



EXAMINING THE NEXUS BETWEEN BOOK PUBLISHING AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA

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Book publishing contributes to national development, Nigeria's economy and the sustainable development of the society through provision of decent jobs and improving the standard of education. In finding the nexus between book publishing and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), this paper critically evaluates role of the Nigerian book industry in attaining four of the goals to wit: Goal 1 (End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere in the World), Goal 4 (Quality Education), Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and Goal 15 (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss). It also highlights the role of the book publishing industry in attaining the African Agenda 2063 on a regional level and ECOWAS Vision 2050 on a sub-regional level. It finds that the Nigerian book industry has not been able to live up to expectation in attaining SDGs as a result of the legal, institutional and operation challenges confronting the publishing industry, making it one of the least contributing sub-sectors to the Nigeria's GDP based on data by the National Bureau of Statistics. The study recommends *inter alia* that Nigeria needs a friendly National Book Policy and development oriented legal reforms in the book publishing industry in order to drive its contribution to the attainment of SDGs in the country.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Books are protected as protected as literary works under the Nigerian Copyright Act 2022¹ (the Act). Book publishing is the art of transforming the author's thoughts into a permanent form from its organic manuscript format to a finished product - book. Ezekwe defines book publishing as 'an essential attribute of modern information age which is responsible for issuing books, maps, photographs and other printed materials'².

Book publishing plays essential roles in driving national development through the dissemination of information and educational resources which are essential building blocks for innovation and creativity needed for societal development. Books are a vehicle for the spread of knowledge, culture, financial empowerment among others and they contribute significantly to boosting economic empowerment, contributing to national development, and promoting mental health.³ Conversely, a society without good books or a virile book publishing industry stands the risk of poverty, underdevelopment, illiteracy, unemployment among others. Books are essential for educating minds that would in turn contribute immensely to the advancement of society; hence, in revamping the economy, attention must be paid to the book publishing industry.

Nigeria's expanding population is another reason there needs to be a focus on the book publishing industry as the teeming population places increasing demands for books. As a continent, shortage of books in circulation is one of the factors militating against the development of Africa. Nigeria has over 100 established book publishers with the largest book publishers being educational publishers such as notably University Press plc (formerly Oxford University Press Nigeria, founded 1949), Longman Nigeria plc, Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd and Evans Brothers (Nigeria Publishers) Ltd, all of which are affiliated with international groups.⁴ Although there is no accurate data on the total number of book publishers in the country, the estimate is a far cry from the number of book publishing companies in the United States of America with 2,829

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¹ S.2(1) CA 2022, A 178, 2023 No 8

² F Ezekwe, 'Publishing and Copyright Law in Nigeria: A Preview' (2019) *Library Philosophy and Practice* <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/220153749.pdf> accessed 15 October 2022.

³ O T Ajayi and L A Ihebuzor, 'Book Publishing and Its Fundamentals as a Parameter for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: a Comparative Appraisal' (2023) 1(4) *International Journal of Applied Economics, Accounting and Management (IJAEAM)* 213, 214.

⁴ Commonwealth Network, 'Find Printing and Publishing expertise in Nigeria' https://www.commonwealthofnations.org/sectors-nigeria/business/printing_and_publishing/ accessed 16 September 2024.

publishing companies, Germany with 1,071 and the United Kingdom with 904 publishing companies.⁵

Over the years, publishing has been one of the least contributing sub-sectors to the Gross Development Plan (GDP) of Nigeria with average of 0.018% to GDP and 0.197% to the sector's value but its growth was the highest in 2011 when its contribution within the sector grew by 40.29% to ₦12,312.10 million but slowed down to a growth of 15.46% in 2012⁶. North America was rated to be the largest region in the global book publishing market as of 2018 with 39% of the market followed by Asia Pacific accounting for 30% of the global book publishing market while Africa was rated as the smallest region⁷. According to the erstwhile Director-General of the Raw Materials Research and Development Council, Prof Azikiwe Onwualu, the pulp, paper, paper products, printing and Publishing sector of the Nigeria's economy (as at 2010) employed over 300,000 people with investments worth over ₦100 billion.⁸ Therefore, there is a need to increase the potentials of the book publishing industry especially by leveraging on its ability to contribute significantly to the sustainable development of the society.

The availability of books and national literacy levels have been shown to correlate positively with socio-economic development.⁹ Book publishing has been described as a noble profession and academic discipline that sustains individual growth and national development.¹⁰ There is therefore a strong relationship between book publishing and the sustainable development goals which aims to transform the world and build a better future for all. The United Nations (UN) has identified 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve a more sustainable and equitable world by 2030. There is a dearth of literature on the nexus between book publishing industry and the attainment to the SDGs, particularly from the Nigerian perspective which is a gap this study seeks to fill. This article examines the role played by the book publishing industry in the attainment of the SDGs at international level, to the African Union's Agenda 2063 at

⁵ O T Ajayi and L A Ihebuzor, 'Book Publishing and Its Fundamentals as a Parameter for Socio-Economic Development in Nigeria: a Comparative Appraisal' (2023) 1(4) *International Journal of Applied Economics, Accounting and Management (IJAEAM)* 213, 219.

⁶ National Bureau of Statistics, 'Nigerian Information & Communication Sector' <<https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/pdfuploads>> accessed 26 October, 2023

⁷ Businesswire, 'Global Book Publishers Market, Forecast to 2022 - ResearchAndMarkets.com' (14 November 2019) <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20191114005799/en/Global-Book-Publishers-Market-Forecast-to-2022---ResearchAndMarkets.com>.

⁸ I S Idakwo and J O Sanni, 'Publishing and National Development' in *Issues and Themes in Publishing* (Zeh Communications Ltd, 2015) quoting *The Punch Newspaper* (7 July 2010) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332752754_Publishing_and_National_Development.

⁹ UNESCO, *EFA Global Monitoring Report, Education for All 2000–2015* (UNESCO, Paris).

¹⁰ S Okere, 'Publishing in Nigeria: Imperative of Change, Growth and Sustainability' (Paper presented at the Nigeria International Book Fair, Victoria Island, Lagos, 2022).

regional level and the Vision 2050 of the Economic of West African Countries (ECOWAS) at the sub-regional level.

Hence, section 2 of this article unpacks the significance of the book publishing and the sustainable development nexus discourse, with focus on how book publishing can serve as enabler and driver of sustainable development, section 3 examines the role of the industry in fulfilling the AU Agenda 2063 and section 4 analyses same with respect to the ECOWAS Vision 2050. Section 5 analyses challenges faced by the book publishing industry which militate against its effective contribution to the attainment of the SDGs. Section 6 makes suggestions on how the book publishing industry can increase its efficiency and contributions towards the sustainable development of society while the article is concluded in section 7.

2.0 BOOK PUBLISHING AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP

As a continuation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 was fashioned out in 2015 to end poverty and establish equality around the world.¹¹ SDGs blueprint was set up by the United Nations to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by the year 2030. These goals address global challenges faced globally such as poverty, inequality, technology, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.¹² One of the ways book publishing promotes the attainment of the SDGs is the publishing of multi-disciplinary and international research needed to nourish policy decisions and challenge some of the existing assumptions connected with Sustainable Development Goals. Book publishers occupy a unique position to facilitate advancement in the various areas of the SDGs. The SDGs challenge book publishers to operate in a sustainable and equitable way while also active as agents of change and progress to contribute significantly to the attainment of the SDGs. Publishers provide vital medium to enlighten people about the SDGs and also discuss its themes such as poverty, health, equality and the environment with each goal providing opportunities to showcase relevant publications on it.¹³

SDGs cover a wide range of critical issues which are all interconnected but this study examines four goals that have direct bearing with book publishing to wit: Goal 1 – End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere in the World, Goal 4 – Quality Education, Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 15 - Protect, restore and promote

¹¹United Nations, 'Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development' *Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Sustainable Development* <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda> accessed 26 October 2023.

¹² Ibid

¹³ International Publishers Association, *Publishers and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* <https://internationalpublishers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Publishers-and-The-United-Nations-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf> accessed 15 October 2023.

sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. This section examines the key areas by which publishing industry can contribute to the achievement of these goals.

2.1. SDG 1: End Poverty in All its Forms Everywhere in the World

SDG 1 is ending poverty in all its forms everywhere in the world. The ability to read and acquire knowledge is fundamental to fighting poverty and hunger; book publishing contributes significantly to education and development thereby enabling people secure work and improve their financial state and build a smarter generation of financially empowered persons for the future.¹⁴ Book publishing cures poverty of the mind (intellectual needs) and poverty of the body (physical needs) both of which are significant parts of the sustainable development goals. By publishing soul and mind lifting materials, the book publishing industry provides essentials needed to reduce poverty of the mind and pocket. The industry offers a wide range of topics to support poor people's empowerment and ensure that people are driven towards enterprises, communications technology, and community development.¹⁵ Poverty of food, housing, clothing and shelter cannot be reduced without tapping into the energy, skills, and motivation of the millions of poor people around the world which can only be attained via education and enlightenment through books.¹⁶ Therefore, bringing an end to poverty is closely linked to education (SDG 4) and availability of decent work (SDG 8).

2.2. SDG 4: Quality Education

SDG 4 declares that “education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”¹⁷. Publishing of quality books brings about quality education, improves dwindling reading culture and raises standard of education globally. This goal also focuses on the promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace¹⁸. Publishers and authors are key players in the promotion of reading culture and learning at all levels. Reading and learning are essential parts in a child's growth and development. Considering the roles played by book publishing in the growth of a nation, research shows that its importance on literacy development

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Open Knowledge Repository, ‘Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook’ (June 2002) <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/bdc9ff61-d597-5a3e-b1ee-c2b5b2ec3be5> accessed 21 October 2023.

¹⁷ High Level Political Development on SDG, ‘Review of SDG Implementation and Interrelations Among Goals’ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23844BN_SDG_8_Decent_work.pdf.

¹⁸ Ibid

cannot be underestimated and as such, the level of development in a nation can be compared with the level of literacy that book stimulates¹⁹. This is the more reason a developed economy is a book-glued economy while a developing economy is a less book conscious society.

Book publishing plays a significant role in the promotion, understanding and attainment of the SDGs. The goals are often published in books and other printed materials, reports and various research results on the SDGs are also published. Moreover, they help to raise awareness about the SDGs to all target audiences by using SDG logos and icons on their content or websites to get people identify with the SDGs and understand the concepts behind them. Therefore, the industry plays a significant role in the awareness about the SDGs. An example is the SDG Book Club launched in 2019 during the “Bologna Book Fair” to enable children interact and better understand the principles behind the SDGs.²⁰ The book club was developed for children aged between 6 -12, and provides a curated reading list of books from around the world, available in all six official UN languages—Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.²¹ Publishers do recommend to authors, children’s books for the SDG Book Club as well as create accessible e-books as a direct contribution to SDG 10 - Reducing Inequalities. Also, publishers contribute to the SDGs by publishing reliable and up-to-date scientific based content which provides a foundation for the goals and enables a scientific approach to combat misinformation.²²

Furthermore, the publishing industry plays a vital role in achieving this goal by producing and distributing educational materials that promote literacy and support education initiatives through partnerships with educational institutions as well as providing educational resources to underprivileged communities. SDG 4 is arguably the most important goal which lays the foundation for success for all other goals and education is the core of what publishers contribute and do daily.²³ Books equip people with the skills and open minds needed to achieve the SDGs and drive the development of society. Kalejaiye and Akangbe sums up the quintessential role of books by stating that. ‘It is a veritable source of information to the teachers and students, a gold mine of knowledge for researchers and scholars and a fountain of pleasure and leisure to general

¹⁹ Graduate Projects, ‘Ethical and Legal Issues in Book Publishing in Nigeria’ (14 September 2022) <https://graduateprojects.com.ng/2022/09/14/ethical-and-legal-issues-in-book-publishing-in-nigeria/> accessed 2 July 2023.

²⁰ IPA, ‘Publishers and the United Nations – Sustainable Development Goals’ https://www.internationalpublishers.org/images/aa-content/ipa-reports/State_of_Publishing_Reports_2020/ accessed 15 October 2023.

²¹ Ibid

²² S Aldies, ‘Taking Concrete Steps Towards the SDG Goals: How Publishers Can Contribute’ *International Publishers Association* <https://www.internationalpublishers.org/blog/entry/taking-concrete-steps-towards-the-sdg-goals-how-publishers-can-contribute> accessed 15 October 2023.

²³ International Publishers Association, Publishers and The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals <https://internationalpublishers.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Publishers-and-The-United-Nations-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf>

readers. Books are indices of progress, pivots of stability, catalysts for social development as well as springboards of advancement and galvanisers to breakthrough.²⁴ Book publishing facilitates literacy which in turn accelerates national development. Hence, the quality, quantity and diversity of books produced in a society are essential indicators of that society's level of development, intellectual sophistication, capacity for technological innovation and industriousness.²⁵

Publishers also played major roles during the recent Covid-19 pandemic. By making books available digitally, they ensured that learning and education could continue even though teachers, students and researchers could not have access to their physical libraries or classrooms due to the lockdown. Many publishers made books and other learning resources available open access or digitally. In addition, research results and publications on the covid 19 pandemic were made open access by publishers to facilitate dissemination of research and ensure collaboration towards a speedy solution to the pandemic and management of its effects.²⁶ The publishing industry therefore played a significant role in enlightening people and facilitating research at a time of emergency in the world.

The impact of book on education, research and general literacy development is unquantifiable; hence, the degree of development in a nation correlates to the degree of literacy or education in that nation which can be directly traced to the availability of quality books.²⁷ Therefore, book publishing plays a significant role in the growth and development of a nation. Book publishing can preserve history and pass down knowledge and critical thinking from one generation to another. It serves an intellectual and social responsibility by keeping human activities for posterity.²⁸

Education plays a significant role in ensuring social change and facilitating greater control over the environment. Book publishing is the nerve of education and it helps the consciousness of people as they relate with their environment. In Nigeria, the nationalists who fought for the independence of the country were able to challenge the colonialists mostly due to formal education.²⁹ Book publishing is an effective vehicle for development and positive change in the behavioural attitude of the people.

Book publishing also contributes significantly to the culture of a people through publication in fields such as history, political science, philosophy, language,

²⁴ O Kalejaiye and C Akangbe, 'Book Publishing and Its Challenges: The Nigerian Experience' (2007) 7 *International Journal of Communication* 71–72.

²⁵ O T Oyeyinka, V E Aganbi and O A Atwolara-Odule, 'Problems of Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria' (2016) 2(10) *Journal of Research and Development (JRnD)* 1–8.

²⁶ Nane GF and others, 'COVID-19 and the Scientific Publishing System: Growth, Open Access and Scientific Fields' (2023) 128(1) *Scientometrics* 345–362 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-022-04536-x>.

²⁷ O T Oyeyinka, V E Aganbi and O A Atwolara-Odule, 'Problems of Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria' (2016) 2(10) *Journal of Research and Development (JRnD)* 1–8.

²⁸ *Ibid*

²⁹ *Ibid*

anthropology and others. They allow thriving of cultural values and steer civilisation and promote the evolution of cultures. Books serve significant record keeping purposes, hence, they can keep being reference points even decades or centuries after they were written or published.

2.3. SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

With a stable economy, book publishing industry is bound to make a great impact on sustainable development of the country. The publication of a book has a multiplier effect on the economy; starting from the printing, circulation/distribution, marketing, etc. Each of these stages involves both manpower and machinery in providing decent job for the citizenry and promote the nation's economic growth.

The chain of book production starting from the author to the end user involves providing decent work and economic growth in accordance with Goal 8. This chain involves authoring the book, printing the book, distributing the published books into the wider audience via school libraries, public libraries and community libraries wherever they exist and marketing the books through indoor and outdoor advertising agency³⁰. SDG 8 promotes 'sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all'. There is a mutually supportive relationship between book industry and socio-economic policies alongside full employment and decent work in a country. By providing employment, the book publishing industry will be contributing its quota to reducing that unemployment rate going by available record which put **Nigeria's youth unemployment rate at 57.5%** by the end of 2024³¹.

Although the book publishing industry has not been given much attention like other sectors in the creative industry, the industry contributes significantly to ensuring gainful employment. Book publishing industry provides job opportunities for many young graduates and professionals who studied related courses. Opportunities such as publishers, manuscript acquisition personnel, literary agent editors, designers, artists, typographers, printers, binders, marketers, sales representatives, promotion officers, public relations officers and a host of others.³² From all these statistics, it is obvious that when efforts are intensified to provide job through printing, publishing, distribution

³⁰ A Basson, 'The Role of African Publishers and Booksellers in Realizing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals' (17 April 2023) <https://namibia.un.org/en/228001-role-african-publishers-and-booksellers-realizing-united-nations-sustainable-development> accessed 15 October 2021.

³¹ Trading Economics, 'Nigerian Youth Unemployment', *Trading Economics Global Macro Models* (14 October 2023) <https://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/youth-unemployment-rate> accessed 15 October 2023.

³² O T Oyeyinka, V E Aganbi and O A Atwolara-Odule, 'Problems of Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria' (2016) 2(10) *Journal of Research and Development (JRnD)* 1–8.

and marketing of books just like other sectors of the economy will contribute to the reduction of poverty.

2.4. SDG 15 - Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Though the focus of SDG 15 is majorly on the environment, paperless policy has direct bearing on book publishing and has implications for deforestation as contained in this goal. To protect, restore and promote a sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, the forest must be managed properly by reducing the rate of felling trees globally. Paperless policy enhances technological advancement in book publishing and reduces deforestation thereby contributing to the attainment of SDG 15(1) which set 2020 as the target for ensuring ‘the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and dry lands, in line with obligations under international agreements’³³ SDG 15(2) also made 2020 as the deadline for promoting the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally³⁴

Paper-based products are responsible for more than 14% of global deforestation which contributes to problems like climate change, reduced crop production, increased greenhouse gases, soil erosion, flooding among others.³⁵ Only 17 reams of paper are produced from one tree which can take over 100 years to grow and globally, more than 50% of paper comes by cutting down virgin forests.³⁶ Hence, paper-based publishing has adverse environmental consequences. A paperless publishing culture will not only preserve the forest by saving billions of trees but this would also boost the availability of oxygen in our atmosphere.³⁷ By going paperless, the Nigerian publishing industry will be complying with the international best practice in technological advancement and emerging artificial intelligence.

The publishing industry in developing countries especially has had a good track record for implementing a coordinated response for sustainable supply chains with regards to responsible sourcing of paper and printing. For instance, Bertelsmann, a media, services

³³ UN Nigeria, ‘Goal 15 Targets’ <https://nigeria.un.org/en/sdgs/15> accessed 14 December 2023.

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Paper on the Rocks, ‘What is the Environmental Impact of Deforestation for Paper Production’ (28 November 2018) <https://paperontherocks.com/2018/11/28/environmental-impact-of-deforestation/> accessed 22 September 2024.

³⁶ Insightful Accountant, ‘Environmental Benefits of Your Office Going Paperless’ <https://insightfulaccountant.com/in-the-news/people-and-business/environmental-benefits-of-your-office-going-paperless/> accessed 13 December 2023.

³⁷ Ibid

and education company, has the ambitious goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.³⁸ Macmillan, an educational publishing company states that its operations globally have been carbon neutral since 2017 and carbon neutral in the US since 2013.³⁹ While it is encouraging to see climate action firmly on the radar of publishers worldwide, Nigerian publishers must also leverage on the experiences of publishers in these countries, explore opportunities to collaborate on clear standards, reporting and green accounting specifically focused on carbon reductions and sustainable practices.

In concluding discussion on the relationship between book publishing and the SDGs, it is important to mention the “SDG Publishers’ Compact” which was designed to encourage industry and innovation in the book industry and launched in collaboration with the International Publishers Association to accelerate progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030⁴⁰. The “Compact” highlights the crucial roles of publishing in the attainment of the SDGs; hence, its signatories are committed to the following 10-resolutions:⁴¹

(i) **Commitment to the SDGs:** One of the significant ways by which the stakeholders in the book industry can contribute to the attainment of the SDGs is by displaying various SDG logos, policies and targets on their websites and incorporating SDGs and their targets in their businesses as appropriate.

(ii) **Actively Promoting and Acquiring Content** – Content that advocates for themes represented by the SDGs, such as equality, sustainability, justice and safeguarding and strengthening the environment will be promoted.

(iii.) **Annual Reporting of Progress Towards Achieving SDGs** – When a target is set, its realization becomes a task which everyone in the organization works towards. Therefore, publishing outfits in their effort to contribute to the SDG, share data and contribute to benchmarking activities, helping to share best practices and identify gaps that still need to be addressed.

(iv.) **Nominating Someone to Promote SDG Progress** - A desk officer who acts as a point of contact to coordinate the SDG themes throughout the organization will be appointed. Beyond mere accepting manuscripts from the authors, the publishing companies have the onerous task of appointing a desk officer among their staff who educates the various publics on the Sustainable Development Goals.

³⁸ Bertelsmann, ‘Bertelsmann to be Climate Neutral by 2030’ <https://www.bertelsmann.com/news-and-media/news/bertelsmann-to-be-climate-neutral-by-2030.jsp> accessed 22 September 2024.

³⁹ Macmillan, ‘Macmillan Sustainability’ accessed 22 September 2024

⁴⁰ United Nations, *Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Sustainable Development (The 17 Goals)* <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/> accessed 15 October 2023.

⁴¹ UN SDGs, ‘SDG Publishers’ Compact’ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sdg-publishers-compact/> accessed 17 October 2023.

(v.) **Raising Awareness and Promoting the SDGs Among Staff** – It is important to increase awareness of SDG-related policies and goals and encouraging projects that will help achieve the SDGs by 2030. Through the various awareness programmes by the publishing companies, members of staff get to know what the Sustainable Development Goals stand for and their usefulness to their immediate environment.

(vi.) **Raising Awareness and Promoting the SDGs Among Suppliers** – Just as members of staff are sensitised, the various vendors of the organisation also need to be educated through various fliers and other advocacies for SDGs and to collaborate with suppliers on areas that need innovative actions and solutions.

(vii.) **Becoming an Advocate to Customers and Stakeholders** – This is done by promoting and actively communicating SDG agenda through marketing, websites, promotions and projects. The various stakeholders in the book industries who should be involved in the advocacy for the SDGs are the authors, publishers, marketers/distributors, scholars, among others.

(viii.) **Collaborating Across Cities, Countries, and Continents** – With the advancement in technology, it is easier for interconnectivity among the publishers in every part of the world to collaborate with other signatories and organizations to develop, localise and scale projects that will advance progress on the SDGs individually or corporately, through their publishing associations.

(ix.) **Dedicating Budget and Other Resources Towards Accelerating Progress** -

SDG-dedicated projects and promoting SDG principles are achievable in the area of educational advancement such as inter-school competition or donation of cash prizes to best students in the name of the SDGs. Through this, awareness is created about the rationale for naming such prizes after the SDGs and what sustainable development goals really stand, for.

(x.) **Taking Action on at Least One SDG Goal** – There are 17 SDGs out of which anyone can be taken by an individual publisher or through the national publishing association for the attainment of SDG and progress report on such action is shared annually to serve as motivation to others.

Signatories to this Compact aspire to develop sustainable practices and act as champions of the SDGs by publishing books and journals that will help inform, develop, and inspire action in that direction during the decade of Action (2020-2030). Based on their commitments to implement universal sustainability principles and to take steps to support UN goals, publishers are encouraged to join the United Nations Global Compact, a voluntary initiative⁴².

⁴² Ibid

3.0 AFRICAN UNION' S AGENDA 2063 AND BOOK PUBLISHING

African Union Agenda 2063 was developed in 2013, a year which was tagged the “Year of Pan Africanism and African Renaissance”⁴³ and fifty years was set to realize the targeted goals which brought about the idea of Agenda 2063. The following five-key agenda were set for attainment by African continent within 50 years:

- A changing global and African context
- Building on the NEPAD⁴⁴ experience
- Strong and well-functioning regional institutions on which Agenda 2063 can stand strong
- New investment opportunities and global interest in Africa that we need to capitalize on
- A more united and strong Africa today that requires a long term strategy to move forward

Nigeria as a nation has a role to play towards the attainment of African Union's Agenda 2063 of which the first objective is to a high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens. This can be achieved when Nigeria domesticates the treaties and ensures that all the key players in the economy such as the book industry are alive to their responsibilities and given the enablement to realize their potentials. Goal 2 of the African Union's Agenda 2063 is to achieve well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation with special focus on education and science, technology and innovation (STI) driven skills revolution in tandem with the UN Sustainable Development Goals 4 which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

In a way to align with the UN's SDGs, the African Union established “AU Agenda 2063,” a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of Africa over the next five decades that emphasizes the importance of developing African economy which extends to the publishing industry. By developing and promoting the African publishing industry, the industry will contribute to the achievement of Agenda 2063 as

⁴³ EAC, ‘African Agenda 2063 General Briefing Kit’, Directorate of Strategic Policy Planning, AUC (6 June 2016) <C:\Users\USERPCX\Downloads\30731-wd-power-point_presentation_on_agenda_2063_-_framework.pptx> accessed 2 July 2023.

⁴⁴ NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa's Development, a socio-economic flagship programme of the African Union.

well as promoting, knowledge, African literature, cultural identity and access to information on the continent.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 is a comprehensive framework that aims to transform the African continent into a more prosperous, integrated, and peaceful region. Within this context, the book industry plays a crucial role in promoting education, preserving African cultures, and sharing knowledge across the continent. Books are tools for educating the population, and they also contribute to the preservation and promotion of African cultures and languages. Furthermore, they are instrumental in sharing valuable knowledge and ideas that can drive socio-economic development, aligning closely with Agenda 2063's objectives. There are 20 agenda as stipulated in Agenda 2063, this section shall however focus on three of them which we believe have direct impact on book publishing as discussed below.

Agenda 1 - A high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens.

Publishing involves creativity and skill which provide incomes, jobs and decent work which AU Agenda 1 stands for. When jobs are provided through publishing activities this will make a great impact in reducing poverty, inequality and hunger as social security and protection will be provided for many including persons with disabilities. The aim of this AU Agenda 1 is the same with SDGs 1 and 8 to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.⁴⁵

Agenda 2 - Skills Revolution Underpinned by Science, Technology and Innovation.

Book publishing also has impact on this agenda as through publishing, quality books are produced to promote education and science, technology and innovation (STI) driven skills revolution just like SDG 4 which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. With the efforts geared toward the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), authors and creators have access to the use of Digital Rights Management (DRM)⁴⁶ that enables the controlled use of copyrighted works through the application of technology to control and manage access to copyrighted material. DRM provides legal and technological protection for authors, content developers, musicians and moviemakers among others to control the use of their work by a third party in order to safeguard their creative and financial investment from being stolen or shared illegally by infringers. In the past, it was difficult for authors to control the third party from accessing their work but with these various tools or technological protection measures (TPM) which are used in DRM systems, such as access control and

⁴⁵ African Union, 'Linking Agenda 2063 and the SDGs' <https://au.int/agenda2063/sdgs> accessed 17 October 2023.

⁴⁶ Fortinet, 'Digital Rights Management' <https://www.fortinet.com/resources/cyberglossary/digital-rights-management-drm> accessed 24 October 2023.

encryption, to prevent unauthorized copying and distribution of digital media, an organization's digital media is protected from being illegally shared or modified without permission⁴⁷.

By leveraging on the secured protection for authors in the digital or online space, the publishing industry in Africa can also go paperless without fear of piracy or other forms of illegal sharing or use of the author's works. This in turn helps protect the environment as discussed above and increases access to published materials by everyone thereby removing the limitations associated with paper-based publishing where books may be lost, stolen, destroyed or out of print.

Agenda 4 - Transformed Economy

With provision of enabling environment which makes publishing to flourish unhindered alongside other business activities, it leads to a sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industrialisation and value addition, economic diversification and resilience. This is the objective of AU's Agenda 4 which is in consonance with UN's SDG 8 to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all⁴⁸. In sum, the role of book publishing in the transformation of economy and improving standard of living as advocated by the SDGs and AU Agenda cannot be over emphasised.

4.0 ECONOMIC OF WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES (ECOWAS) VISION 2050

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional organization which comprises of 15 countries in West Africa to promote economic cooperation among member states in order to raise living standard at achieving sustainable economic, social, and political development in West Africa. The publishing industry has a significant role to play in this vision by promoting access to information, knowledge sharing, and cultural exchange within the region so as to make progress in areas of good governance, sustainable development, capacity building, economic growth and above all, peace and security⁴⁹. Through the production and distribution of books, the industry can contribute to the achievement of several SDGs, including promoting economic growth, reducing inequalities, and preserving cultural heritage.

⁴⁷ PrivacySense.org, 'Digital Rights Management: What Is It, and How Does It Work?' (10 January 2023) <https://www.privacysense.net> accessed 24 October 2023.

⁴⁸ The Global Goals, 'Decent Work and Economic Growth' <https://www.globalgoals.org/goals/> accessed 24 October 2023.

⁴⁹ S M Tunis, 'ECOWAS Vision 2050 is the Foundation for Our Actions Over the Next Thirty Years' <https://www.parl.ecowas.int/ecowas-vision-2050-is-the-foundation-for-our-actions-over-the-next-thirty-years-sidie-mohamed-tunis-2/> accessed 21 October 2023.

Encouraged by the achievements of ECOWAS Vision 2020 and the need to consolidate on the gains, Members of Parliament of the ECOWAS on Saturday, December 4, 2021 in Abuja during their plenary meeting of Second Ordinary Session of Parliament, issued a favourable opinion to the “ECOWAS Vision 2050” with a slogan; “The ECOWAS of Peoples: Peace and Prosperity for All”.⁵⁰ With a credo that West Africa is ‘A community of peoples fully integrated in a peaceful, prosperous region, with strong institutions that respect fundamental freedoms and work for inclusive and sustainable development,’ ECOWAS member states agreed on Vision 2050 which is based on the following five pillars:

- A secured, stable and peaceful region;
- A region endowed with strong institutions, and that complies with the rule of law and fundamental freedoms;
- A fully integrated and prosperous region;
- A region mobilized for transformation, inclusive and sustainable development;
- A community of peoples fully inclusive of women, the youth and children⁵¹.

ECOWAS Vision 2050 outlines the development aspirations of West African countries in which the book industry has significant roles to play in fostering education, promoting cultural diversity, and disseminating knowledge throughout the region. A strong book publishing sector enhances literacy rate, empowers people with knowledge, skills acquisition and preserves the rich cultural diversity of West Africa countries⁵². All these align with the broader objectives of ECOWAS Vision 2050 to create a prosperous and integrated West African community as also canvassed by Goal 8 of SDGs i.e decent work and economic growth.

In its VISION 2050 blueprint, ECOWAS itemized 86 development plans aimed at promoting sustainable development in the region⁵³. Among these development plans are some very crucial items related to book publishing which are in tandem with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals such as items 37, 38, 56, 60 and 76.

⁵⁰ ECOWAS Parliament, ‘ECOWAS Moves from “Vision 2020” to “Vision 2050”’ <https://www.parl.ecowas.int/ecowas-moves-from-vision-2020-to-vision-2050/> accessed 17 October 2023.

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ ECOWAS Commission, *ECOWAS Vision 2050: ECOWAS of the Peoples – Peace and Prosperity for All* (2022) https://ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Vision2050_EN_Web.pdf accessed 22 September 2024.

Item 37 - Human Capital and Development

ECOWAS countries realized there was insufficient performance in terms of the level of human capital and human development due to shortcomings in the education and health care systems going by the World Bank's Human Capital Index which put economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa as low as 2.5% in 2023, from 3.6% in 2022⁵⁴. Apart from Ghana, which is in the second quartile of this index, the rest of the countries in the region were in the lowest quartile of the Human Capital Index in 2021⁵⁵. The book publishing industry can contribute significantly to this industry by providing reading, research and training materials human capital development in the region particularly in sectors where such is lacking.

Item 38 - Unemployment Rate and Job Insecurity

The 2022 Vision 2050 report indicates that a low unemployment rate with high job insecurity exists at the regional level as unemployment rates are low in most countries of the region with a rate estimated at 6.6% in 2020.⁵⁶ However, many of these jobs are not decent; most people are self-employed in the informal sector (61.7% in 2018) and are employed in precarious and insecure jobs which constitute over 70% of available jobs in 12 ECOWAS countries in 2018.⁵⁷ About 38.4% of working population in the ECOWAS region are below the poverty line as at 2018 and the vulnerability of employments correlates to the low level of skills of the labour force.⁵⁸ This therefore traces unemployment and job insecurity to poor human capital in the region which brings to fore the importance of the publishing industry as a major stakeholder in the education and training of a well-equipped human capital needed to drive development and sustainability in West Africa.

Also, the publishing industry provides employment directly for the labour force involved in the writing and publication of the books and indirectly for marketers, distributors, reviewers among others. Books are often also adapted into other genres of works like songs and movies thereby creating employment for others in the creative industry. In the publishing industry, apprentices also go through training and subsequently become self-reliant, becoming employers of labour and contributing to the sustainable development of the nation.

⁵⁴ The World Bank, 'The World Bank in Africa' <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/overview> accessed 21 October 2023.

⁵⁵ S. M. Tunis, 'ECOWAS Vision 2050 is the foundation for our actions over the next thirty years' <<https://www.parl.ecowas.int/ecowas-vision-2050-is-the-foundation-for-our-actions-over-the-next-thirty-years-sidie-mohamed-tunis-2/>> accessed 21 October, 2023

⁵⁶ ECOWAS Commission, *ECOWAS Vision 2050: ECOWAS of the Peoples – Peace and Prosperity for All* (2022) https://ecowas.int/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Vision2050_EN_Web.pdf accessed 22 September 2024.

⁵⁷ *ibid*

⁵⁸ *ibid*

Item 56 - Technological Innovation to Drive Transformation

In their bid to level up with the Sustainable Development Goal 9 on Technological Innovation, ECOWAS countries agreed to tackle the low level of science and technological expertise which is compounded by the imbalance between men and women in the field of science and technology⁵⁹. Hence, combating the high level of illiteracy and poor skills in these fields are part of the important roles played by the book publishing industry.

Item 76(iii) - Digitalization

Digitalization has made significant impacts on book publishing as authors now publish their works online and this growing interest in digitalization is marked by the efforts made to progressively develop internet networks⁶⁰ and online publishing. With careful execution of ECOWAS Vision 2050, digitalization will provide solutions to some of the development challenges of the region. Digital transformation and solutions contribute to creating jobs, driving education and stimulate competitiveness and innovation. These play key roles in the transformation of economies in West Africa and the improvement of the lives of its citizens. It is therefore necessary for the region to maximize on digitalization, which today has integrated itself into all socio-economic activities including book publishing.

Publishing industry has vital roles to play in achieving the key visions of ECOWAS in all the afore-mentioned pillars to achieve integration, transformation, development and sustainability by networking with publishers in neighbouring countries. In the first instance, the 5-Pillar Agenda highlighted above needs to be given maximum awareness across the ECOWAS member States and one of the effective ways of doing this is through various publications. Creating awareness can be done through broadcast and print media in accordance with the earmarked plans of ECOWAS 2050 which states that the 'successful implementation of the ECOWAS Vision 2050 will not only require awareness creation and knowledge of ECOWAS and its vision, but also, that the main domestic and foreign stakeholders understand it, own it and commit and contribute to its achievement'⁶¹. To achieve awareness of the vision, there is need for concerted efforts of key players in the economy including the publishing industry to be saddled with the responsibility of educating, entertaining and informing the public about the ECOWAS 5-Pillar Agenda through their various websites, publications and links.

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

5.0 GAPS TO SUSTAINABILITY-INCLINED BOOK PUBLISHING IN NIGERIA

Having examined the quintessential role played by the book publishing in the attainment of sustainable development, this section shall highlight challenges militating against the industry in Nigeria which hamper its effectiveness in harnessing its potentials towards the attainment of the SDGs.

Lack of adequate awareness of rights and duties of both authors and publishers have adversely affected the industry. Many do not have a proper grasp of copyright law and the extent or distinctions between the rights of the authors and the publishers; hence, publishers may infringe on the rights of authors and in the absence of properly documented contracts between authors and publishers, there is often conflict and rancour between them and subsequent allegations of infringement, non-payment of royalties and exploitation.

Although technology has made the job of publishing to be less tasking unlike in the past when many things were done manually, it is not without its challenges as sustaining and maintaining the emerging modern equipment requires infrastructural facilities including good and consistent power supply and internet facilities. Unfortunately, many publishers do not have these which hamper their work⁶². Reliance on alternative energy sources such as generators, high cost of fuel, solar energy usually increases the cost of production of the publisher which is passed on to the end buyer of the books.

Lack of technical know-how and skilled expertise is another challenge the publishing industry is facing in Nigeria. As an academic discipline, few Nigerian higher institutions offer it as a separate course although it is gradually being introduced as a course within the curriculum of mass communication students.⁶³ Also, there is a professional brain drain generally in the Nigerian society due to the poor economic situation of the country. The consequence of this is that many published works are poorly edited, and the standard of production is poor. abandoned and the advancement of the industry is often stunted because of these issues. In addition, many publishers lack contemporary gadgets and technologies that can help upgrade the quality and quantity of their publications.⁶⁴ This is often due to lack of adequate finance, awareness and technical know-how.

⁶² A Andrew and I Didiugwu, 'New Technology and Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria: Issues, Constraints and Prospects' (2016) 3(10) *International Journal in Commerce, IT & Social Sciences* 51, 62.

⁶³ NOUN, MAC 423: *Book Publishing and the Law* <https://nou.edu.ng/coursewarecontent/MAC%20423%20PDF.pdf> accessed 23 September 2024.

⁶⁴ N O Ubogu, 'Publishing and Information Dissemination: Trends and Challenges in Nigeria' (2018) 5(1) *International Journal of Innovative Research in Social Sciences and Strategic Management Techniques* 239–247.

Poor financing of the industry occasioned by economic downturn has adversely affected the contributions of the book publishing industry to sustainable development. Book publishing is capital intensive and raising capital is an uphill task for many publishers. High taxes and import duties placed on imported printing materials increase the cost of production. Book publishing in Nigeria is marked by erratic production, unsteady output and often poor quality, since it must be carried out with limited resources which adversely affects the reputation of indigenous publishers and places them at a great disadvantage in comparison to multinational publishers.⁶⁵ Financial institutions do not often give loans to publishers especially small and medium scale ones. Where they do, the interest rates are often too high for the publishers to successfully use such loan facilities to run profitable businesses.

The country's economy is in shambles; publishers, like others in the society, are groaning under the weight of this economic crisis caused mainly by excessive reliance on importation by the Nigerian society.⁶⁶ Reduced foreign exchange earnings has led to high foreign exchange rates which has serious consequences for the price of goods and services needed for successful book publishing including materials which are often imported.

Poor government regulations and policies also adversely affect the industry. Government hardly pays adequate attention to book publishing or put measures in place to harness the potential of the industry. Nigeria lacks a National Book Policy and a National Book Development Organization or Commission.⁶⁷ Although in May 2023, it was announced that a draft national book policy had been developed by the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) but yet to go through legislative processes to become operational.⁶⁸ More so, existing policies are often not well implemented or monitored. Policies are also often not revised to keep abreast of developments in the industry globally and specifically position the book publishing industry a major driver of sustainable development of the society. Political instability can also lead to frequent change in the direction of policies in the industry which leads to uncertainty and other adverse effects including a lack of seriousness or continuity on the part of the government.

⁶⁵ A Irele, 'The Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects' https://web.archive.org/web/20181030054704id_/https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/C197FF9D3E0163966659403CB707F060/S0266673100004827a.pdf/div-class-title-the-book-publishing-industry-in-nigeria-problems-and-prospects-div.pdf accessed 23 September 2024.

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ C C Emenyonu, 'Establishing a Publishing Outfit in Nigeria' (2017) 12(1) *International Journal of Development and Management Review* 168, 175.

⁶⁸ Daily Trust, 'NPA Demands Implementation of the National Book Policy' (21 May 2023) <https://dailytrust.com/npa-demands-implementation-of-the-national-book-policy/> accessed 23 September 2024.

General poor reading culture orchestrated by the herald of internet and other social media platforms is a challenge the industry must battle with. Many read only for the purpose of passing examinations and acquiring certificates. This has had debilitating effect on publication of other genres of books like novels, historical, biographies, motivational, business and other forms of books. The market for book publishing in Nigeria is limited as Nigerians attitude towards habit of reading is discouraging. The dwindling reading culture is not only with regards to the paper-based books but the same applies to e-books as well. Book publishing thrives where most of the population are interested in reading.⁶⁹

Copyright infringement is killing innovation and creativity in the book publishing industry. Piracy erodes the profits of both publishers and authors as book sellers and pirates connive to sell published works at ridiculously cheap prices.⁷⁰ Digital books are also shared illegally; hence, many authors and publishers are hesitant to publish digitally or online. Many Nigerian publishers are also unaware of technological protection measures and digital rights management techniques that can help them protect their works in the digital environment.

Lack of standardization and poor regulation of the industry is another militating factor. In the absence of clearly set standards and proliferation of different types of publishers as well as disagreement and in-fighting among the stakeholders in the industry, the publishing sector will find it hard to harmonise and address their challenges. As mentioned earlier, the relationship between the authors and publishers is hardly healthy. Authors often accuse publishers of giving them pittance as royalties despite huge profits made from book sales or publishing while publishers also accuse authors of double dealings.⁷¹ Consequently, useful projects are often

6.0 BRIDGING THE GAPS: RECOMMENDATIONS

For the book publishing in Nigeria to better contribute towards the sustainable development of the society, the following are recommended:

Although it is laudable that the Nigerian government through the NERDC finally has a draft National Book Policy since independence in 1960 (over 60 decades), there is an urgent need to legitimize the policy so its implementation can commence. The policy will enable the book publishing industry to promote and reward local authorship of

⁶⁹ NOUN, MAC 423: *Book Publishing and the Law* <https://nou.edu.ng/coursewarecontent/MAC%20423%20PDF.pdf> accessed 23 September 2024.

⁷⁰ A Andrew and I Didiugwu, 'New Technology and Book Publishing Industry in Nigeria: Issues, Constraints and Prospects' (2016) 3(10) *International Journal in Commerce, IT & Social Sciences* 51, 63.

⁷¹ C C Emenyonu, 'Establishing a Publishing Outfit in Nigeria' (2017) 12(1) *International Journal of Development and Management Review* 168, 175.

books, create an enabling environment for publishing as well as provide support services needed for manuscripts generation. It aims to seek the purchase of rights of published works in high demand in Nigeria's educational system where necessary and encourage their local production and generally make books available and affordable at all levels through a sustainable system of distribution and use, support and encourage investigation and research into book development. The policy will also encourage the production of professional books and books in specialized areas such as Braille for the visually impaired persons while also supporting the establishment and growth of libraries at all educational levels and communities.

Increased awareness about copyright law, author's rights and necessity of well-drafted contracts. Publishing contracts are essential for stipulating the rights and duties of the authors and publishers. Contracts are also needed while interacting with other stakeholders in the industry including graphics designers, illustrators, marketers, distributors among others. This will protect all parties while preventing rancour and disagreements which often hinder the execution of great book publishing projects that ought to contribute to the society's development.

To protect their works from infringement, publishers and authors must be aware of their rights and possibilities as provided under the recently passed Copyright Act 2022. The Act stipulates certain rights and remedies in the case of infringement of those rights. It enables authors and right owners to use technological protection measures and digital rights information management to protect their digital works while also ensuring copyright protection of works over the internet. Stakeholders in the book publishing industry must also monitor their rights and books while being ready to take actions to stop infringement or piracy privately or in collaboration with relevant government agencies such as the Nigerian Copyright Commission.

Availability of adequate finance is necessary to achieve a vibrant book industry that can contribute to society's development. Publishers should be supported in this regard through grants and low interest loans that can assist them in running a profitable venture. Financial institutions can also tailor special loan or financial facilities for this sector considering the capital-intensive nature of publishing with little profits. This will enable them to update their equipment and skills in response to technological demands and adapt to the needs of society.

Publishers must engage in constant training and professional development in order to be abreast of developments in the industry as well as comply with international best practices. The government and professional bodies such as the Nigerian Publishers Association should take on this laudable task.

The reading culture in the country also needs to be encouraged by rewarding writers, readers and publishers. Many younger generations do not aspire to become writers or publishers or consider reading or education a worthy venture because the society seems

to reward and celebrate entertainment industry such as music, actors and similar segments of the entertainment industry rather than those in the book industry. Often, humongous sums are awarded to those in music or similar content creation than to those in the literary or book sector. This passes a message to people that the book industry is not worth investing time or efforts in. Many more stakeholders must engage in exercises that promote and reward a reading culture. Without this, the publishing and book industry will continue to struggle to thrive.

The stakeholders in the book industry must also learn to work together and present a united front in order to combat various challenges militating against the industry in contributing effectively to sustainable development. Selfish and greedy interests must be set aside for the good of the industry and its growth. Effective operation and collaboration among relevant institutions such as the National Copyright Commission, Association of Nigerian Authors, Nigerian Publishers Association, Law enforcement agencies and the courts is necessary in ensuring that the industry is properly sanitized.

Furthermore there must be provision of necessary infrastructures such as power supply, good road network to enable publishers supply their books to the nooks and crannies of the nation and a security architecture that reduce or eradicate the menace of kidnappers and banditry in the country

Government's economic policies especially as it relates to importation and foreign exchange adversely affect the book publishing industry. It is recommended that the paper mills in Nigeria be resuscitated, and the government facilitates local production of book publishing materials in order to reduce heavy reliance of the industry on importation. Also, the import duties on book publishing materials should be reduced or eradicated so that the cost of book publication can reduce for the benefit of the Nigerian society. Although paperless book publishing should be encouraged, this should be balanced with the production of hard copy books where necessary and publishers guided on how to profitably transition to a paperless policy without losing their jobs or sources of income.

7.0 CONCLUSION

Book publishing plays an important role in the sustainable development of the society. It contributes significantly to education which is a bedrock for the development of any society and an important pillar for the attainment of the sustainable development goals. It also makes significant contributions to economic development through the provision of jobs among other SDGs. The Nigerian book publishing industry plays a key role in the attainment of the SDGs at an international level, the AU Agenda 2063 at the regional level and the ECOWAS Vision 2050 at the sub-regional level. However, several factors are militating against the book industry in achieving its potential in this regard. A holistic and development-oriented approach will ensure that these challenges are

addressed and the potential of the book industry harnessed in driving the sustainable development of the society.