

National Library of Nigeria: Objectives, Functions, Achievements

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Definition of Terms
National Library Ranganathan defines a national library of a country as "the library which has the duty of collecting and preserving for posterity the written production of that country. It is the central station for the assembling and service of thought energy".¹ For the purpose of this paper the national library shall be the National Library of Nigeria established by the National Library Decree 1970. Hereinafter, the former shall be referred to as the NLN, and the latter, the NLD.
Functions The Random House Dictionary of English language defines function as "a kind of action or activity proper to a person, thing or institution". Another dictionary describes function as "the special kind of activity proper to any thing ... by which it fulfills its purpose, duties, etc."² Functions of national libraries, therefore, are such activities which they perform in order to achieve their objectives. It is the objectives which make the functions proper to the libraries. The functions of the NLN shall be those enumerated in the NLD 1970. Their properness will be discussed later in this paper.
Objectives An objective is defined as something that one's efforts or functions are intended to attain or accomplish - "purpose, goal, target".³ Objectives can be general or specific. The former is an overall, long term end result or a series of identified accomplishments while the latter is usually an intermediate, short-term end result leading to a general objective.
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