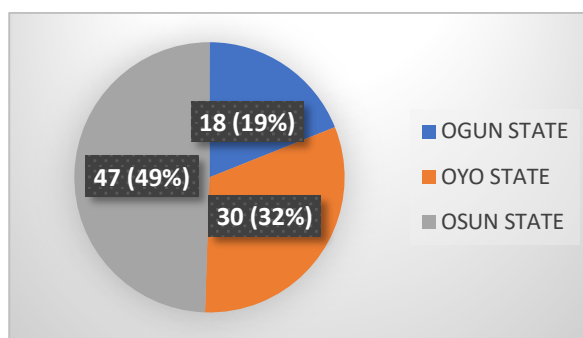

Figure 2. Distribution of the Pupils based on the State of Residence

Figure 2 shows that pupils from Osun State were more (49.0%), followed by those from Oyo State (32.0%) and then Ogun State (19.0%).
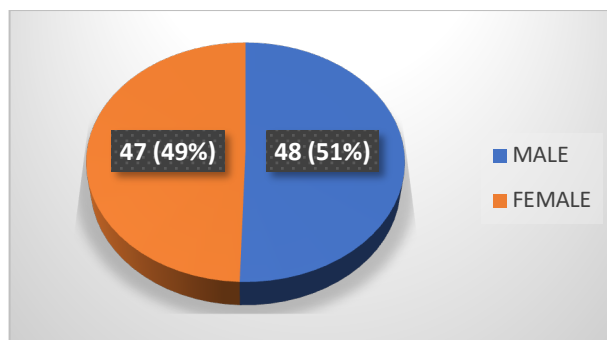

Figure 3. Gender Distribution of the Pupils

Figure 3 reveals that 51.0% of the pupils were male while 49.0% were female pupils.
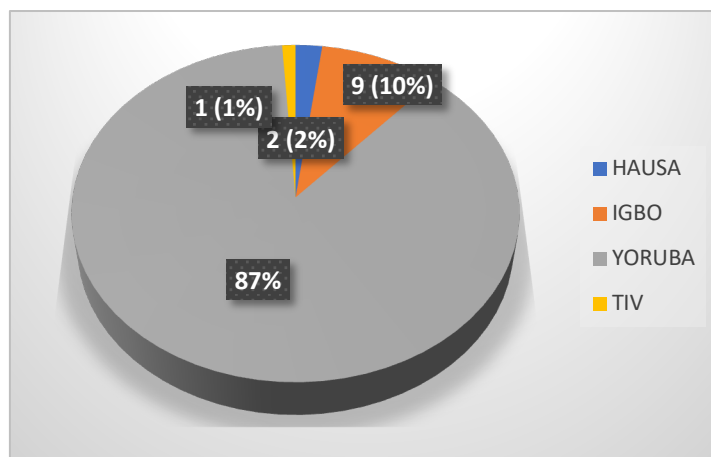
Figure 4. Ethnic Distribution of the Pupils

Figure 4 shows the distribution of the pupils based on ethnicity as follows; Hausa was 2.0%, Igbo was 10.0%, Yoruba was 87.0% and Tiv was 1.0%.

Part B. Answers to Research Questions

Table 1 shows the Level of Soft Skill Development acquired by the primary two pupils.

Table 1. Level of Soft Skills Development in the OVC

S/N	Item	N	Mean	Std.D	Remark
	Responsibility				
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 jobs to complete the assignment	95	1.684	.606	Fair
5	Do not blame others when things go wrong	95	1.705	.617	Fair
	Sub-weighted average		**1.726**		
	Flexibility				
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 ways of doing things	95	1.695	.707	Fair
5	Show interest when learning new activities	95	1.800	.766	Fair
	Sub-weighted average		**1.804**		
	Team Spirit				
1	Enjoy doing activities with others	95	1.779	.622	Fair
2	Show likeness to other team members	95	1.874	.551	Fair
3	Do 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	Do not insist on being the leader always	95	1.621	.687	Fair
	Sub-weighted average		**1.741**		
	Integrity				
1	Being honest when a mistake has been made	95	1.642	.683	Fair
2	Always tell the truth even when it could lead to being punished	95	1.895	2.166	Fair
3	Do things the right way even when no one is watching	95	1.600	.659	Fair
4	Insist on perfection even in group work	95	1.526	.616	Fair
5	Like to keep a promise	95	1.684	.606	Fair
	Sub-weighted average		**1.669**		

	Courtesy				
1	Always greet others with respect	95	2.116	.599	Fair
2	Would always use the words: 'thank you' and 'please' and 'sorry"	95	1.916	.630	Fair
3	Do not shout or abuse others even when provoked	95	1.726	.721	Fair
4	Do not deliberately get others angry	95	1.716	.663	Fair
5	Do not get into physical fights with others, but rather report to the teacher when offended	95	1.779	.655	Fair
Sub-weighted average			**1.851**		
Weighted average			**1.758**		

Table 1 shows that the soft skills of the OVC pupils were fairly developed despite their exposure to concepts in social studies (Weighted Average, WA = 1.76) generally so also are the five indices of soft skills. However, courtesy has the highest development mean score (Sub-weighted Average, SwA = 1.85), followed by flexibility (SwA = 1.80), followed by team spirit (SwA = 1.74), followed by responsibility (SwA = 1.73) and last is integrity (SwA = 1.67). This information is presented in a bar chart.

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

S/N	Item	N	Sub-weighted average	Remark
1	Responsibility	95	1.726	Fair
2	Flexibility	95	1.804	Fair
3	Team Spirit	95	1.741	Fair
4	Integrity	95	1.669	Fair
5	Courtesy	95	1.851	Fair

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

Table 2 summarises the presentation in Table 1 and it shows that courtesy has the highest development mean score (Sub-weighted Average, SwA = 1.85), 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). This information is presented in a bar chart.

Discussion

The result shows that the soft skills of the OVC pupils were fairly developed. This implies that majority of the pupils did not develop the five sub-skills of soft skills. For instance, less than 10.0% of the pupils are good in doing things around the class even when not asked to do so. The demonstration of the pupils in all other sub-skills and items are almost like the example stated. This finding might be as a result of the school practices concentrating on cognitive development of the pupils while other learning domains were being neglected. Doyle (2022) further elaborates that these skills are non-technical and can be learned from school and other environments, which include interpersonal (people) and communication skills, flexibility, responsibility (dependability), team spirit, courtesy (respect) and integrity. These skills significantly impact how smoothly a person's relationship with others will be. This implies that the social studies teaching-learning process to which these pupils were exposed has, to an extent, improved their soft skills.

Boven (2022) emphasised the potential of social studies in enhancing soft skills, especially when project-based learning is utilised. Courtesy ranked highest in the soft skills of participants. This can be linked to the predominant culture of participants (Yoruba tribe), where courtesy is a core value upheld by these communities (Adedokun and Marais, 2023).

Though the items adopted to measure the soft skills of the pupils were limited, but the items were selected because of their critical areas of expected affective learning domains to be developed by the pupils. Again, as a result of decadence in the moral development among Nigerians in recent past, one might argue that the instrument should feature more items. But category of pupils the study focused on, most especially the PSEN, who are mentally retarded, adding many items might not be feasible to administered. Hence, the instrument used to measure the soft skills might not be held accountable for the skill acquisition measured.

The result further shows that there is no significant difference between orphans and pupils with mild intellectual disability in soft skills development. The result also indicates that there is no significant difference among the states in soft skills development. The results show that there is no significant difference between male and female pupils in the soft skills. This negates the study of SİDDİKY (2020), which focused on university students and found that males had better soft skills than females. Nevertheless, children tend to interact better with each other and are still developing soft skills, which may have accounted for similar soft skills levels among participants in our study.

CONCLUSION

This study has shown that soft skills such as courtesy, flexibility, team spirit, responsibility, and integrity were not given much attention in the lower primary school classes, where the pupils' personalities are better formed. They accounted for a fair level of development of these skills, which, if not checked, might affect the employability and ability to be independent of future education recipients. The worst hit of this situation is the orphan and vulnerable children in the lower primary classes. A drastic measure must be taken to ensure that these skills are developed in the pupils because this will enhance their success in future.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:
1. The education given to all pupils, especially OVCs, should be aimed at developing essential skills such as soft skills (courtesy, flexibility, team spirit, responsibility and integrity) in these pupils. This helps in preparing the pupils for the future.
2. During the teaching and learning process, the focus of learning should not be on subjects alone but on the development of skills. Teachers should incorporate various activities during their lessons that will allow pupils to develop their soft skills.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (OPTIONAL)

REFERENCES

Adedokun, T., & Marais, E. (2023). Greetings as a politeness strategy in a Yoruba short story taught to high school learners. Interdisciplinary Journal of Economics and Business Law, 12, 146-162.

Adeyemi, B. A., & Onigiobi, O. (2020). Re-examining social studies curriculum in Nigeria: Issues and challenges confronting the all-round development of 21st-century learners. Journal of African Social Studies, 1(2), 12-19.

Bagley, D. (2023). Why social studies matters. Studies Weekly. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://www.studiesweekly.com/why-social-studies-matters/.

Beardmore, K. W. (2019). Soft skills: Old and new (Master's thesis). University of Kentucky. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://uknowledge.uky.edu/epe_etds/65.

Boven, B. G. (2022). The development of the soft skills within social studies curriculum (Master's thesis). Grand Valley State University. Retrieved from https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/gradprojects/175.

Chadwick, S. (2019). What is the meaning of integrity? Accountable2You. Retrieved February 4, 2024, from https://accountable2you.com/blog/meaning-of-integrity/.

Doyle, A. (2022). What are soft skills? The Balance Money. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://www.thebalancemoney.com/what-are-soft-skills-2060852.

Edinyang, S. D., & Ipuole, O. D. (2014). Introduction to social studies education in Nigeria schools: A success or failure. International Journal of Education and Research, 2(4), 143-150. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328631618.

Esoftskills. (2023). Adaptability and flexibility. Esoftskills. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://esoftskills.com/10-soft-skills-you-need-adaptability-and-flexibility-7.

Essien, E. E., Gimba, J., & Agbor, E. (2019). Exploring the relationship between social studies and other social science subjects for effective capacity building and national development. International Journal of Innovative Research and Development, 8. https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2019/v8/i3/MAR19012.

Fatherland Gazette. (2021). Respect in the Yoruba culture. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://fatherlandgazette.com/respect-in-the-yoruba-culture/.

Galić, R., & Zubić, D. (2018). Single-parent families: Category at increased risk of poverty. Psychotherapy in Achieving Health and Well-being for Children and Young People, 1(1), 17-27.

Jacob, U. S., Oyefeso, E. O., Adejola, A. O., & Pillay, J. (2022). Social studies performance of pupils with intellectual disability: The effect of demonstration method and storytelling. Ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online, 21(1), 36-47. https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2022.01.04.

Jasper, A. (2022). Socialisation process: Overview, stages & life course approach. Study.com. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://study.com/learn/lesson/stages-socialization-primary-secondary-adult.

Melser, N. A. (2019). Soft skills for children: A guide for parents and teachers. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Miyamoto, K., Huerta, M. C., & Kubacka, K. (2015). Fostering social and emotional skills for well-being and social progress. European Journal of Education, 50(2), 147–159. https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12118.

Partnership for 21st Century Learning. (2015). P21 framework definitions. Retrieved from http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/docs/P21_Framework_Definitions_New_Logo_2 015.pdf.

Salami, I. A. (2018). Fun-rigor theory of child development: Implication for repositioning child-rearing and childhood education practices in Africa. Ibadan Journal of Educational Studies, 15(1 & 2), 64-72.

Salami, I. A., Omilani, N. A., Sulaimon, T. K., & Rabiu, A. (2024). Vulnerable pupils' soft skills related scientific attitude in Southwestern Nigeria. European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences, 12(5).

Santos, D., & Primi, R. (2014). Social and emotional development and school learning: A measurement proposal in support of the public policy. Preliminary results of the Social and Emotional Skills Measurement Project in Rio de Janeiro. OECD/ Ayrton Senna Institute/ Secretaria de Educação Rio de Janeiro.

Siddiky, M. R. (2020). Does soft skill development vary among the students? A gender perspective. Turkish Journal of Education, 9(3), 205-221. https://doi.org/10.19128/turje.658198.

StudyCorgi. (2023). Types of responsibility. StudyCorgi. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://studycorgi.com/responsibility-definition-and-classification.

Thomas-Odia, I. (2023, June 24). Path to deepening alternative care for orphans, vulnerable children. The Guardian. Retrieved November 13, 2023, from https://guardian.ng/saturday-magazine/path-to-deepening-alternative-care-for-orphans-vulnerable-children/.

Wonderlic. (2016). Soft skills development interest survey. Retrieved from http://www.wonderlic.com/reports/employer-soft-skills-survey-development-interestsurvey-report.