



PRESS STATEMENT

Textbook content on disadvantages of Christianity obnoxious: The response of the Ghana National Association of Authors and Publications.

Friends of the media, we thank you immensely for honouring our invitation to grand us ears to a publication of one of our members -Excellence publication and Stationary Limited.

On the 26th of May, we saw on myjoyonline.com a media content supposed to home been a report on a pronouncement made by the honorable Deputy Education Minister, Hon. John Ntim Fordjour.

In the report, the minister is quoted to have condemned the publication made by Excellence publication regarding the disadvantages of Christianity obnoxious. According to the minister, the content of the textbook titled “History of Ghana for Basic Schools as obnoxious and misleading.

The statements made in the book published by Excellence Publication has been a matter of concern for Ghanaians in general and the Publishing industry in particular, since it’s coming from a high profile statesman.

As an association that represents the collective voice of textbook developers and literary artists including writers of poems, children, teenage and adult novels, movie scripts and journals, we cannot sit unconcerned but to help Ghanaians understand the scope of the matter and render apologies for any inconvenience caused.

THE REAL ISSUE

We did not gather here to pass judgement on the matter but to set the records straight and to render apologies where apologies are due in our bid to protect the image and professionalism of our association.

BACKGROUND

Friends of the media, first and foremost, we wish to let Ghanaians know about the types of books we create and the processes involved before learners in pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions come to consume any book on the library vaults. The works we create are as follows:

I. Non-Fiction

ii. Fictions (Script, Poetry, Prose, etc)

The creation of fiction works finds itself in the creative Arts industry and involves the clever use of imagination to create, document edit and publish stories, movie scripts, poems and songs under the lens of culture and observation.

Non fiction works are scientific documents. Every statement made lends itself to evidence. Scientific text, biographies, and content of all textbooks come under non-fiction.

Given the importance of textbooks especially at the heart of education all authors and publishers ensure that statements made as content are stick neck and head with the curriculum.

Friends of the media, the history book in question falls under the category of textbook. In creating a textbook, one would professionally expect any author and publisher to go through the processes such as:

1. Planning & Budgeting
2. Selection of authors (in case the author is different from the publisher)
3. Production of manuscript (In line with a set curriculum)
4. Typesetting
5. Internal proofreading
6. Designing &
7. Submission to NaCCA for approval

Over the years our Association has worked hand in hand with the National Council for Curriculum & Assessment and have benefitted a lot from them when it comes to professional development. Our credibility for knowing our job as authors and producers of textbooks cannot be undermined even in circumstances such as this.

We are proud to admit the tremendous inputs of the government towards the draft a globally competitive standard based Curriculum that underpins the development of all textbook for learners in pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions.

When the matter reached us as leaders of the authors and publishers industry in Ghana, we painstakingly studied the matter and settled on the following observations:

i. That the page circulating in social media response to STRAND 3, substrand 3 of the of the History Curriculum for Primary School- Missionary Activities in Ghana;

ii. That the author was required by the syllabus to describe European missionary Activities in Ghana by:

(a) Identifying the missionary societies in Ghana (from 1st to last);

(b) Locating the place where they operated (Basel -Akuapem, Bremen -Peki);

(c) Discussing Christianity and formal education as some of the major impacts of European presence in Ghana;

(d) Showing and discussing video /documentary of European Activities in Ghana

(e) Discuss other activities they engaged in (trade, vocational training centres) health facilities development of alphabets for some local languages & Translation of the bible into local languages;

(f) Debating the effects (pros & cons) of European activities in Ghana.

FINDINGS:

The following are the findings of the association of the publication in view of the above:

1. the authors did well to discuss the in the pages that preceded the page that raised controversy;

2. the points raised in the book were views or opinions of the author regarding the negative effects of the Christian missionaries in Ghana

However, we admit in part to the error of adherence to content requirements and suitability of content for the level it was intended for. The authors, we admit, should have remained faithful to the demands of the syllabus and stressed the impact of Christian missionaries rather than religion as a whole.

On the issue of language suitability, we admit to the fact that the content and the style of expression was a little above the learners for whom the message was intended.

CONCLUSION:

Following the above, we wish to:

I. Accept in good faith the criticism of all stakeholders and render unqualified apology to the Ministry of Education, The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Ghanaian Schools, Nananom, the Christian Council of Ghana and any Ghanaian who find the statements obnoxious;

For many years, since the introduction of formal education in Ghana, Ghanaians have had confidence in the textbooks developers and have found their works useful. We as a result, plead with the people of Ghana and all stakeholders to continue to have the confidence in our products and services.

We assure all Ghanaians including schools, of higher degree of professionalism and strict adherence to international standards in producing books of all genres for learners in pre-tertiary and tertiary levels of education. Our doors are opened to all Ghanaians for issues you might have regarding the content of any of our books and services.

You can reach us on:

www.gnaaonline.com

or info@gnaaonline.com

or +233244448761