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**An Assessment of Library and Information Science (LIS)
Professional Skills among Librarians in Bab Fafunwa Library,
Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.**

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Abstract

The study is on assessment of library and information science (LIS) professional skills among librarians in Bab Fafunwa Library, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria. Total population sampling research design was used for the study. The population comprised all the librarians in Bab Fafunwa Library, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Questionnaire was the research instrument was used for the study. The researchers collected the data through face-to-face administration of questionnaire. In the data analysis, frequency counts, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for the statistical analysis. . Based on the result, the various personal professional skills among the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are: analytical skill, creative skill, flexibility skill, reflective skill, adaptability skill, enthusiastic skill, self-motivation skill and soft skill (interpersonal) and other research questions were treated as well. It was recommended that there should be provision of fund for the acquisition of training facilities and materials for the training. Consequently, librarians will be able to render efficient services in term of discharging professional duties with standard and ethics especially in information provision. Services in the library become more attractive and glaring to the users as a result of this training and this will always draw the users' interest to the resources in the library and thus the library become active, functional and practically operative.

Key words: Assessment, Library and information Science, Professional skills, Librarians,

Adeyemi College of Education, Nigeria

Introduction

To take an assessment, there is the need to be acquainted with the basic principles of professionalism and skills. Skills are very essential for every professional, which help them to deliver services on time and in efficient manner to their users (Kumar, 2018). According to Mazumdar (2007), skill is an ability or proficiency in execution or performance, which is required for a person to plan and execute an action designed to achieve some goals or accomplish a particular task. A skilled person has the ability to perform any task successfully. The skill the person possessed can give the mind to face the challenges that occur in a particular profession because of the social, economic, educational and technological changes. Thus, in order to cope up with the ever-changing library and information science profession, librarians must have the relevant skills to perform their professional functions effectively.

The roles of LIS professionals are very important in the library because they have the skills required to acquire relevant information resources for the library and are able to process them according to the library system. The LIS professionals are the bridge between information resources and the readers (Kumar, 2018). In the library, resources are acquired and processed based on rules and regulations of the profession. And these rules and regulations do not come in rosy way. They are acquired from the academic world to handle library information resources in a way that users can easily access them.

The core skills traditionally associated with library/ information science include information handling skills - cataloguing, classification, indexing, enquiry work and user education training skills with facilitating skills and evaluation skills. (Hashim and Mokhtar, 2012).

Today's changing environment in library and information centres look for change in the professional skills besides the academic skill. The dramatic changes, largely the result of rapidly evolving information and communication technologies (ICTs), have impacted significantly on the knowledge and skills required for library and information science (LIS) professionals. The transformed landscape requires a new generation of LIS professionals to effectively and efficiently bridge it (Ravi, 2018). In addition, Ravi (2018) cited National Knowledge Commission (2007) while recommending the role of libraries as "gateways to knowledge" emphasized the skills required to fulfill the changing role of libraries as Library and Information handling skills, service orientation, ICT knowledge skills, communication and training skills, marketing and presentation skills, understanding of cultural diversity and knowledge mapping skills.

According to Ravi (2008), in order to cope up with the ever-changing library and information science profession, the library professionals must be a skilled professional. The skills can be categorized as domain specific skills, essential skills - reading, writing, computer application, creative thinking, analyzing skills etc. As part of the skills, the profession requires managerial skills - planning, organisation, managing negative people, assertive skills and conflict management skills. Leadership Skills are part of the key skill that a librarian needs, to be able to arrive at the target of the organization. Leadership skills include goal setting, team building, motivation, risk taking, formulating vision and others. In the library, there are lot of sectional duties with its peculiarities and uniqueness, as such, contextual skills – operational skills in different environment or culture comes in, in order to achieve the organizational goals.

According to DIK (2011) in Widén and Kronqvist-Berg (2014), seven key areas were identified for professional efficiency in LIS. They are digitalization, reading skill, scholarly

communication, participatory culture, pedagogical skills, marketing, and academic skills. The key areas focused on communicative skills, in various ways as well as juridical competence within the different areas.

Digitalization skill entails technical competency and ability to communicate with IT personnel and systems, juridical competence, license agreements, and procurement. In addition, reading skill involves information and media literacy skills competency, to meet all kinds of user groups (children, multicultural and people with disabilities). Consequently, the library of this century must give ICT a top priority. These skills will assist Library and Information Science professionals to effectively apply ICT-based technologies to the provision of library and information services (Nkanu, Iyishu and Ogar, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Professional skills are required by Library and Information Professionals in this modern age for excellent productivity and performance. To catalogue, classify, index, digitize and disseminate information properly require skills. In other words, library functions are duties that must be done with the requirement of professional skill which enable the information services provided to have impact on satisfying the information quests of the users thus metamorphosing into the good performances of the students' academic work and achievement in the college. The professionalism acquired by the Librarians is what enables them to practice successfully in the information industry, library inclusive. On this note, the researcher looks into the professional skills of the Librarians in Adeyemi College of Education Library to help investigate the growth of the institution's library in building an intellectual world in the college through the provision of information services in a professional way.

Objectives of the study

1. To investigate the various personal professional skills among the Librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
2. To measure the rate of the generic skills possessed by the librarians for the execution of their professional duties.
3. To assess the rate of leadership skills which the librarians possessed.
4. To examine the contemporary skills in Library and Information Science (LIS) possessed by the librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.
5. To examine the barriers to the acquisition of some of these professional skills among the Librarians in ACE, Ondo.

Research Questions

1. What are the various personal professional skills among the Librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?
2. What is the rate of the generic skills possessed by Librarians of ACE for the execution of their professional duties?
3. What is the rate of leadership skills possessed by Librarians in ACE, Ondo?
4. What are the contemporary skills in LIS possessed by the librarians of ACE, Ondo?
5. What are the barriers to the acquisition of some of these professional skills among the Librarians in ACE, Ondo?

Literature Review

Library and Information professionals apart from their educational practices required different kinds of skills and competency to give right information at the right time for right users. The role of libraries and librarians are changing rapidly due to growth in science and technology. Prior to this, library professionals' jobs were limited to library boundaries but now, it has spread

across the globe known as digital library. In this age, it is difficult to manage and preserve all changing forms and formats of the documents for all types of patrons using all key Skills. Today, librarians need to play different roles which demand various skills ranging from an old culture to new fashion (Muddapur and Agadi, n.d).

Until recently, information professionals did not see the need to deal with informal knowledge and intellectual capital. Their role was restricted to managing formal knowledge. As more and more organisations realise the value of informal knowledge in an increasingly competitive knowledge economy, there is a growing need for information professionals to sharpen their skills and assume the role of knowledge managers (Al-Hawamdeh and Foo, 2001). Mohammed (2003) in Nkanu, Iyishu and Ogar, (2013) asserted that the need for the provision of library and information science education and the acquisition of relevant knowledge, techniques and skills for effective and efficient library and information work is needed now more than before due to differences in library and information systems, services and infrastructure to cope with the changing needs and expectations of the 21st century people, societies, communities and institutions.

Aina (2007) as cited by Nkanu, Iyishu and Ogar, (2013) is of the view that, the Nigerian LIS professional is expected to possess skills in repacking of information, management and operation of audio-visual equipment, documentation of indigenous knowledge, preservation and conservation of records, provision of query and answers service in the communities.

Hashim and Mokhtar, (2012) explained that the foundations of librarianship, which include skills such as cataloguing and user education, are as relevant in an electronic age as they are in a print based one and will continue to provide a solid base of skills. It is hoped that in this fast changing environment, librarians and information professionals must be someone with

multi-skills, multi-tasking abilities, and competent in areas of work such as management, communication, language, public relations and others.

We live in an information society where the development of information technology and telecommunication networks is accompanied by a corresponding increase in knowledge, with a rapidly growing flow of information. This new information environment requires new skills in seeking, processing and using information. The base for individual ability to understand and use information is a qualitative, ongoing learning process (Hashim and Mokhtar, 2012).

In a study carried out by Al-Hawamdeh and Foo (2001), it can be seen that the 75 participants agreed that information-seeking skills are a must for information specialists. This includes the ability to capture, index, retrieve and disseminate information. The second most important skill as highlighted by the study is the social and communications skills. Seventy-two participants or 96% of the participants emphasized the importance of social and communications skills. Most participants see the role of information professional as a mediator who must possess the skills of active listening and have the ability to clearly convey ideas and information to others. Managerial and leadership skills are also essential for information specialists to handle projects that involve multiple departments within the organisation. And it was stated in the study that managerial skills are essential for knowledge worker in the organisation. Sixty-five participants or 86% of the participants enveloped in the study agreed that an information specialist should be friendly, open minded and able to adapt to changes and relates to new ideas. The research revealed that an information specialist should be able to work with people in the organisation regardless of their diverse subject background. Also he must be able to motivate and convince people to share information and knowledge. Information professionals need to be proactive, responsive and have diverse subject background.

An information professional can possess a variety of different skills, depending on the sector in which the person is employed.

Some essential cross-sector skills are:

- IT skills, such as word-processing and spreadsheets, digitization skills, and conducting internet searches, together with skills in digitization, loan systems, databases, content management systems, and specially designed programmes and packages.
- Customer service: An information professional should have the ability to address the information needs of customers.
- Language proficiency: This is essential in order to manage the information at hand and deal with customer needs.
- Soft skills: These include skills such as negotiating, conflict resolution, and time management, which are useful for all interactions at a workplace (Wikipedia, 2019).

In the innovative age of information science and technology, it is crucial for librarians to possess the necessary competencies for working in a specialized workplace, where the equipment and the clients' needs are being changing rapidly. Such changes are happening at a fast speed that every day the new skills and styles are needed to handle the information and the related ideas (Abotalebi and Biglu 2017). This is in line with Danchak's (2012) as cited by Chikonzo, Bothma, Kusekwa and Mushowani (2014) who advised that libraries and librarians need to be where the users spend most of their time. Such a shift in the characteristic and type of library clientele calls for the need to identify new professional skills and competences which librarians need in order to effectively function in this digital age.

Orme (2008) in Chikonzo, Bothma, Kusekwa and Mushowani (2014) conducted a content analysis of 180 job advertisements collected between June 2006 and May 2007 from the library

sectors in the United Kingdom. She categorized skills into generic, personal and professional. The findings indicated that generic skills are the most normally required. Professional skills and personal skills are the second and the third place respectively. The following categorization of skills is provided: Generic: 'interpersonal/communication, general computing, team work'. Professional: 'professional related experience, customer service, chartered librarian, cataloguing, classification and Metadata'. Personal: 'enthusiasm, flexibility and self-motivation'

Anyaoku (2012) in Kumar (2018) indicated in his paper that a large majority of 173 (98.8%) rated themselves as having some skills in basic computing, which is the use of word processing software. In addition, the large majority 165 (95.2 %) had some internet information retrieval skills. A high percentage of 79.9 % (138) rated themselves as having some skills in the use of presentation software. More than half of the respondents 118 (68.1 %) had Web 2.0/Lib 2.0 skills, 113 (64.3%) had statistics package usage skills, 106 (60.8 %) had graphic skills and 89 (51.2 %) had software installation skills. It was also indicated that respondents rated their skill low in some area of ICT use. A majority of 122 (69.9 %) had no technical skills in repair and maintenance of equipment. More than half of 101 (59.4 %) also had no digitization skills and slightly above half the respondents 91 (51.8 %) had no web page development skills

According to Rao (2014), Richard Harrington while addressing the 25th Online Information Meeting in London in December 2001, the Chief Executive Officer of the Thomson Corporation noted that no profession had changed as much as that of an information profession in the last five years with the development of the range of Internet-based technologies. There is a need to acquire professional skills that helps the librarians to deal effectively with their clientele. Paramanik (2015) observed the rapid change in modern technology and communication which has raised the need to acquire new skill and knowledge in the present day working environment.

Present LIS Professionals have computer and communication skill and get-in-depth training in software package designs, use of software package, as part of their professional education. The existing skills of classification, cataloguing, indexing etc. are to be remodeled for data analysis, data structuring, data organization, packaging and repackaging of information. The researcher explained the skills needed by Library and Information Professional in the 21st century as follows:

- **Communication skills:** Communication skills have vital role in the life. It is also important to the library and information science professionals. Communication media may be written, oral, interpersonal, human or public relation and user orientation etc.
- **Management skills:** Management is the core aspect of library and information centre. These skills required to manage the library financially by applying techniques and skills i.e. supervisory, counseling, auditing, planning, decision making motivating etc.
- **Technological skills:** The present age is considered as an “Age of Technology”. Skills are required to handle technology in general with reference to information technology like computer operation, telecommunication media, library network, micrographics, online database, website design, internet searching, handling audio visual material and digital collection.
- **Traditional skills:** Traditional skills include acquisition, organization, collection, classification, cataloguing, indexing, abstracting, preservation, conservation and dissemination of information.
- **Research and statistical skills:** Research & statistical skills are basically required for faculty members, researchers in library school which range from analysis to synthesis,

manipulate, consolidate, evaluate, and interpretation of result of the research in a scientific manner.

- Other skills: There is large number of skills like navigation, advocacy, innovation etc. These skills help professionals to take proper decision in the changing environment. Among the specific skills needed for working as digital information professional were knowledge of Web publishing, imaging technologies, optical character recognition and markup languages (Nonthacumjane, 2011).

According to Australian Library and Information Association (2014) Library and information specialists must be able to understand, analyse and interpret the contexts in which information is originated, described, stored, organized, retrieved, disseminated, modified and used. In addition, a specialist must understand the ethical, legal and policy issues that are relevant to the sector. Also, an LIS professional must be able to discuss future directions and negotiate alliances for library and information sector development aligned with corporate, social and cultural goals and values. And lastly, the specialist must respectfully acknowledge, learn about and understand the important contribution of our first peoples, especially in their role as the inheritors and the custodians of the longest living human culture on earth.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Total population sampling research design was used for the study. This is suitable for this research because the entire population was used. Total population sampling technique is a type of purposive sampling technique where you choose to examine the entire population that have a particular set of characteristics (e.g. Librarians).

Population of the Study

The population comprised all the librarians in Bab Fafunwa Library, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was adapted by the researchers and used for the study. Section A comprises information on Biodata; Section B was on Likert type scales which asked questions on Library and Information Science (LIS) Professional Skills among Librarians in Bab Fafunwa Library, Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, Nigeria.

Validity of Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, samples of questionnaire were given to experts in the field of librarianship in the College Library of the Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Observations and corrections made by them assisted in validating the research instrument.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers collected the data through face-to-face administration of questionnaire. This involves going to the various offices of the librarians to administer the questionnaire and collecting them back at the same time.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The responses of the respondents were collected, aggregated, and presented in a tabular form. Based on this, frequencies of occurrence were established and used for the analysis using percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Research Question1: What are the various personal professional skills among the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 1: Personal Professional Skills among Librarians in ACE

Item	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. D	Remark
Analytical Skill	6	4	0	0	3.60	.51	Possessed

Creative Skill	4	6	0	0	3.40	.52	Possessed
Flexibility Skill	4	5	0	1	3.20	.92	Possessed
Reflective Skill	5	5	0	0	3.50	.53	Possessed
Adaptability Skill	4	6	0	0	3.40	.52	Possessed
Enthusiastic Skill	4	6	0	0	3.40	.52	Possessed
Self-motivation Skill	6	2	2	0	3.40	.52	Possessed
Soft Skill (Interpersonal)	5	5	0	0	3.50	.53	Possessed

Key: VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE = Very Low Extent
Decision Value for Remark: *Not Possessed* = 0.00-2.44, *Possessed* = 2.45-4.00

Table 1 shows the various personal professional skills among the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. It was revealed from the table that the items received a means score that is above the benchmark of 2.45 with “Analytical skill” having the highest score of $\bar{x} = 3.60$ and “Flexibility skill” with lowest score of $\bar{x} = 3.20$. Based on the result from this table and mean score acceptance by the decision rule, the various personal professional skills among the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are: analytical skill, creative skill, flexibility skill, reflective skill, adaptability skill, enthusiastic skill, self-motivation skill and soft skill (interpersonal). In support, Orme (2008) in Chikonzo, Bothma, Kusekwa and Mushowani (2014) conducted a content analysis of 180 job advertisements collected between June 2006 and May 2007 from the library sectors in the United Kingdom. She categorized librarian personal skills into generic, personal and professional.

Research Question2: What is the rate of the generic skills possessed by librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo for the execution of their professional duties?

Table 2: Rate of Generic Skills Possessed by Librarians in ACE

Item	VHR	HR	LR	VLR	Mean	Std. D
Information literacy Skills	6	4	0	0	3.60	.52
Communication Skill	6	4	0	0	3.60	.52
Critical thinking Skill	4	6	0	0	3.40	.52
Teamwork	7	3	0	0	3.70	.48
Ethics & Social responsibilities Skill	3	7	0	0	3.30	.48
Problem solving Skill	5	5	0	0	3.50	.53
Leadership Skill	4	4	2	0	3.20	.79
Weighted Average					3.47	

Key: VHR = Very High Rate, HR= High Rate, LR= Low Rate, VLR = Very Low Rate
Decision Value: Low=0.00-2.44, High = 2.45-4.00

Table 2 shows the generic skills possessed by librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. This result revealed that the respondents strongly agreed to the following items: information literacy skills ($\bar{x} = 3.60$), communication skill ($\bar{x} = 3.60$), teamwork ($\bar{x} = 3.70$) and problem solving skill ($\bar{x} = 2.51$). Furthermore, the table also shows that the respondents agreed to the following: critical thinking skill ($\bar{x} = 3.40$), ethics & social responsibilities skill ($\bar{x} = 3.30$) and leadership skill ($\bar{x} = 3.20$). Meanwhile based on the value of the weighted average (3.47 out of 4.00 maximum value obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for **high**, it can be inferred that the rate of the generic skills possessed by librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo for the execution of their professional duties is high. Thus, Orme (2008) in Chikonzo, Bothma, Kusekwa and Mushowani (2014) conducted a content analysis of 180 job advertisements collected between June 2006 and May 2007 from the library sectors in the United Kingdom. She categorized skills into generic, personal and professional. The findings indicated that generic skills are the most normally required.

Research Question3: What is the rate of leadership skills possessed by librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 3: Rate of Leadership Skills Possessed by Librarians in ACE

Item	VHR	HR	LR	VLR	Mean	Std. D
Goal Setting	4	4	0	2	3.00	1.15
Team Building	5	3	0	2	3.10	1.19
Motivation	5	3	0	2	3.10	1.19
Risk Taking	4	4	0	2	3.00	1.15
Formulating Vision	3	5	0	2	2.90	1.10
Weighted Average					3.02	

Key: VHR = Very High Rate, HR= High Rate, LR= Low Rate, VLR = Very Low Rate

Decision Value: *Low*=0.00-2.44, *High* = 2.45-4.00

Table 3 shows the leadership skills possessed by librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. This result revealed that the respondents agreed to all the items as follows: goal setting ($\bar{x} = 3.00$), team building ($\bar{x} = 3.10$), motivation ($\bar{x} = 3.10$), risk taking ($\bar{x} = 3.00$) and formulating vision($\bar{x} = 2.90$). Meanwhile based on the value of the weighted average (3.02 out of 4.00 maximum value obtainable) which falls, within the decision value for *high*, it can be inferred that the rate of leadership skills possessed by librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo is high.

Research Question4: What are the contemporary skills in LIS possessed by the librarians of Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 4: Contemporary Skills in LIS Possessed by Librarians in ACE

Item	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Mean	Std. D	Remark
Metadata Skill	1	6	1	2	2.60	.96	Possessed
Database Management Skill	1	6	2	1	2.70	.82	Possessed
Users' need presentation	2	6	2	0	3.00	.67	Possessed
Digital archiving and preservation (Virtual Library Work)	2	5	3	0	2.90	.74	Possessed

Information Processing Skill	3	5	2	0	3.10	.74	Possessed
Content management system (Library Instruction Programme)	3	7	0	0	3.30	.48	Possessed
Internet Skill	4	3	2	1	3.00	1.05	Possessed

Key: VHE = Very High Extent, HE= High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE = Very Low Extent
Decision Value for Remark: *Not Possessed*=0.00-2.44, *Possessed* = 2.45-4.00

Table 4 shows the contemporary skills in LIS possessed by the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The table shows that all the items received a means score that is above the benchmark of 2.45 for possession of skills. Based on the result from this table and mean score acceptance by the decision rule, the contemporary skills in LIS possessed by the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are: metadata skill, database management skill, users’ need presentation, digital archiving and preservation (Virtual Library Work), information processing skill, content management system (Library Instruction Programme) and internet skill.

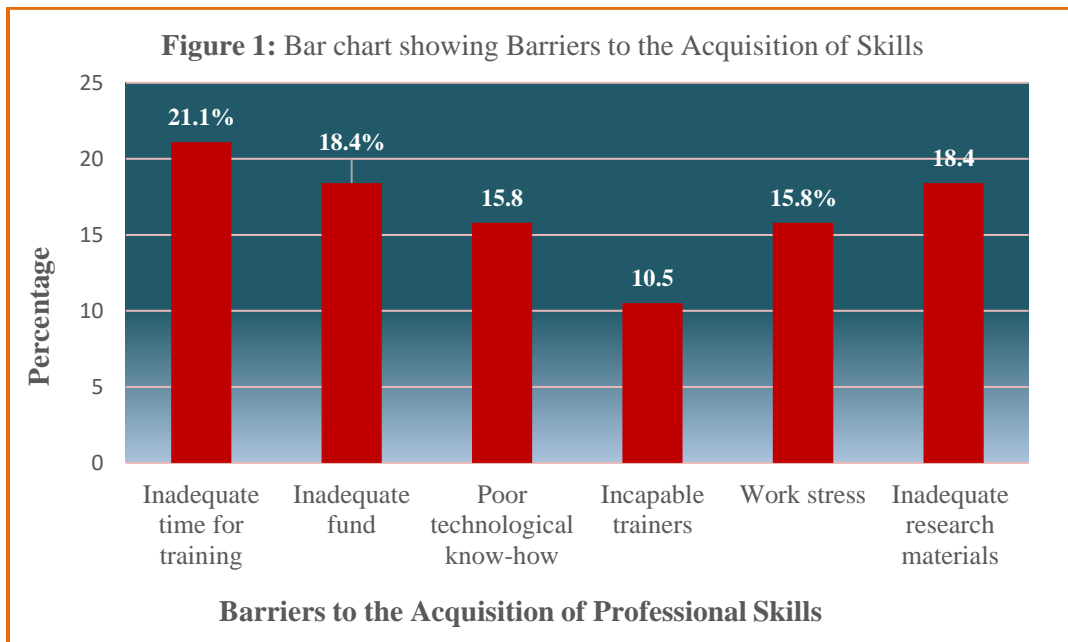
Research Question5: What are the barriers to the acquisition of professional skills among the Librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo?

Table 5: Barriers to the Acquisition of Professional Skills among Librarians (N=38)

Barriers	Multiple Responses	
	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Inadequate time for training	8	21.1
Inadequate fund	7	18.4
Poor technological know-how	6	15.8
Incapable trainers	4	10.5
Work stress	6	15.8
Inadequate research materials	7	18.4

Table 5 above shows the barriers to the acquisition of professional skills among librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. Overall, many(21.1%) of the respondents indicated

inadequate time for training as barriers, followed closely is inadequate fund and inadequate research materials with (18.4%) each, poor technological know-how and work stress have (15.8%) each while only (10.5%) indicated incapable trainers. Therefore, the barriers to the acquisition of professional skills among the librarians in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo are: inadequate time for training, inadequate fund, inadequate research materials, poor technological know-how and work stress. Figure 1 below further presents the result from the table in a bar chart.



Conclusion and Recommendations

There are a lot of barriers to the acquisition of professional skills among librarians. These barriers can be crossed when the appropriate authorities make provision for the librarians to be trained by creating a serene atmosphere for them. Also, there should be provision of fund for the acquisition of training facilities and materials for the training. Consequently, librarians will be able to render efficient services in term of discharging professional duties with standard and

ethics especially in information provision. Services in the library become more attractive and glaring to the users as a result of this training and this will always draw the users' interest to the resources in the library and thus the library become active, functional and practically operative.

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