## Resolving Ethics and Religious Crises: The Role of Book Publishers in Nigeria

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### **ABSTRACT**

This investigation focuses on the function of Nigerian book publishers in addressing ethical and theological crises. Professionals from Nigerian publishing firms who work in the book industry made up the population. However, a total of 10 publishing firms participated in the survey, and 60 participants were chosen at random. The information from the respondents were gathered using a self-made online questionnaire that was created and circulated. A sample size of 60 respondents were used for the study. Out of 57 filled and returned instruments, 50 were legitimate and utilized in the study. The descriptive research design was used in this investigation. The frequency of the simple percentages and mean scores were used to examine the data. The findings demonstrate that while book publishers do not organize training programs for self-employment, produce audiobooks on conflict resolution, engage in research, bibliotherapy, or outreach, they do translate publications into local languages, partner with governments, and distribute free books on conflict resolution. They provide their services via libraries, ebooks, online books, Facebook, Twitter, Academia.edu, Research-gate, kindles, and other digital and physical book platforms. They work together with libraries to extend legal deposit but not to build institutional repositories, create and provide digital publishing services, plan outreach, expand copyright, or ensure electronic distribution. In order to have a greater influence on resolving Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues, it was advised that book publishers work more effectively with librarians and vice versa.

**Keywords**: Book publishers, Ethnics, Nigeria, Publishing houses, Religious crisis, Roles,

# INTRODUCTION

Because to the development of moveable type and the Gutenberg innovation in the 15th century, books have become essential instruments for survival. The increase in book production has aided in advancement and new technologies. This is particularly true as we transition to a knowledge-based economy, where knowledge is seen as one of humankind's fundamental necessities and the fifth component of production—behind land, labor, capital, and entrepreneurship. Every published book includes crucial information that served as the foundation for its creation and could not have been communicated by any other method than a published book, whether it be in print or electronic form. Additionally, book publishers are experts in the field of book

manufacturing. Tóth and Tóthová (2020), pointed out that publishing activity and the publishing of books are part of the creative industry. Furthermore, they opined that book is not an ordinary commodity an instrument of education. This means that book is not just a commodity but it is an exceptional one that facilitates the acquisition of skills that breeds entrepreneurship. With the ultimate purpose of providing accessible knowledge while generating a profit, publishing is the profession or business of creating and producing books and CD-ROMS and selling or making them available to the general public (Eneh. Opara & Asogwa, 2022). A book publisher may also be thought of as the architect of the book since he often creates all the plans and ensures that they are implemented. Because he provides the funding for the book's financing and assumes the financial risks associated with its publication, he is also an entrepreneur. As a result, the book publisher is in charge of stocking, marketing, and selling completed books in addition to doing research, planning, budgeting, editing, illustrating, and designing. The scope of book publishing has extended to encompass electronic resources, such as electronic versions of books, journals, and magazines, thanks to the development of digital information systems and the internet (Asemah, 2014)

The area of philosophy known as ethics is concerned with morality and how it affects conduct. The origins of our moral convictions and how they influence how we conduct our daily lives are examined by several sections of the study of ethics. An ethnic crisis is a kind of crisis in which at least one side defines its goals in terms of an ethnic group and in which the violence, its causes, and potential solutions are seen from an ethnic perspective. Conflicts or crises are often caused by political, economic, social, cultural, or geographical issues rather than actual ethnic divisions (Reuter, 2022). The aforementioned description accurately captures the situation in Nigeria, where the three largest ethnic groups—Igbo, Hausa, and Yoruba—constantly clash over political and economic issues rather than over issues of ethnicity. The conflict between Christians and Muslims in contemporary Nigeria, which began in 1953, is now again referred to as a religious crisis in Nigeria. The Bokoharam insurgency has recently dominated religious violence in Nigeria. The fact that the governing party's (APC) presidential and vice presidential candidates for the 2023 general elections are all Muslims, which Christians regard as neglect and a scheme to Islamize Nigeria, indicates that the situation is going to become worse soon.

However, there are solutions to Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues. As a result, Nigerian librarians are troubled and seeking strategies to resolve the country's ethnic and religious conflicts on a professional level. The thesis of this dissertation is that because books are the only tool librarians have to stop the raging violence, book producers—that is, publishers—should play some important roles in resolving Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues.

## Statement of the problem

A country is a vast group of people bound together by a common language, religion, or culture. In certain countries, residents are united as a country by their shared religious beliefs. There are several civilizations, languages, and faiths in some other places. To

preserve peace, unity, equality, justice, and fairness among the many religious and ethnic groups, however, is the responsibility of the state via the government for the development of the country.

Unfortunately, Nigeria has ongoing religious and ethnic problems, which have impeded the country's development on many fronts—politically, economically, socially, and elsewhere. In order to guarantee that Nigeria's religious and ethnic issues are addressed, it is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to make information resources and services available to the general population. However, as books are the instruments that librarians employ, it is noted that book publishers should also play specific responsibilities in order for librarians to resolve religious and ethnic disputes. Furthermore, published study studies have not addressed the contributions book publishers have made to resolving religious and ethnic problems in Nigeria. Therefore, this research to determine the involvement of book publishers in resolving religious and ethnic tensions in Nigeria was necessary in order to address the aforementioned gaps.

## **Objective of the study**

The purpose of this research is to determine the contributions book publishers have made to resolving Nigeria's ethnic and religious conflicts.

The research is focused on achieving the following goals in particular:

- 1. To learn what assistance book publishers provide in resolving religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.
- 2. To learn about the medium that book publishers use to mediate religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.
- 3. To investigate how much book publishers and librarians work together to resolve religious and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria.

## **Research Questions**

The main research questions for this investigation are as follows:

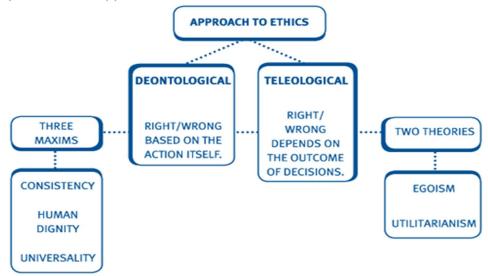
- 1. What are the solutions book publishers provide to Nigeria's religious and ethnic conflicts?
- 2. Which medium do book publishers use to help Nigerians resolve their religious and ethnic conflicts?
- 3. How much do book publishers and libraries work together to resolve racial and religious conflicts in Nigeria?

#### Theoretical framework

Decisions on good and evil permeate daily life. Ethics should apply to all facets of life; doing the right thing as an individual develops a responsible organization, improves the efficiency of the government, and lessens social strife. As a result, ethics provide a framework or a standard for conduct that guides our decisions about how to behave in a variety of circumstances in order to prevent conflict and instead advance peace, progress,

and tranquillity in our community. A person's moral outlook must be founded on ethical frameworks and guidelines. According to Gallinero, making moral judgments needs awareness of the ethical implications of issues and circumstances, as well as practice (Gallinero, 2018).

The fundamental principle of establishing ethical norms for the general welfare is upheld by theoretical approaches to ethics.



## **Deontological approach**

- The motive or principle is crucial in this non-consequentialist view.
- When the morality behind an action are understood, only then can it be judged as right or wrong.

There are three main principles, or tests, that every action must pass in order to be ethically acceptable.

- Consistency: Only follow a maxim by which you may simultaneously want for it to become a universal rule.
- o For the action to be morally correct, everyone must adhere to the same guiding principle.
- Human dignity: Act in such a manner that you always respect humanity as an end in and never just as a means, whether it be in your own person or that of another.
- Universality: Act solely in a way that allows it to believe that it is simultaneously enacting universal law via its maxims.

### Teleological approach

This theory is consequentialist.

• The results or ramifications of a choice determine whether it was made correctly or incorrectly.

•The activity itself doesn't matter as long as the result is correct. The result may be regarded from either of two angles:

## **Egoism**

- Occasionally referred to as the "what is best for me?" perspective.
- If a person voluntarily chooses to behave in a way that furthers either their immediate goals or their long-term interests, such behavior is ethically good.
- Egoism does not always function since actions on all members of society cannot be decided.
- The egoist will also behave in a manner that seems to be "right" in society because it makes them feel better.

#### Utilitarianism

- The concept of "what is best for the largest number?" is sometimes taught. A course of action is ethically correct if it maximizes the benefit for the largest number of those it affects
- It doesn't only apply to one person; it applies to society as a whole.
- It is very subjective yet useful in business choices since it adds the idea of "utility," or the economic worth of acts.

It is crucial to comprehend these fundamental theoretical perspectives in order to propose answers to fundamental ethical problems in conflict and crisis resolution for a peaceful society.

### Ethnic and religious crises in Nigeria

Nigeria is known for its severe differences, which fuel ferocious and violent political debates along lines of complex ethnic, religious, and regional divisions (Canci & Odukoya, 2013). The political process in Nigeria has historically been significantly influenced by ethnic and religious identities, both during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The colonial administration encouraged the development of the "we" against "them" mentality, which put Muslims against Christians, northerners against southerners, Hausa-fulani, Yoruba and Igbo against one another, and so forth (Adefemi, 2003). According to Canci and Odukoya (2013), it is frequently difficult to distinguish between religious and ethnic crises because the line separating them is razor-thin. This point was also made by Osaghae & Suberu (2005), who noted that, in contrast to popular belief that most of these conflicts are directed at a specific ethnic or religious group, most of these conflicts take place in the middle belt and along the culturally borderline states of the country. According to Enukora (2005), the Jos insurrection riots of 2001 and the Kaduna crises of 2000, which claimed several hundred lives, are examples of ethnic-religious crises in Nigeria. The Bokoharam insurgency is recent, as Canci and Odukoya (2013), observed that various conflicts were experienced in Nigeria between 1999 and 2013, with the Bokoharam crisis, which is still continuing, being the most serious.

According to Canci and Odukoya (2013), high levels of corruption and resource theft, poverty and injustice, the divide and rule system of colonial administration, and the socioeconomic marginalization of the north, which led to bokoharam, are the causes of ethnic and religious conflicts in Nigeria. Similar opinions were expressed by Salawu (2010), who claimed that discrimination, colonial-era government policies, poverty, unemployment, accusations and counter-accusations of neglect, oppression, dominance, exploitation, victimization, marginalization, nepotism, and bigotry are to blame for Nigeria's ethnic and religious crises. However, Canci & Odukoya (2013) added that identity consciousness, the justification of wars by religious groups, competing interests of those in authority, and envy of the business ingenuity of southerners in the north by northern elites are also major causes of ethnic and religious crises in Nigeria. As a result. their points of view were not entirely in agreement. On the other hand, Salawu (2010) expanded on his ideas when he said that immorality, the use of compulsion and force in politics, and outside influences all play a role in Nigeria's religious and ethnic issues. However, there are ways to address the ethnic and religious crises in Nigeria, including strict adherence to the teachings of one's religion, the avoidance of derogatory terminology, justice and fairness from the government, the burying of one's gruesome past, and the sincere formulation of a reconciliatory action plan by leaders of all ethnic nationalities (Abdulkareem, 2020). Damilola (2021) also said that for there to be ethnic and religious harmony in Nigeria, there should be open access to education, sufficient jobs, respect for human rights, and tolerance for one's own faith.

# Role of book publishing in a crises prone society

# a) Self-Employment Opportunities

Salawu (2010) said that poverty and unemployment increase the amount of persons willing to murder or be killed for a certain path or nominal advantages, which is a key contributing element to religious and ethnic problems in Nigeria. However, book publishing is becoming a lucrative industry and a source of independent work. Emenyonu (2017), who said that a comprehensive examination of the Nigerian Educational System reveals a feasible market for the publishers, backed this opinion. There is a sign of the publishing venture's potential in the growth of publicly and privately funded academic institutions. For young people who are interested, well-established publishing firms may also provide internship and training opportunities in the many fields of book publishing, including writing, editing, design, production, marketing, etc. This will open the door to independent work.

# b) Bibliotherapy Services

Bibliotherapy is the methodical use of literature to assist individuals in resolving their mental, physical, emotional, and social issues. Recent research on bibliotherapy demonstrates that it may be used to effectively assist a variety of individuals in coping with stress, loneliness, sadness, bereavement, domestic violence, issues with physical and mental health, as well as man-made and natural catastrophes (Jukharlli, 2011). To

put it another way, the publishing sector should encourage knowledge in the creation of bibliotherapeutic publications, bibliotherapy research, and the establishment of non-governmental organizations (NGO'S) that will support bibliotherapeutic services in the nation. In other words, bibliotherapy might help to alleviate and possibly eradicate religious and ethnic tensions in Nigeria. This is due to the fact that reading a lot of books will inevitably have an impact on our life, attitudes toward other people, circumstances, and events, moral compass, and communication skills. Additionally, Okwilagwe (2001) expressed a similar idea when he said that books have enormous potential for cultural engineering or national restoration. The democratization of society and social reform are powerfully accelerated and sustained by books.

### c) Mass Mobilization

In partnership with libraries, book publishers may plan strategic mass mobilization initiatives in the form of meetings, workshops, lectures, and seminars. The key is to provide the populace with accurate, pertinent, and useful information. This concurs with Toochukwu and Nwangwu's (2018) observation that the majority of violent confrontations were caused most significantly by a lack of appropriate or impartial information. Publishers of books may organize such initiatives or social media sites like Facebook, Google, Twitter, and LinkedIn by using information communication technologies.

## Collaboration between publishers and libraries

In order to effectively contribute to the resolution of Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues, book publishers must work with libraries. Creating institutional repositories to support the archiving and distribution of a variety of scholarly and teaching materials, developing digital publishing services to support the design management and distribution of online journals, and participating in education, outreach, and advocacy activities addressing scholarly communication issues are all examples of areas where publishers and libraries collaborate (Rosenblum & Brian, 2008; Natarajan & Kaliyan, 2009). Ceeny (2003) also expressed the opinion that publishers and libraries, as important participants in the information chain, might collaborate to expand legal deposit, copyright, and security electronic transmission.

Additionally, there is encouraging evidence that book publishers may help Nigeria resolve its ethnic and religious issues via their services including bibliotherapy, mass mobilization, accessible printing, event documenting, and publication. It is clear from literature that working together with libraries to resolve Nigeria's ethnic and religious conflicts is a good idea.

A significant knowledge vacuum exists, however, about the services offered by book publishers, the medium through which they provide services, and the cooperation between book publishers and libraries in resolving ethnic and religious problems in Nigeria. This widely held belief served as the impetus for this research on the function of book publishers in resolving ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria.

#### **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study used descriptive survey research as its methodology. Publishing industry experts working in Nigerian publishing firms made up the study's population. However, a total of 10 publishing firms participated in the survey, and 60 participants were chosen at random. In order to determine the services that book publishers offer in resolving religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria, the extent to which the media offers services in resolving religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria through book publishers, and the extent to which book publishers and librarians collaborate in resolving religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria, a self-constructed online questionnaire was divided into three clusters. 50 respondents completed the online survey. However, only 45 provided relevant and meaningful data for the research. A percentage and score analysis was performed on the data. The criterion mean was determined using the five-point Likert scale as follows: 5+4+3+2+1=15 5=3.0.

**DECISION RULE**: Any item with a mean of 3.0 or above was approved, and any item with a mean of 3.0 or less was rejected, depending on the decision.

## **RESULTS**

Table I: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Item	Frequency	
Sex		
Male	29 (58%)	
Female	21 (42%)	
Designation		
Publishers/Managing Directors	10 (20%)	
Editors	15 (30%)	
Book Designers	5 (10%)	
Illustrators	5 (10%)	
Marketers	10 (20%)	
Warehouse Officers	5 (10%)	

50 publishing industry experts from 10 Nigerian publishing firms made up the responses. According to the findings, there were 21 (42%) females and 29 (58%) men. They chose 10 (20%) publishers, 15 (30%) editors, 5 (10%) book cover designers, 5 (10%) illustrators, 10 (20%) marketers, and 5 (10%) warehouse officers as the outcomes of their categorization.

**RESEARCH QUESTION ONE**: What are the services that book publishers offer in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Mean analysis of responses of participants on the services that book publishers offer in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1.	Book publishers create employment opportunities	3.5	3.5	accepted
2.	They organize training programs for self-employment	2.0	3.0	rejected
3.	Production of audio books on conflict resolution	2.1	3.0	rejected
4.	Translation of publications to different local languages	3.3	3.5	accepted
5.	They engage in research in order to be more	2.5		rejected
	responsive to the needs of the people		3.3	
6.	Bibliotherapy services to dissuade the people from	2.0		rejected
	conflict		3.0	
7.	They organize conferences and workshops on conflict	2.8		rejected
	resolution		3.4	
8.	They with government and NGO's to distribute free	3.3		accepted
	books on conflict resolution		3.5	

The services provided by book publishers in Nigeria to resolve religious and ethnic problems are listed in Table 1. In order to resolve the religious and ethnic issues in Nigeria, respondents were asked to list the services book publishers provide. based on a 5-point likert scale (5-1), which has the following categories: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and severely disagree (SD). It demonstrates how publishing houses collaborate with governments and non-profit organizations to offer free books on conflict resolution, translate works into several local languages, and generate job opportunities (3.5). (3.3). However, the results indicate that book publishers do not set up selfemployment training programs (2.0), do not create audiobooks that focus on conflict resolution (2.1), do not conduct research to better understand the needs of the public (2.5), do not provide bibliotherapy services to deter conflict (2.0), and do not set up conferences and workshops on conflict resolution (2.8). It is clear from the data in this table that there is a lack of assistance provided by book publishers in Nigeria to resolve religious and ethnic conflicts. In contrast, Oyeyinka, Aganbi, and Adebyo (2016) said that book publication is a powerful tool for fostering growth and a transformative attitude shift in individuals that enables them to fully manage their surroundings. Therefore, it demonstrates that book publishers are not actively resolving Nigeria's religious and ethnic issues.

**RESEARCH QUESTION TWO:** What are the media through which book publishers offer services in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Mean analysis of responses of participants on the media through which book publishers offer services in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM	MEAN	S.D	DECISION
1	Kindles	3.1	3.4	Accepted
2	Academia.Edu	3.2	3.4	Accepted
3	Researchgate	3.5	3.6	Accepted
4	E-Books	3.5	3.6	Accepted
5	Online Books	3.5	3.6	Accepted
6	Facebook	3.3	3.4	Accepted
7	Physical Books	3.1	3.4	Accepted
8	Twitter	3.2	3.4	Accepted
9	LinkedIn	3.0	3.4	Accepted
10	Libraries	3.4	3.5	Accepted .

The medium that book publishers use to help Nigerians resolve their religious and ethnic conflicts are listed in Table 2 above. based on a likert scale of strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and severely disagree (SD) with 5 points (SD). The respondents accepted Facebook (3.3), Google (3.1), Twitter (3.2), Linkeldn (3.0), and libraries (3.1) as the media through which book publishers offer services in resolving religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria. They also accepted kindles (3.1), academia.edu (3.2), researchgate (3.5), e-books (3.5), online books (3.5), and kindles (3.5). This supports the assertion made by Badmus and Folayan (2020) that e-publishing is gaining popularity in Nigeria's book and journal publishing business even if it has not totally replaced traditional publishing processes including manuscript evaluation, production, sales, and distribution.

**RESEARCH QUESTION THREE:** To what extent do book publishers and librarians collaborate in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria?

**Table 4:** Mean analysis of responses of participants on the extent to which book publishers and librarians collaborate in settling religious and ethnic crises in Nigeria

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM		S.D	DECISION
1.	Book publishers and librarians collaborate in	2.0		Rejected
	creating institutional repositories		3.0	-
2.	They collaborate to develop and distribute digital	2.3	3.2	Rejected
	publishing services			
3.	They collaborate to organize outreach and	2.6	3.4	Rejected
	advocacy activities			
4.	They collaborate in extending legal deposit	3.3	3.4	accepted
5.	They collaborate in extending copyright		3.4	Rejected
6.	They collaborate in securing electronic delivery		3.2	Rejected

Based on a 5-point Likert scale, Table 3 above illustrates the level of cooperation between book publishers and librarians in resolving religious and ethnic problems in Nigeria. The scale ranges from very high extent (VHE), high extent (HE), medium extent (ME), low extent (LE), and very low extent (VLE). The replies demonstrate that book companies and libraries work together to expand lawful deposits (3.3). The responses, however, indicate that there is a lack of cooperation between book publishers and librarians in Nigeria when it comes to developing institutional repositories (2.0), creating and disseminating digital publishing services (2.3), planning outreach and advocacy initiatives (2.6), extending copyright (2.8), and securing electronic delivery (2.4).

#### CONCLUSION

The growth of Nigeria as a country has been severely hampered by ethnic and religious conflicts. The report is presented in the most effective manner possible to demonstrate the traditional and nontraditional roles that book publishers have played in resolving Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues. This analysis found that publishing houses collaborate with governments and non-profit organizations to provide free books on conflict resolution, translate works into local languages, and provide job possibilities. Additionally, it was found that book publishers provide their services via a variety of platforms, including Kindles, academia.edu, Researchgate, e-books, online books, libraries, and social networking platforms like Facebook, Google, Twitter, and Linkldn. It was also made known that book companies and libraries work together to expand lawful deposit. They do not, however, work together to build institutional repositories, publish digital content, organize outreach and lobbying efforts, extend copyright, or secure electronic distribution. Additionally, book publishers in Nigeria do not put together self-employment training programs, create audiobooks, conduct research, practice bibliotherapy, or host conferences and seminars on conflict resolution.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The research made the following recommendations:

- 1. Book publishers should go beyond financial gains and take on social obligations to resolve Nigeria's ethnic and religious issues.
- 2. Book publishers and libraries should work together more effectively as essential participants in the book business, particularly when it comes to addressing religious and ethnic problems in Nigeria.

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