ASSESSMENT OF WELFARE AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN ORPHANAGE HOMES FOR THE REALISATION OF CHILD RIGHTS ACT IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

Adekunle Adeyinka Shoyemi Ph.D.[1]
Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan
aa.shoyemi@ui.edu.ng shoyemi4real2006@gmail.com
+2348038327949

Olusegun Omoluwa[2]
Department of Educational Foundations, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo
omoluwaoo@afued.edu.ng
+2348034497295

Akinwale Olayiwola Solanke[3]
Department of Educational Foundations/Management, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri
akinwalesolanke@gmail.com
+2348033871192

Moses Dele Amosun Ph.D.[4]
Department of Early Childhood and Educational Foundations, University of Ibadan
amosunmoses@gmail.com
+2347062175617

Abstract

The realisation of the Child Rights Act (CRA) is dependent on the adequate provision of welfare and educational facilities for children and should be provided by parents. However, there are children regarded as orphans having no access to parents or guardians, hence the provision of orphanage homes to cover up the gap. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the welfare and educational needs of children in orphanages for the realization of the CRA in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study adopted a descriptive survey design and sampled 258 orphans residing in orphanages through purposive techniques. Data were collected with a researcher-designed questionnaire, titled Welfare and Educational Needs Inventory. Data collected were analysed using frequency count and percentage. The findings revealed that all welfare and educational needs for children in orphanage homes were available, and all welfare and educational needs for children in orphanage homes were adequate except specially trained teachers in music and mathematics. The study concluded that the path to realising the CRA for the children in orphanage homes in Lagos State is on the right course. This is evident through the availability and adequacy of most welfare and educational needs. The study recommended that further steps should be taken to improve the welfare and educational provisions of children in orphanages. This is a sure pathway to ensuring that they are not left out in the pursuit of realising the CRA, which is domesticated in the state.

Keywords- Welfare and education needs, Child Rights Act, Orphanage Homes

Introduction

The importance of children's well-being/welfare and education is recognized by the Child's Rights Act (CRA) of 2003. A sizable number of sections (from section four through to fifteen) of the document emphasised measures to guarantee the survival and development of Nigerian children through rights which include right to survival and development (s.4); right to name (s.5); freedom to peaceful association and assembly (s.6); freedom of thought conscience and religion (s.7); right to private and family life (s.8); right to freedom of movement (s.9); right to freedom from discrimination (s.10); right to dignity of the child (s.11); right to leisure, recreation and cultural activities (s.12); right to health and health services (s.13); right to parental care, protection and maintenance (s.14); and right of a child to free, compulsory and universal primary education among others (s.15). The public document which domesticated the 1989 United Nations Convention of the Right of a Child (UNCRC) seeks to guarantee the welfare and educational interest and development of every child. It recognizes the need and vital role of parents specifically as stated in section fourteen (s.14). This section was probably based on the assumption that achieving all stated rights for children is dependent on the presence and availability of parents or guardian for such children (Child's Right Act, 2003; Bashir, 2023).

Parents, among other members of any family, and as social agents, play a very crucial role in the growth and development of children. Their duties in ensuring a child's holistic development in any society cannot be overemphasised, as they are responsible for overseeing and providing the needs necessary for their social, physiological, psychological, and emotional well-being (Olalowo, et al, 2024). The survival of any child before adulthood depends on needs met by parents, which include physical needs (nutrition, shelter/accommodation, clothing & adequate sleep); emotional needs (love, affection, security, and self-esteem); and social needs (social interaction and friendship). Also, it is important to note that parents are equally expected to guarantee needs relating to the protection and safety of their children. It is a social anomaly that children experience abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), exploitation (including trafficking), violence, and harm of any kind. Thus, parents are primarily charged to prevent the occurrence of such (Shoyemi, 2017).

The provision of education is equally as important as the needs discussed above. As emphasis is on the importance of physical, emotional, social, and protection-related needs, so also, the

relevance and potential of education for the growth and development of children cannot be controverted (Amosun, 2019, Amosun and Kolawole, 2015). It is, however, not out of place to state that the well-being of any child cannot be said to have been sufficiently catered for by any parent without adequate provision of their educational needs. In essence, parents are expected to ensure that children have unrestricted access to qualitative education, as it is an opportunity for learning and development through standardized educational facilities and resources. Further, parents providing quality education for the advancement of their children means that the education takes place in a highly conducive environment characterized by a support system and safety measures. Parents providing quality educational needs for children equally means they have access and opportunity to meaningful growth, both personally and academically (Shoyemi, 2017).

Despite the social, physical, emotional, and educational relevance of parents towards children, a substantial population of Nigerian children are orphans, having no access to their parents or guardians. This is caused by factors which include accidents claiming the lives of parents, maternal death at birth (childbirth, war, and communal conflict, abandonment as a result of economic hardship relating to poverty. Also, some other issues which have increased the number of orphans (children under 18 years without parents) in Nigeria revolve around increasing insecurity, terrorism and insurgency, natural disaster, substance abuse, crime, terminal illness (diseases), violence, and others (Amali et al., 2020). Nigeria, being a third-world country, is reportedly one of the nations with the highest number of orphans. As of 2011, it was reported that over 5 million children were orphans, representing over 10% of the entire population of children in the country, and this implies that one child out of every ten children can be considered an orphan (Yusufu & Dike-Nwadei, 2020). With no recent statistics and data on the population of orphans in Nigeria, Save the Children in 2016 reported that out of the 169 million children in the country, 12 million are estimated to be in the category of orphans and vulnerable (Chima, 2018). The data and statistics presented in Mohammed et al. (2020) state that Nigeria, as a giant of Africa, has over 17 million orphans. However, the most recent report by UNICEF (2024) suggests that the number of orphaned children would have rapidly increased as a result of conflict and other issues. The data showed that 4.5 million children have in recent times been victims of conflict and displacement in various states, such as Benue State, Nigeria.

Further, the socio-economic and educational fate of orphans in Nigeria appears to be an issue of concern and worrisome. According to Yusufu and Dike-Nwadei (2020), orphans in Nigeria are as good as stranded. Orphans suffer deficiencies in welfare needs, which include shelter, nutrition, and emotional and psychological support. Also, medical and health facilities and services, which should be accessible to every child according to Chima (2018), are not readily available to all orphans. The author opined that socio-demographic factors tend to influence the access of orphans to these facilities. The unfriendly experiences that orphans are exposed to are not limited to their welfare but also extend to their education. This is evidenced by the insufficient provision of necessary needs for a progressive and quality learning experience. The submission by Amali et al. (2020) suggests that the welfare and educational challenges encountered by orphans are beyond the elementary and basic school level, as those in tertiary institutions equally have an unsmooth educational experience. They are exposed to the inability to purchase learning materials (phones, internet, laptops, notebooks, and textbooks) and pay for tuition and hostels, departmental and faculty dues, and transportation from one place to another. They equally experience insufficient welfare resources, such as clothing, among others.

Several steps have been taken by various Government and international agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Based Organisations (FBOs), and others to ameliorate the welfare and educational challenges of children considered as orphans in Nigeria (Amali et al., 2020; Eneji and Archibong, 2021). The establishment and approval of orphanage institutions and homes by the Government and non-government agencies, according to Yusufu and Dike-Nwadei (2020), is one of the attempts to improve the welfare and education of these children. Orphanage homes are supposed to be registered institutions (Governmental and Non-governmental) charged with the responsibility to provide welfare and educational succor to children who have no access to their parents as a result of death, abandonment, war and conflict, refuge, and others. Children who have been exposed to one form of abuse or the other, and those neglected by parents and relatives, or other difficult situations, are equally housed in orphanages. Through trained personnel and caregivers, orphanages should serve as a stand-in for parents and fill the gap by ensuring that children are adequately catered for, both in welfare needs and in educational provision, among others (Uyiosa, 2024).

With the introduction, approval, and establishment of orphanage institutions and homes, one expects that the welfare and educational difficulties experienced by orphans will drastically reduce. However, despite children's residence in orphanage homes to assist in their education, Eneji and Archibong (2021) found that orphans in orphanages suffer some deficiencies in securing the necessary facilities and needs for their education. According to their study, the (financial) resources available for the orphans' education are inadequate to meet their needs, such as books and other school materials. Also, due to the difficulties in securing the needed resources for learning, they (orphans in homes) are unable to concentrate during teaching and learning exercises in the classroom. Also, Uyiosa (2024), in a study, reported that the educational background of children in orphanages is nothing to write home about. It was further submitted that this is one of the leading challenges encountered by the children. The inadequacy of educational resources might equally be the reason for poor performance in certain school subjects. The submission of Mohammed et al. (2020) was in a different but similar dimension, as it was revealed that orphans in orphanages exhibited an inability to speak English fluently. It was opined that this is most probably a resultant effect of a shortage (inadequate) or lack of qualified, committed, and effective English language teachers in orphanage homes.

Furthermore, it appears that beyond the issues of educational challenges, the welfare needs of children in orphanage institutions and homes equally need attention. Yusufu and Dike-Nwadei (2020) observed that children in orphanage homes are not exempted from neglect and the experience of various forms of violence. Several of them are equally exploited economically, engaging child labour and all others. Uyiosa (2024) further reported that orphans who are residents in orphanage homes equally experience a lack of access to caregivers and other workers who represent their parents. Other material welfare resources that are deficient include clothing materials, feeding and nutritional resources, and a convenient (suitable) accommodation facility. Mohammed et al. (2020) considered adequacy in their analysis. It was argued further that the social welfare facilities available to orphans in orphanage homes remain inadequate because of an exploding increase in the number of orphans in Nigeria and admitted into orphanage homes and institutions.

The welfare and educational challenges orphans encounter are arguably based on the assumption that some states have yet to domesticate the Child Rights Act (CRA) of 2003. The implementation

of the Act has not yet been enforced in twelve (12) states of the Nigerian Federation, especially from the Northeastern geopolitical zone. As a result of the foregoing, children from states like Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe, and Yobe are most exposed to violence and abuse. Although the several negative welfare and educational experiences children (orphans inclusive) are exposed to could arguably be linked to the non-domestication of the Child's Rights Act by the states concerned. In other words, the non-domestication of the Child's Rights Act in states has hampered organisations and other agencies that would have responded to the plight of children, and by extension, the welfare and educational needs of orphans through the establishment of homes. Having addressed the issues of states yet to domesticate the Child's Rights Act, there is equally a need to analyse the dynamics around one of the twenty-four (24) states reportedly said to have done the needful concerning the Child's Rights Act domestication. One of such states is Lagos (Southwestern Nigeria), which domesticated it in 2007 (Oriwoh & Efanodor-Obeten, 2022; Human Rights Commission, 2023).

The fact that Lagos (among other states in the South west) has domesticated the Child Rights Act means that several measures must have equally been put in place to ensure that the welfare and educational needs of children are met (at least to the average standard). These plans and moves by the State are without exception for orphans, considering they are children too. It is believed that the Lagos state Government, through public-private partnerships, makes moves to ameliorate the conditions of orphans. One of such steps is the establishment and licensing of orphanages and other institutions committed to housing children who, for one reason or another, have no access to their parents (Association for Reproductive and Family Health, 2022).

Considering the assertion that Lagos state has taken giant steps in domesticating the Child Rights Act for all children, including orphans, which is evidenced through the licensing and establishment of orphanage homes, it becomes imperative to discuss the welfare and educational provisions available to children in those homes. Amid this conversation, Bamgboye et al. (2017) conducted a situational analysis of absenteeism from school by orphans and vulnerable children in Lagos State. Also, Bamgboye et al. (2020) examined the households of orphans and vulnerable children in Lagos State. This was done to reveal their status from the socio-economic dimension. Having thoroughly observed the foregoing study, it was evident that no study has been conducted to analyse the welfare and educational situation of children in orphanage homes in Lagos State,

Nigeria. Hence, there is a need for this present study on the assessment of welfare and educational needs of children in orphanage homes for the realization of the Child's Right Act in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the available welfare needs for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

1b. How adequate are the available welfare needs for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

2. What are the available educational facilities for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

2b. How adequate are the available educational facilities for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

Methods

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey research design because the study sought to investigate the availability and adequacy of welfare and educational needs of children residing in the orphanage homes for the realization of the Child's Right Act in Lagos State, Nigeria. The population for this study consists of all children in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. The exact population in figure was deliberately not given to the researchers by the Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sport and Social Development. However, the target population for this study consists of selected orphans in Lagos State, Nigeria, aged 12 years and above. Orphans in this age range were considered eligible for this study because of their intellectual capacity to identify their needs and their ability to know how available resources are and how adequately their needs are met. The sample for this study included 258 orphans purposively selected from eight orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique enabled the researcher to select eight orphanage homes with a relatively high population of respondents (orphan children aged 12 and above). This was based on the consultation and data provided by the Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Social Development. Also, these were the orphanage homes the researchers were granted access to in Lagos after a consultation with the aforementioned ministry. The

researchers therefore sampled all 258 orphans (within the ages of 12 and above) who are residents in the approved orphanage homes.

Furthermore, a researchers-designed instrument titled 'Welfare and Educational Needs Inventory' (WENI) was used to collect information on the availability and adequacy of welfare and educational needs across orphanage homes. The instrument was divided into two sections, A and B. Section A elicited information on the availability and adequacy of welfare needs of orphans, while Section B was on the availability and adequacy of educational needs of orphans. Before administration, this instrument was presented to experts for modification and correction in social sciences education and the Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sport, and Social Development. In the administration process, the researchers considered ethical issues. The researchers got the consent of the Lagos State Ministry of Youth, Sport and Social Development, caregivers in charge of the homes, and the children resident in those homes. Also, no participant was coerced (participation was voluntary), and their anonymity and privacy were upheld and respected. The researcher ensured that the pictorial image of the participants was not recorded or revealed in the study. The purpose of the study was disclosed to all respondents. The forms were administered and retrieved immediately from the respondents. Analysis of data/answering of all research questions was done using frequency and percentage.

Results

Research Question One (a & b): What are the available welfare needs for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State? (b) How adequate are the available welfare needs for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

TABLE 1

Available and Adequate Welfare Needs for Children Resident in Orphanage Homes in Lagos State

S/N	Welfare Needs	Available (%)	Not Available (%)	Adequate (%)	Not Adequate (%)
1.	Food	148 (99.3)	1 (0.7)	123 (82.6)	26 (17.4)
2.	Provisions and Beverages like Butter and Tea	145 (97.3)	4 (2.7)	120 (80.5)	29 (19.5)
3.	Toiletries/ Bathing materials like soap, toothpaste, tooth brush and tissue roll.	148 (99.3)	1 (0.7)	126 (84.6)	23 (15.4)

4.	Conducive and secured shelter/home	136 (91.3)	13 (8.7)	111 (74.5)	38 (25.5)
5	Medical/ health care facilities/First Aid	132 (88.6)	17 (11.4)	104 (69.8)	45 (30.5)
6.	Clothing Materials	145 (97.3)	4 (2.7)	119 (79.9)	30 (20.1)
7.	Under wears	136 (91.3)	13 (8.7)	103 (69.1)	46 (30.9)
8.	Access to clean water	145 (97.3)	4 (2.7)	120 (80.5)	29 (19.5)
9.	Sanitation facilities like brooms and dustbins.	143 (96.0)	6 (4.0)	120 (80.5)	29 (19.5)
10.	Clean Toilet	145 (97.3)	4 (2.7)	118 (79.2)	31 (20.8)
11.	Clean Bathrooms	145 (97.3)	4 (2.7)	117 (78.5)	32 (21.5)
12.	Peaceful and secured environment	130 (87.2)	19 (12.8)	100 (67.1)	49 (32.9)
13.	Recreational/ Relaxation/Outdoor facilities	120 (80.5)	29 (19.5)	87 (58.4)	62 (41.6)
14.	Bed/Mattress facility	139 (93.3)	10 (6.7)	114 (76.5)	35 (23.5)
15.	Blankets/Bedspread	144 (96.6)	5 (3.4)	112 (75.2)	37 (24.8)
16.	Pairs of shoes and socks	139 (93.3)	10 (6.7)	112 (75.2)	37 (24.8)
17.	Access to slippers/ indoor foot wears	135 (90.6)	14 (9.4)	110 (73.8)	39 (26.2)
18.	Access to guidance counsellor	123 (82.6)	26 (17.4)	88 (58.1)	61 (40.9)
19.	Tables and chairs	141 (94.6)	8 (5.4)	112 (75.2)	37 (24.8)
20.	Cutleries like plats, spoons and cups.	142 (95.3)	7 (4.7)	115 (77.2)	34 (22.8)

Table 1 indicates that 149 orphans participated in this study, giving consent to identify available and adequate welfare needs for children residing in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. 148(99.3%) of the respondents (orphans) perceived food, Toiletries/bathing materials like soap, toothpaste, brush, tissue rolls, and a clean toilet to be available. Also, 145 (97.3%) of the respondents responded that other welfare needs, such as provisions and beverages, which include butter and tea, clothing materials, access to clean water, clean bathrooms, and blankets and bedspreads, were available to them in orphanage homes. Furthermore, 143 (96%) of the respondents provided that Sanitation facilities like brooms and dustbins were available, while 142 (95.3%) responded that cutlery such as plates, spoons, and cups were available and 141 (94.6%) provided that tables and chairs were also available to them in orphanage homes. Further, 139(93.3%) of the respondents attest that pairs of shoes and socks, as well as bed/mattress facilities, were available, while 136 (91.3%) confirm that underwear and conducive and secure environments were also available. Also, 135(90%) respondents confirm access to slippers/ indoor

footwear, while 132 (88.6%) claim availability to medical/health care facilities/ first aid, and 123 (82.6%) claim to have access to guidance counsellors. As regards recreational, relaxation, and outdoors facilities, 120 (80.5%) consider them to be available.

Concerning adequacy, 126 (84.6%) and 123(82.6%) of the respondents (orphans) perceived that Toiletries/bathing materials like soap, toothpaste, and brush, tissue rolls, and food materials were adequate, respectively. Also, 120 (80.5%) of the respondents supported that welfare needs such as provisions and beverages, which include butter and tea, access to clean water, sanitation facilities like brooms and dustbins, were adequately available to them in orphanage homes. Furthermore, 119 (79.9%) of the respondents reported that clothing materials were adequately provided to them, while 118 (79.2%) responded that clean toilets were adequate, and 117 (78.5%) reported the adequacy of clean bathrooms in orphanage homes. Also, 115 (77.2%) and 114 (76.5%) of the respondents reported the adequacy of eating cutleries (plats, spoons and cups inclusive) and bed/ mattress facilities respectively while 112 (75.2%) of respondents claims the adequacy of welfare needs like blankets/bedspread, slippers/indoor footwears and tables and chairs. Furthermore, 111(74.5%) of the respondents attest that they had adequate access to conducive and secured shelter/homes and 110 (73.8%) responded that slippers and indoor wears were adequate while 88 (58.1%) and 87 (58.4%) confirm the adequacy of guidance counsellor and recreational and relaxation facilities respectively.

Research Question Two: What are the available educational facilities for children resident in orphanage homes in Lagos State?

TABLE 2

Available and adequate Educational Facilities for Children Resident in Orphanage Homes in Lagos State

S/N	Educational Facilities	Available (%)	Not Available (%)	Adequate (%)	Not Adequate (%)
1.	School Library	109 (73.2)	40 (26.8)	80 (53.7)	69 (46.3)
2.	School Laboratory	116 (77.9)	33 (22.1)	90 (60.4)	59 (39.6)
3.	Schools Toilet facility	112 (75.2)	37 (24.8)	83 (55.7)	66 (44.3)
4.	Spacious classrooms	113 (75.8)	36 (24.2)	85 (57.0)	64 (43.0)
5	Classroom Board	120 (80.5)	29 (19.5)	96 (64.4)	53 (35.6)
6.	Classroom Chairs, Tables and lockers	118 (79.2)	31 (20.8)	95 (63.8)	54 (36.2)

7.	School meals and mid-day snacks	121 (81.2)	28 (18.8)	90 (60.4)	59 (39.6)
8.	Writing Materials like pen and pencils	140 (94.0)	9 (6.0)	117 (78.5)	32 (21.5)
9.	School Uniforms	132 (88.6)	17 (11.4)	111 (74.5)	38 (25.5)
10.	School sport wears	133 (89.3)	16 (10.7)	114 (76.5)	35 (23.5)
11.	School Sandals and socks	130 (87.2)	19 (12.8)	110 (73.8)	39 (26.2)
12.	School Bag	133 (89.3)	16 (10.7)	111 (74.5)	38 (25.5)
13.	Textbooks for each subject	119 (79.9)	30 (20.1)	96 (64.4)	53 (35.6)
14.	Notebooks for each subject	129 (86.6)	20 (13.4)	109 (73.2)	40 (26.8)
15.	Specially trained teachers in Languages, Mathematics and Music	114 (76.5)	35 (23.5)	53 (35.6)	96 (64.4)
16.	Computer, Projector and Electronic boards	97 (65.1)	52 (34.9)	75 (50.3)	74 (49.7)
17.	School based Counsellors	105 (70.5)	44 (29.5)	80 (53.7)	69 (46.3)
18.	School clinic/ medical facility/sickbay	110 (73.8)	39 (26.2)	81 (54.4)	68 (45.6)
19.	Education Sponsorship	116 (77.9)	33 (22.1)	84 (56.4)	65 (43.6)
20.	School sport facilities	117 (78.5)	32 (21.5)	88 (59.1)	61 (40.9)

It is presented in the table above that 140(94%) of the respondents (orphans) perceived writing materials like pens and pencils to be available. Also, 133 (89.3%) of the respondents responded that school bags and school sportswear were available, and 132 (88.6%) confirmed the availability of school uniforms, while 130 (87.2%) reported the availability of school sandals and socks for schooling. Furthermore, 129 (86.6%) of the respondent provided that notebooks for each subject were available, while 121 (81.2%) responded that they enjoy school meals also known as mid-day snacks and 120 (80.5%) provided that classroom boards were also available to them in the schools within and outside orphanage homes. Furthermore, 199(79.9%) of the respondents attest that textbooks for each school subject were available, while 118 (79.2%) confirm that their schools within and outside orphanage institutions, made classroom chairs, tables, and lockers available for them (orphans). Also, 117(78.5%) respondents confirm access to school sport facilities, while 116 (77.9%) claim availability of educational sponsorships and a school laboratory. 114 (82.6%) of respondents claim to have access to specially trained teachers in language, mathematics, and music, among others, and 113 (75.8%) claims to have been provided with spacious classrooms. As regards school toilet facility, 112 (75.25%) considers it to be available, 110 (73.8%) claims to have access to school clinics/ medical facility/ sickbay, while 109 (73.2%) confirmed the

availability of school library and 105 (70.5%) and 97 (65.1%) reported the availability of school-based counsellors and computerized educational facilities respectively.

As regards adequacy, 117 (78.5%) of the respondents (orphans) perceived writing materials like pens and pencils to be adequately provided, while 114 (76.5%) reported the adequacy of school sports wears, and 111 (74.5%) reported the adequacy of school uniforms and school bags. Also, 110 (73.8%) of the respondents claimed that school sandals and socks were adequate. Furthermore, 109 (73.2%) reported the adequacy of notebooks for each school subject, while 96 (64.4%) responded that they enjoy the adequacy of classroom boards and textbooks for each subject in the schools within and outside orphanage homes. Furthermore, 95 (63.8%) of the respondents attest that classroom chairs, tables, and lockers were adequate, while 90 (60.4%) confirm that they enjoyed school meals (mid-day snacks) and laboratory in schools within and outside orphanage institutions. Also, 88 (59.1%) respondents confirm adequate access to school sport facilities, while 85 (57%) claim adequacy of spacious classrooms. 84 (56.4%) of respondents claim children in orphanage homes enjoy educational sponsorship, and 83 (55.7%) claim to have adequate access to school toilet facilities. As regards school first aid facility, 80 (53.7%) considers it to be adequate, 80 (53.7%) claims to have adequate access to school library and school-based counsellors while 75 (50.3%) confirmed the adequacy of educational facilities like computers, projectors and electronic boards and 53 (35.6%) reported the adequacy of specially trained teachers in subjects like music, language and mathematics.

Discussion

The first finding of this study revealed that all basic welfare needs for children in orphanage homes were available. However, the greatest welfare needs and materials available to such children were food, toiletries/ bathing materials like soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, tissue roll, and clean toilets, among others. This finding is, however, in contrast with that of Yusufu and Dike-Nwadei (2020), who submitted that the welfare of children in orphanages is not guaranteed as a result of their experience of violence and child labour. Also, the findings in this study directly contradict Uyiosa (2024), who found that orphanage homes cannot claim to provide welfare for the children resident in them because of the unavailability of caregivers. On the contrary, this study showed that caregivers are readily available in orphanage homes in Lagos state. The probable reason for the disparity in findings could be due to the difference in the locale of study. As observed, the study

by Yusufu and Dike-Nwadei (2020) was conducted in the Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, and the study by Uyiosa (2024) was conducted in an unspecified location of the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. Another possible reason for a difference in findings could be that the Lagos State Government takes the domestication of the Child's Rights Act more seriously through public-private partnerships and monitoring of the orphanage institutions and homes.

Also, the findings in this study revealed the availability of educational stationery such as writing materials (pen & pencils), school uniforms and sportswear, school bags and notebooks for each subject to children in orphanage homes in Lagos State for the realization of the Child Rights Act. However, this result disagrees with the view of Eneji and Archibong (2021), who submitted that financial constraints limit the availability of necessary educational needs, such as books and other materials. Beyond that, this study contradicts the findings by Uyiosa (2024), who observed that the educational background of children in an orphanage home is discouraging, with evidence of poor performance in school subjects. Specifically, this study found that there are specially trained teachers available to educate children in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. Therefore, the assertion by Mohammed et al. (2020) does not align with this study. The assertion is that the inability of orphans in orphanages to speak English fluently was caused by the lack of qualified teachers. The difference in findings could be a result of divergent locale. It could be that the Lagos State Government emphasises the need to improve children's education, including those categorized as orphans, even in their orphanages. This may have caused the difference in findings between the study by Eneji and Archibong (2021) conducted in the Eleme area in Rivers State, Nigeria. Beyond the difference in locale, another possible reason for divergent findings could be that the Lagos State Government domesticated the Child Rights Act earlier than its Rivers State counterpart. Another reason could be that the Lagos State Government has greater access to local and foreign/international partnerships in the amelioration of the educational challenges of orphans in orphanages compared to other states in Nigeria.

In addition, it was revealed that the available welfare needs and materials for children in orphanage homes in Lagos State were adequate, as reported by a higher percentage of the respondents (children in orphanage homes). This is not in agreement with the submission by Mohammed et al. (2020), who argued that the welfare provision for children in orphanage homes and institutions remains inadequate, because of an increasing number of those admitted into the institutions. The

difference in findings is possibly because orphanage homes in Lagos, Nigeria, enjoy donations from various local and international philanthropists and humanitarian organisations. In addition, it could be that the Lagos State Government agencies and ministries charged with the responsibilities of monitoring the education of children (including orphans) are up and doing compared to other states in Nigeria.

Finally, the findings revealed that the available basic educational facilities provided for children, as reported by respondents (children in orphanage homes), were adequate. Thus, the finding in this study differs from the findings of Mohammed et al. (2020), who emphasized the adequacy of teachers for special subjects. Although the study by Mohammed et al. (2020) was silent on the locale of study, it appears that such a study might have been conducted in a different location from Lagos. The reason for this finding could assume that the Lagos State Ministry in charge of education is committed to its task. In other words, adequate inspection is done before an approval is given to schools, and this prompted the provision of adequate learning facilities, including teachers. It will be pertinent to state that attendance in those schools equally includes orphans from various orphanage homes, as such homes rarely operate a school simultaneously. Also, this finding is different from the findings by Amali (2020), who reported that orphans are challenged through inadequate educational facilities and needs. It could be that the difference in findings is caused by the difference in participants. Beyond differences in locale, Amali et al. (2020) examined undergraduates, and this current study examined children below the age of 18 years. Possibly, greater attention is given to orphans at a younger age, especially before they get into tertiary institutions, and then less attention is given as they proceed into higher school.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this study, it can be concluded that the domestication and realization of the Child's Rights Act for children in orphanage homes is on course. The implementation of this Act is following the right path through the availability and adequacy of welfare needs for orphans in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. Beyond the welfare needs, the aspect of the Act that emphasizes education is equally taken care of for children in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria. This is evident through the provision of adequate educational needs to orphans in orphanage homes in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

- to improve the drive towards achieving child's Rights Act basic welfare resources (such as food, water, clothing, among others) should not just be made available, but equally adequate to children residing in orphanage homes by stakeholders which includes philanthropist, Government agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Faith Based Organisation (FBOs) among others.
- Considering the lifelong benefits and effects of education on children, educational resources and stationery like notebooks, textbooks, computer facilities, and school bags for children residing in orphanage homes should be made adequately available.
- For orphanages without financial means, more scholarships should be provided for children in such homes at all levels of education (from basic to higher education, vocational education inclusive).
- Other states in Nigeria should take a leaf from Lagos state as measures to improve on the welfare and education of indigent children within their states as the pursuit for child holistic development and rights is a global and national concern.

References

Amali, I. O. O., Shoyemi, A. A., Akintola, M. & Ayantoye, K. S. (2020). Educational Challenges Encountered by Orphaned Undergraduates of a Public University in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Anatolian Journal of Education*, 5(2), 163-172. https://doi.org/10.29333/aje.2020.5214a

Amosun, M. D (2014). Providing Quality Pre-primary and Primary Education in Nigeria in the Best Interesting of the Child. Journal of Early Childhood Association of Nigeria. Vol. 4. No. 2. 56-63.

Amosun, M.D. and Kolawole, O.A. (2015). Pedagogical Knowledge and Skill competencies of Pre-school Teachers in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria. *Journal of the International Society for Teacher Education*. 19 (2), 6-14.

Association for Reproductive and Family Health, (2022). USAID local partners for orphans and vulnerable children project in Nigeria, Region One (ARFH LOPIN REGION 1). https://arfh-ng.org/past-project/usaid-local-partners-for-orphans-and-vulnerable-children-project-in-nigeria-region-one-arfh-lopin-region-1/

Bamgboye, E. A., Odusote, T., Olusanmi, I., Nwosu, J., Phillips–Ononye, T., Akpa, O., 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, An International Interdisciplinary Journal for Research, Policy and Care*, 1-14. DOI:10.1080/17450128.2017.1325545

Bamgboye, E., Odusote, T., Olusanmi, I., Akinyemi, J., Yusuf, B., Adebowale, A., Ashaolu G. & Ladipo, O. (2020). Socio-economic status and hunger among orphans and vulnerable children households in Lagos State, Nigeria. *African Health Sciences*, 20(2), 923-931. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7609119/ doi: 10.4314/ahs.v20i2.47

Bashir, Z. (2023). An evaluation of the impact of the Child Rights Act in regulating the rights of a child in Nigeria. The right of a child in Nigeria. *International Association of Women Judges*. https://iawj.org/content.aspx?page_id=2507&club_id=882224&item_id=4600

Chima, V. (2018). Socio-demographic determinants of health support services among orphans and vulnerable children in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Health and Epidemiology*, 10(5), 165- 170

Eneji, R. I. & Archibong, E. P. (2021). Social challenges to the education of orphaned and vulnerable children in Eleme, Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(4), 183-189

Human Rights Commission (2023). Child Rights. https://www.nigeriarights.gov.ng/focus-areas/child-rights.html

Mohammed, M., Isah, M. D & Rukuna, F. A. (2020). Strategies in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of English language in Nigeria: conceptual study of orphanage homes. *International Journal of Strategic Research in Public Administration and Organizational Process*, 2(1), 137-144

Olalowo, I.E., Olarogba, A. & Amosun, M.D. (2024). Engaging Parents for Improved Schooling Outcomes of Under-8 Pupils: A Teachers' Qualitative Perception. *Educational Challenges*, 29 (2): 287-300.

Oriwoh, V. E. & Efanodor-Obeten, H. O. (2022). Non-domestication of the child's rights act and child's rights violation in North-East Nigeria: The Implications. *Journal of Global South Research*, 1(1), 87-105

UNICEF (2024). Annual report 2023 UNICEF Nigeria. https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/media/9261/file/Annual%20Report%202023.pdf

Uyiosa, O. U. (2024). The influence of orphanage homes on the social and cognitive development of children in stem education. *Iconic Research and Engineering Journals*, 8(6), 423-432

Yusufu, S. & Dike-Nwadei, J. A. (2020). The challenges of orphans as vulnerable children in

Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. *University of Benin Journal of the Humanities,* 9(1), 1-14