Publishing, Bootlegging, Piracy and the Public in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The publishing of educative materials, fictional and non-fictional books, bulletins, magazines, and newspapers is all for disseminating information to targeted readers. The importance of books and other types of publications to individuals and a nation cannot be overemphasised. Thus, due to how important publishing is, bootlegging, which is the synonym of piracy, was examined in this study. The study examined how bootlegging affects publishing, and if the public is aware of public relations as a body that can curb piracy. However, the Excellence Theory, propounded by James Grunig, was adopted with a random sampling method using survey design. More so, a total of 200 questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents out of 250. The study used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to code the respondents' data. According to the findings, both teachers and students are unaware of Public Relations' function in the publishing industry while the respondents mostly mentioned the government as the body responsible for curbing bootlegging, and that was because the public has limited knowledge on how Public Relations can effectively curb bootlegging in the publishing industry. Thus, this study recommends that the public should be made aware of the functions of Public Relations. Likewise, the publishing industries should not rely only on the government to curb piracy, but they should seek Public Relations agencies' services to curb piracy effectively.

KEYWORDS: Perspective, Publishing, Public Relations, Bootlegging, Piracy, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

When a publishing company is mentioned, the first thing which comes to mind is books. Books have been an old existing source of documented history. Book is a multi-faceted, dynamic product and a tremendous asset of every society (Oyeyinka, Aganbi & Adebayo, 2016, p 1). It enlightens scholars, teachers, and students as a catalyst for knowledge, pleasure, and development in a society, made so many scholars conclude that books have a great impact on the people and therefore, a developed society is that which reads (Oyeyinka *et al.,* 2016). Book publishing plays a vital role in the development of a country. Great intellectuals of the world such as Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, and so many other works would not be known if not because it was written. As much as publishing is for intellectual purposes, it is also a social responsibility. Likewise, it is a medium of mass communication because it aids in disseminating information to an audience.

Moreover, publishing is an old business which is traced to the first printing press established in Calabar in the year 1846 by Rev. Hope Waddell of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland mission mainly for the production of bible lessons and later instructional materials for schools (Omeiza & Lanre, 2019, p. 5). Publishing deals with a printing works for distribution and sales to people, mostly learning who can read and write. The process of publishing includes: having an idea of what to write, submission of a manuscript, proofreading, editing, typing, and printing which is done mainly for profit by the publishers based on the Nigerian context (Omeiza & Lanre, 2019).

With the advent of publishing, bootlegging followed destroying creativity, diminishes talents, and subsequently resulting in the intellectuals not benefiting from their works, causing more concern by the authors and publishers. Bootlegging is a constant, prevalent, worldwide phenomena that has for long challenged organisations especially publishing firms (Nwosu *et al.*, 2020a; Nejo *et al.,* 2020b; Olabanjo *et al.,* 2020a; Omokiti *et al.,* 2020b; Salau *et al.,* 2020a; Salau *et al.,* 2020b; Nwosu *et al.,* 2020b). Due to bootlegging, the Nigerian copyright commission (NCC) was established to protect individuals' intellectual properties and penalise any person who violates the laws by using someone's work without authorisation. The International Intellectual Property Alliance (2006) reports that Nigeria's bootlegging level is nearly 85% for all sectors with an estimate among the world's highest (Ahmadu, 2017, p.104).

Regarding Public Relations, it is not subjected to one definition but can be referred to as a management function with the leadership role of maintaining relationships through communication practices, between the organisation and its publics (Nwosu *et al.,* 2019). It can be said that the functions of the Nigerian Copyright Commission can be substituted with that of Public Relations because the

department or agency will fully focus on only one organisation at a time to tackle the problems. However, Public Relations has to do with an effective and two-way communication system (Aiyende *et al.*, 2020b; Fayemi *et al.,* 2020a; Fayemi *et al.,* 2020b; Fayemi *et al.,* 2020c; Fayemi *et al.,* 2020d; Olabanjo *et al.,* 2020b; Omokiti *et al.,* 2020a). Therefore, Public Relations can be a department or an agency representing a publishing firm to ensure the firm has a good public image by preventing pirated publications' excess flow. Additionally, it is paramount for an organisation to know the central goal of its publics to satisfy them and this can be solely achieved by the presence of the Public Relations practitioners who engage in relationship building with stakeholders (James *et al.,* 2020a; Ndubueze *et al.,* 2019; James *et al.,* 2020b; James *et al.*, 2020c; Ndubueze *et al.,* 2020; Nejo *et al.,* 2020a; Olabanjo *et al.,* 2019).

This study determines the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding Public Relations functions in publishing industries and which pirated books or originals are patronised. It would also determine the reason for bootlegging and its effect on distribution and price and establish a solution to curb bootlegging.

A. *Overview of Books and Publishing Industries in Nigeria*

When publishing industries are discussed, books come to mind. Books had existed for so many years and were called differently in a different part of the world when it first emerged. Books are non-periodicals; it is printed and published. The Greeks and the Egyptians around 3000 BC used the papyrus roll as books, and they were kept in libraries. The Romans were also not left behind in the discovery.

Nevertheless, in this case, only the rich had books in their possession. All this show the gradual evolution of books to what it is today. The first book to be printed was a bible by Johannes Guttenberg who invented the first movable printing press. This invention paved the way for printing and publishing (Oyeyinka *et al.,* 2016).

Gradually, the invention reached Nigeria through the Presbyterian Missionaries who established a printing press in 1846 at Calabar, Cross River State. The publication was not for educational purposes but was basically for religious purposes. Also, another printing press evolved in Abeokuta, and since then, more printing firms were built with newspapers and books in circulation (Oyeyinka *et al.,* 2016). Since then, many Nigerians venture into the publishing business, which is growing at a fast pace.

With more publications and readers of books, journals, monographs, magazines, newspapers, and e-books, the more the nation becomes knowledgeable, development automatically starts. Publishing is beneficial to every community because it brings about social change, and it serves as the means of keeping a record of events and history. Publishing also paves the way for job creation as editors, printers, graphic designers, and marketers are needed for the production processes (Oyeyinka *et al.,* 2016).

B. *Publishing and Piracy*

Publishing is the process of producing words, images, or pictures and making them accessible and available to the public. Publishing involves the services of editors, printers, authors, and marketers subsequently, a manuscript is edited, designed, structured into a publication, and finally distributed to the target audience (Ferdinand, 2019). Publishing industries are very important in developing a nation because books inform, educate, and entertain people. Publications can be periodicals, newspapers, books, magazines including electronic media. Despite the fast growth of publishing, the piracy or bootlegging rate, and lack of funding affect the industries massively. According to the Oxford dictionary, piracy can be defined as the unauthorised use or reproduction of another's work. Also, bootlegging, which is synonymous with piracy, means the activity of selling goods illegally.

Piracy or bootlegging affects the publishing industries by limiting the circulation of their books. Pirates sell more than publishers because it is cheaper and always available in the market. The high cost of Ink, Paper, and gum reduces the original books expensive and sometimes scarce. The government needs to implement effective laws to stop pirates from operating (James & Odiboh et al., 2019).

In safeguarding publishing industries, different bodies have emerged to help curb the challenges faced. The Nigerian Publishers' Association (NPA) established the regulatory bodies established in 1965, Nigerian Booksellers Association, Association of Nigerian Printers, Association of Nigerian Authors, and Nigerian Library Association (Olabanjo, Odiboh, Nwosu & Ndubueze, 2019). The mentioned associations make sure that publishing industries and the authors disseminate information and are being protected. The Nigerian Copyright Commission serves as the body which enforces copyright laws to prevent piracy (Ubogu, 2018). Despite all the bodies mentioned, bootlegging is still a serious issue faced in the publishing industry. What could be missing?

C. *Public Relations and Publishing*

Public Relations is the deliberate planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics (Odiboh & Oladunjoye, 2019). Public relations is concerned with or devoted to creating mutual understanding among groups and institutions. Public relations monitors, surveys, and researches issues and happenings in the environment (Odiboh & Ajayi, 2019). Public relations are the creations of the establishment of mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics. It suggests that public relations are not a haphazard process (Ndubueze *et al.,* 2019). Also, public relations practice is the art and science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisation leaders, and implementing planned programmes of action, which will serve both the organisation and its publics. The three main elements of

public relations are to inform people, persuade people, and integrating people with people (Adama & Okechukwu, p.3, 2019). Apart from the mentioned elements, Public Relations communicates basically through social media, the traditional media, and the new media (Olabanjo *et al.,* 2019).

Furthermore, it is important to note that Public Relations is a management function that involves managing problems, record keeping, defining the board of management's responsibility to make decisions based on the public's interest, serves as an early warning system, and does researches. Thus, Public Relations is a planned activity, and the relationship with the public is established and then maintained (Theaker, 2020).

The public must be fully aware of public relations' responsibilities to be perceived as important in all fields (Nwosu, Odiboh, Ndubueze & Olabanjo, 2019). The public mostly considers the Nigeria Copyright Commission (NCC) as the main body for regulating the publishing firms but the definitions of Public Relations show that it is very effective in dealing with all kinds of organisations (Odiboh, Ezenagu & Okuobeya, 2019). During a crisis, in this case bootlegging, Public Relations is the department full of experts in crisis communication which means they have the right strategies to curb piracy in the publishing industry (Ahmad & Idid, 2020). Publish Relations practices extend to different works of life and creating awareness about their roles and services can make other organisations such as publishing firms value and trust their expertise in tackling bootlegging. Therefore, it will be important for organisations to focus more on managing the public misperception of Public Relations (Adelua *et al.,* 2019) to be well informed of Public Relations activities in any organisation. The missing link in most studies is there is hardly a connection between publishing and public relations, looking at the functions of a public relations practitioner; this study will attempt to close the gap between the two by finding out the perspective of the public regarding public relations functions in the publishing industry.

THE ORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Excellence theory is a public relations theory propounded by James Grunig in 1985. The theory explains how organisations can be more productive and effective by stating the functions of Public Relations when it comes to managing an organisation. According to the theory, Public Relations manages, organises, fosters good relations with the public, reduces publicity negativity, satisfies the public, and ensures the organisation is accepted (Grunig, 2008; Godam, Omego & Ochonogor, 2019).

Therefore, this theory applies to the study by implying that publishing firms are responsible for the authors, booksellers, and publics. In other, for the publishing industry to keep the public's interest at heart, Public Relations can help build a relationship between the public and the industry to work towards its publics' goals and interests. Public relations is a management function that focuses on satisfying the public and maintaining its public image (Odiboh, Olonode, Adesina & Yartey, 2018).

A.   Research Design and Methodology

This discusses research design, population, sampling technique/ sample size, and the data collection instruments (Odiboh *et al.*, 2020a; Odiboh *et al.,* 2020b; Odiboh and Oladunjoye, 2019; Odiboh and Ajayi, 2019; Odiboh, Ezenagu and Okuobeya, 2019). In this study, the survey method was adopted. Survey research design has an unbiased representation of a population of interest and gathers the same information from each participant (Owens, 2002).

To get responses from the respondents, the researcher formulated a questionnaire out of the research questions. It is about the perception of the public toward Public Relations in publishing industries and how to curb bootlegging. The questionnaire consisted of open and close-ended questions whereby, the copies of the questionnaires were administered to the population by the field assistants to the researcher. After administering the questionnaires to the students and teachers, the data gathered was coded into the social science software Statistical Package and tabulated to understand data collected. The sample size was selected based on a random sampling technique because the school population cannot be all selected due to many students. Therefore the random selection allowed different categories of students and teachers to fit into the study. The study's sample size is 250 respondents, but only 200 questionnaires were retrieved from the field.

RESULTS

After collecting data, it was analysed through frequencies and percentages using SPSS (Statistical Package of the Social Science) software. The tables interpret the findings.

Table I: Respondents

		F	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
	Teachers	85	42.5	42.5	42.5
	Students	115	57.5	57.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

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Table II shows that 85 of the respondents (42.5%) are teachers, while 115 (57.5%) are students. This result shows that most of the respondents are students; although both respondents are active readers and book buyers.

Table II: Reasons for Purchasing Poorly Printed Books

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
The high price of the original	146	73	62.2	62.2
Unavailability of original	37	18.5	25.9	88.1
Poor quality	17	8.5	11.9	100.0
Total	200	100	100.0	

Table II shows that 146 (62.2%) of the respondents, which is the highest agreed that the high price of original books makes them buy poorly printed books which turns out to be pirated copies. Also, 37 (25.9%) responds that the unavailability of original books in circulation compels them to purchase pirated books whose features are mostly poor printing. More so, 17 (11.9%) agrees that they purchase pirated books despite the low quality because it is affordable. This study indicates that most of the respondents go for pirated books because it is cheaper for them to afford.

Table III: Purchase of Pirated Books in the Past

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
Yes	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
No	100	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

In Table III, half of the respondents (50%) agreed that they had bought pirated books before subsequently. Similarly, the other half (50%) acknowledged that they have never bought a pirated book in the past.

Table IV: Reasons for Book Piracy

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
Cheap	41	20.5	25.2	25.2
Poverty	36	18.0	22.1	47.2
Unemployment	15	7.5	9.2	56.4
Greed	12	6.0	7.4	63.8
No idea	92	46	33.7	97.5
Unavailability of originals	4	2.0	2.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table IV indicates the reasons why bootlegging exists. The majority of the respondents 92 (33.7%) said they have no idea why books are pirated while 41 (25.2%) stated that pirated books are cheap unlike the expensive originals, this makes the pirates produce more books because of the high demands for cheaper books. Thirty-six (22.1%) of the respondents said poverty makes youths indulge in the act. Likewise, unemployment 15 (9.2%) is also a factor that pushes people into the act. Greed 12 (7.4%) and unavailability of original books 4 (2.5%) are also factors that bring about piracy. Pirates only pirate books that are high in demand that means if the pirates produce the same book at a cheaper rate people will rush for it which will cut the supply of the original copies because there is no one to buy the expensive books.

Table V: Public Relations Responsible for Bootlegging Control

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
Yes	41	20.5	20.6	20.6
No	102	51	50.8	71.4
Not sure	57	28.5	28.6	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

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According to Table V, most of the respondents 102 (50.8%) agree that Public Relations has no responsibility in controlling bootlegging in publishing firms. On the other side, 41 (20.6%) share a contrary opinion. However, the least number of 57 (28.6%) respondents have no idea of public relations' responsibilities in controlling bootlegging in a publishing firm.

Table VI: Respondents' Preference for a Price, Original and Pirated Books

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
A pirated but low-price book	28	14.0	14.0	14.0
An original but expensive book	172	86.0	86.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

In Table VI, the respondents responded to the question of their preference. They were asked if they prefer a pirated book but low price or an original book but expensive. 172 (86.0%), the majority agree that they prefer to purchase an original book no matter the expenses than purchase a pirated book of lower price. 28 (14.0%) respondents prefer pirated books because of the cheap rate.

Table VII: Reasons for Bootlegging and Piracy

f		*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
Laziness	3	1.5	1.7	1.7
Ignorance	4	2.0	2.2	3.9
Quick money/ unemployment	42	21.0	23.5	27.4
High price/no access to originals	76	39.5	32.4	59.8
Greed	15	7.5	8.4	68.2
Poor government policies towards publishing	10	5.0	5.6	73.7
Poverty	22	11.0	12.3	86.0
No idea	25	12.5	14.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Three (1.7%) respondents in Table VII stated that Laziness is a factor or reason which encourages bootlegging as many people are not hardworking enough to earnf a living. The 4 (2.2%) respondents said many Nigerians are ignorant of bootlegging being a crime which makes it a reason they indulge in the act while 42 (23.5%) states that quick money-seeking and unemployment are some of the reasons. Also, 76 of the respondents (32.4%) agree that high price and lack of access to original books causes bootlegging because of the public purchases the cheap books. Greed from the pirates' side to earn double of what they did not produce is the reason for bootlegging, which 15 (8.4%) of the respondents identified. Poor government policies 10 (5.6%) towards publishing are serious issues as the government neglects the industry. If the government takes the publishing firms seriously, piracy can be curbed. Twenty-two respondents (12.3%) say that poverty results in people doing anything to survive without thinking of the damages it might have on others. Finally, 25 respondents (14.0%) said that they have no idea what the reason for bootlegging is.

Table VIII: Suggestions for Tackling Bootlegging

	f	*%*	*Valid %*	*Cumulative %*
Job creation	27	13.5	15.2	15.2
Penalty	102	51	44.9	60.1
Awareness	16	8.0	9.0	69.1
Affordability	17	8.5	9.6	78.7
Effective laws	24	12.0	13.5	92.1
No idea	14	7.0	7.9	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

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Table VIII, which is the last table, answered suggestions on how to tackle or curb bootlegging. The majority of the respondents which are 102 (44.9%) stated that to solve the bootlegging problem, pirates should be penalised for knowing how serious the crime of piracy is while 27 (15.2%) respondents suggested that when there is job creation, such crimes like piracy will reduce. Some of the respondents, 16 (9.0%), suggested that people should be aware of bootlegging's serious implication and the damages it causes both publishers and authors. Also, 17 (9.6%) said piracy would reduce when original books are affordable and circulated. Some of the respondents 24 (13.5%) suggested effective laws by both government and publishing firms while 14 (7.9%) respondents said they have no idea how bootlegging can be tackled.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study shows that most of the public does not know Public Relations' responsibilities, thereby stating that they have no role in publishing companies when piracy. The majority affirmed that Public Relations have no responsibility in bootlegging control in publishing industries. While curb bootlegging control is seen as PR's responsibility, the respondents are unaware of bootlegging PR control. The respondents who said that PR is responsible for bootlegging control failed to state what the responsibilities are. This finding shows that the respondents do not know the responsibilities of PR in publishing firms regarding bootlegging.

According to this study's findings, original copies of books are patronised more than the pirated ones. Some public members are ready to spend more to get an original book in circulation than having a pirated copy. Therefore, the original books and scarcity's high price makes the publics patronise pirated books; thereby encouraging pirates to keep producing pirated books in the market. This act affects the distribution of the original books, thus, affecting the development of publishing businesses in Nigeria. On the other hand, most of the respondents said they do not know the bootlegging reasons, while a lesser number responded that pirated books are cheap and accessible.

Several factors are responsible for bootlegging. According to this study, unemployment is a major factor because it causes the youths to indulge in different criminal acts such as bootlegging. While some people are fully aware of the wrongness in engaging in by selling other people's work, others agreed that some are ignorant that reproducing of any literary work, sculpture, painting, or any kind of creation under the protection of the Nigerian Copyright commission if not authorised, is a crime. However, many respondents agreed that bootlegging is caused by poverty in the country where people act just to eat a meal and poor government policies. The government should take the publishing firm seriously as they are the backbone of Nigeria's educational sector. Because the original books are not in access in the market like the pirated, people rush for the pirated because it is cheaper, reducing the books' circulation rate, and the price drops because no one is buying. Furthermore, another study supports these findings by stating that poverty, ignorance, the high cost of books, inability to access original books, and poor funding of regulatory agencies such as the Nigerian copyright commission. Its effect is the economic, social, and intellectual damage it causes (Emmanuel & Folorunsho, 2019).

To curb bootlegging and piracy, most of the respondents stated that both the government and the publishing firm should establish an enforceable law against pirates to be penalised accordingly when found wanting because bootlegging affects not only the publisher but also the authors of the publications. Also, the study found out that when original books are sold at an affordable price and in circulation, the rate of piracy will reduce because some buyers only purchase cheap books and most of the cheap books are the pirated ones. Onabajo (2017) had affirmed that public relations tools should use are; news release, advertisement, the favourable public image of the organisation, and award programmes for the staff. The tools can be a starting point for reducing piracy; likewise, the public's perspective will change towards public relations' responsibilities in the publishing industry. Emmanuel and Folorunsho (2019) support that professional bodies, such as the media should solve bootlegging. In this regard, the publishing industry's Public Relations responsibility is encouraged to curb piracy in Nigeria. On the other hand, the Nigerian parliament should enforce strict laws and severe punishments for pirates and discourage books' street selling.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that bootlegging is a serious issue that some public is ignorant about while most of the population buy pirated books because of how cheap it is and always available for distribution, unlike the original copies. Pirates operate based on the books that are high in demand. The school where the questionnaires were administered suggested that to curb bootlegging; awareness should be made, offenders should be penalised, the government should improve and strengthen their policies regarding publishing firms. Most of the respondents failed to state Public Relations' responsibilities, which shows that they are unaware of how effective and important public relations in the publishing industry could be. This result also indicates that Public Relations activities in publishing industries are limited.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the government make the publishing industry a priority because it is the backbone of Nigeria's educational system. If the publishing business dies off today due to bootlegging, students will not have books to read, and the author's creative talents will not be put to use anymore. Also, the Nigerian copyright commission policies should be strengthened and made effective to curb bootlegging in Nigeria.

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Finally, the respondents failed to mention a public relations responsibility as a means to solving bootlegging, therefore despite the presence of a copyright commission, and publishing firms should be encouraged to have a Public Relations department or an agency to help in curbing bootlegging. Also, Public Relations maintains a good public image so that the customers will not patronise pirated books, increasing the positive perception of Public Relations by the public.

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