

# Information Needs of Albinos in the Yoruba Ethnic Group, Nigeria

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## Abstract

*Albinism, is a relatively common condition in many communities in Nigeria. However, there is a lingering dearth of information concerning the real cause(s), management and appropriate behavior towards people living with this condition. This paper explores the perception of Ibule-soro people about albinism and also closely considers the unanswered questions about their rejection. Existing literature was reviewed and an ethnographic approach was also adopted, using key informant interview to collect data from prominent members of the community. The paper found out that Albinos have information deficiencies on how to properly take care of their skin, to prevent them from being unhappy and unattractive and also take care of their already impaired vision. All the respondents confirmed that giving birth to or accommodating an albino is a taboo in Ibulesoro community. They equally reported that the Jooro river goddess abhors albinos because her request that an albino be sacrificed to it was declined. The paper concluded that there are no negative psychological, social or spiritual consequence associated with albinism except as initiated by stigmatization and discrimination. Information Professionals should therefore educate the general public concerning the ills of discrimination and social exclusion of albinos. This would make Albinos feel a sense of belonging in their communities and consequently make them live healthy and productive lives.*

## 1. Introduction

Every individual, whether literate or not, has information needs which arise from the need to resolve uncertainties, solve problems, or take decisions. The need for enlightenment and education through availability of useful information keeps growing by the day. Many communities in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular, still hold on to cultural values and beliefs that promote segregation, discrimination and stagnation. Concerning attitude towards albinism for example, there is an array of beliefs and traditions and these differ from community to community. According to *The New York Times*, Albinos are being mutilated and murdered for their body parts in Tanzania and some other African countries. The brutal killings are fueled

by the rumors that albino blood, skin, and hair have magical powers. Albinism is therefore a phenomenon which requires careful scholarly enquiry.

## 2. Role of Information Professionals

As a maxim on information that said “He who is not informed is deformed”, information serves as a reliable basis for effective, adequate and successful behavior. Information empowers individuals, organizations, societies and nations to achieve their stated goals and objectives. According to Abels, et al [1] An Information Professional (IP) strategically uses information in his/her job to advance the mission of an individual or the organization. The IP develop, deploy, and manage information resources and services. They harness technology to accomplish goals. IPs includes, but is not limited to librarians, knowledge managers, chief information officers, web developers, information brokers, and consultants. IPs are needed to quality filter and provide needed information in an actionable form. According to the Association’s members of the Special Libraries Association (SLA), the competencies and skills required for specialized information management are professional competencies, personal competencies and core competencies.

Professional Competencies relate to practitioner’s knowledge of information resources, access, technology and management, and the ability to use this knowledge as a basis for providing the highest quality information services.

Personal Competencies represent a set of attitudes, skills and values that enable practitioners to work effectively and contribute positively to their organizations, clients and profession. This competencies range for being strong communicators, to demonstrating the value-add of their contribution, to remaining flexible and positive in an ever-changing environment.

Core Competencies anchor the professional and personal competencies. These two core competencies are absolutely essential for information professionals. IPs also acknowledges and adheres to the ethics of the profession.

In addition to this, IPs must exercise a unique set of skills; technical skill, human skill, conceptual skill, leading skills, planning level, organizing skills, controlling skills and decision-making skills. These

skills refer to the personal ability put to use by the IPs in specific position that he or she holds in the organizational hierarchy.

In recent years, however, attention has increasingly been given to the need to analyze the ways in which IPs can more effectively carry out his or her role of making information resources and services available to his or her readers, these includes;

### **2.1. Bridging the information gap**

The role of the IPs is the establishment of connections between those who have information, and those who want it. IPs must be well prepared in meeting the challenges of the current and the future information environments. In today's information environment, IPs have concerns, such as the need to get close to the user, to take a marketing approach to organizational information services, to properly integrate information services with the needs of business, and to provide information to customers rather than just data. The underlying role is to ensure quality provision of information services.

### **2.2. Adapting to emerging professional trends**

ICT is transforming the global information environment. ICT provides huge opportunities to: develop the information roles, market services, access new sources, and reach a much greater user base. In addition, ICT poses a threat to the role of IPs in the information industry. It must be recognized that the traditional markets for information skills and services keeps on changing as new skills and services are being developed. These new roles for the IPs are information strategist, facilitator and advisor and consultant. The information environment fabric is already open to new and challenging opportunities that need continuous training for IPs.

### **2.3. Marketing information products and services**

The interest in marketing has tremendously increased over the past few decades in libraries like other service centers: education, health, transportation, insurance, banking, etc. [6]. Marketing is a concept that usually involves the marketer selling a product and service to a customer. The library and information center is the "retailer" of information products and services and the information audience the "customer". According to Konata [10], the library brand is one that needs better brand management to improve the image and perceptions in a library user's mind. According to Das and Karn [6] the modern library is now generally called an information market and the library user is a consumer of information. The ultimate role of IPs in marketing is to provide the right information to the right user at the

right time. These demonstrates innovative ways of re-inventing the wheel of information products and services, in a new environment and community that forces them to market, and advocate their own identity and relevancy in order to compete in a more diverse and abundant information environment.

### **2.4. Developing customer relations**

Konata [10] observes that: the IPs must be goal and objective oriented in delivery of information services. Konata [10] noted that: "the customer is always right", has long been a mantra and philosophy in the business world for the obvious reason of needing customer loyalty to survive. IPs should always follow this principle to the same degree because it is now necessary to do so.

### **2.5. Leadership and management competencies**

Quality services are only possible through quality leadership and management practices. No one can dispute the importance of leadership qualities in human beings. From newspaper adverts to open discussion forums in all fronts (local, national, regional and international) the concept of leadership is ever emphasized. IPs need to put in place quality management and best practices for better delivery of information products and services. Tang and Levinge [18] assert that in the context of a library, all library staff can each display initiative and direction in the area of quality management and thereby influence – in various ways - the structure, success and future development of a library's quality management program.

## **3. Information Professionals and Diversity of Information Users**

Diversity is about valuing peoples' differences and addressing their different needs and situations. It also means that we are delivering information-based services which meet the diverse needs of our service users. Good equality and diversity practice ensures our information services are accessible to all; ensures that everyone is treated with dignity and respect; supports involvement and self-management and supports improved outcomes for all. Equality and diversity are not 'add-ons', but should be an essential part of how we deliver our information-based services and how we work together. All Information Professionals (IPs) play a vital role in delivering information services which promotes equality and diversity. The IPs must be able to:

- Recognise discrimination and identify risks of discrimination - whether direct discrimination, indirect discrimination or harassment;
- Understand the potential consequences of discrimination;

- Be able to identify and respond to the specific needs of diverse service users, especially the Albinos and their parents or careers which arise from their personal, social or cultural background;
- Be accountable for providing a service which demonstrates good equality and diversity practice; and
- Support the empowerment of Albinos and other service users so that they may be involved in their own care and health improvement.

Good equality and diversity practice involves:

- Communicating with service users in a way that is accessible to them;
- Making reasonable adjustments in the way we do our work and deliver our services to take account of the particular needs of disabled people;
- Understanding the role that cultural and religious beliefs play in information services, health care and peoples' experiences of the health service;
- Ensuring that everyone gets care which takes account of their individual needs;
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect at all times.

#### **4. Information Needs and Plights of Albinos in Yoruba Ethnic Group**

The study of information needs and seeking behavior dates back to 1948 when Bernal and others presented a paper on scientific information at the 1948 Royal Society conference [5]. An information need is recognition that one's knowledge is inadequate to satisfy a goal [12]. Kuhlthau [11], Marchionin [13], Shenton and Dixon [17], and Walter [19] define an information need as a requirement that drives people to search for information.

Wilson [20] described information behavior as the totality of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information-seeking, and information use. Information behavior, a sub-discipline within the field of library and information science, describes "how people need, seek, manage, give and use information in different contexts." It is in this vein that Hjørland has observed that:

What users believe they need represents their subjective understanding of their need. This subjective understanding is reflected in their information-seeking behavior. Even if this behavior may be studied objectively it is still not useful criteria for what is needed. What is needed is something that is able to solve the problem behind the user's behavior. When we go to real life problems, there are usually

different opinions about how they should be understood and how they should be addressed, including different opinions about what information is relevant to solve the problem [8].

According to Emasealu and Popoola [7] the implication of the above statement is that information is a concept, pregnant with diverse meanings and interpretations depending on what the user needs at a particular point in time. Information needs leads to search and demand for information to meet the required gap. According to Wilson [20], information seeking behavior includes those activities a person may engage in when identifying their own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transferring that information. Thus, in as much as albinos are facing neglect in the society, depending on the level of their illiteracy, it is important and a matter of necessity, to cater for their information needs. Such information will help with indiscrimination against them, social inclusion and care of their physical body and health.

According to Mnubi-Mchombu and Ocholla [14], several models have been identified on information needs and information seeking behavior in the last three decades. There are several well-known models namely: Dervin (1986), Ellis (1989), Wilson (1981, 1997), Krikelas (1983, 1999) and Kuhlthau (1991, 1993) which provide a strong foundation for studying information needs and seeking behavior and have relevance in the information seeking behavior of Albinos. The focus here will be on uncertainty initiated due to information deficiencies, a gap in knowledge, or a limited construct [11]; the information seeking process is a progression from uncertainty to understanding accompanied by a range of feelings and actions on the part of the information seeker. Carol Kuhlthau's research is based on the work of a psychologist George Kelly. Kelly theorized that learning is a process of testing constructs [9]. Kuhlthau built on Kelly's theory to develop a model called the Information Search Process (ISP). Similar to Belkin and Dervin, Kuhlthau's ISP model posits uncertainty reduction as the prime motivator for research, and like Taylor, Kuhlthau breaks the information seeking process into stages. However, Kuhlthau's focal point is the emotional states that accompany the stages, which was considered most suitable for this study as described as follows. Anxiety, for example, accompanies the recognition of uncertainty at the first stage, initiation. The next five stages and common affective states with which they are associated (listed in pares) are: (2) selection (optimism), (3) exploration (confusion/frustration/doubt), (4) formulation (clarity), (5) collection (confidence), and (6) presentation (relief/satisfaction or disappointment). The model highlights the emotional states of Albinos and as accompanied by the stages starting from anxiety (initiation). At the first stage of anxiety, a person with albinism while growing up faced great concern on the

colour of his/her skin and the challenges that comes with it. At the second stage of selection, he/she is being hopeful of indiscrimination. Confusion or frustration or doubt set in at the third stage while exploring the society for social acceptance. At the fourth stage, there is precision on what albinism stands for in the society and how to maintain a good health, proper management of the stigma or health issues that comes with it. Next stage brings more confidence while the last stage comes with either relief or satisfaction or disappointment about social neglect.

Albinism has been described as a display of genetic recessiveness peculiar to the skin and often characterized by white skin and hair and often reddish eyes. This condition is caused by an absence of melanin pigment, a chemical substance responsible for colouration and is dominant in both males and females. It can be further described as defects in the most common inherited defect is oculocutaneous albinism (OCA) with reduced or absent melanin formation in the skin, hair, and eyes while there are other six distinct genetic types of autosomal recessive OCA which all share the same clinical manifestations resulting from the hypopigmentation. Despite a wide variety of manifestations, all forms of albinism are characterized by several ocular features, including: nystagmus, photophobia, reduced visual acuity and a lack of stereopsis (Abadi & Pascal, 1988). Reduced skin pigment produces increased skin sensitivity to sunlight and increased frequency of skin malignancy. Reduced pigment in the eyes is associated with photophobia, nystagmus, reduced visual acuity, and abnormal optic projections.

A research conducted by Aduge-Ani [2] reveals that it is estimated about one in 70 people carry a recessive gene for albinism and about one in every 18,000 people in the world have features of albinism. Nigeria is estimated to have one of the highest albinism prevalence rates in the world, which is about 6 million. Children constitute about 40% of this population, spread across all the states in Nigeria. It is assumed that many persons with albinism living in Nigeria, especially in the Yoruba ethnic group, are either illiterates or barely educated, mainly because of low vision impairment, discrimination and social exclusion as a result of their skin, hair and eyes colour. According to Okoro [16].

The existence of albinos in all the ethnic groups in Nigeria has long been recognized. Every major Nigerian language has a name for albinos: Afin (Yoruba), Anyali (Igbo), Mbakara-Obot-Ikot (Efik), Eyaen (Bini), Ugobu (Idoma), Zebia (Hausa). The Efik name is rather derogatory and means literally 'a white man from the bush'. Albinos are taunted from the cradle to the grave with such names as 'D.O.' (District Officer), a reference to the days when District Officers were Europeans.

Negative or positive behavioral patterns of society strongly affect and determine the sway of the psyche of albinos, and in a society that is predominantly fixated on normal outward appearances, it comes as no small wonder that whatever confronts that norm is met with resistance and hostility. Albinos find themselves in a situation in which adequate and clear information is greatly essential. Due to factors such as ignorance, poverty, lack of education and social exclusion, it is difficult for albinos to effectively search for information. Also, due to the ignorance of families and the society in general, problems associated with albinism such as sunburn, freckles and in worst cases, terminal skin cancer has consistently manifested. Many of the persons with albinism themselves remain ignorant on proper skin disease prevention and care, leaving many of them unhappy and unattractive, which further pushes them into isolation and poor self image.

Only a small percentage of albinos whose parents are enlightened enough to infuse their children/wards with a healthy sense of self have gone ahead to break barriers and reach for their dreams. On the other hand however, other parents of children with albinism, have ignorantly written off their children as being unintelligent, unfocused and stubborn, not realizing that these children struggle greatly as a result of visual impairment and in their frustration, most of such children become rebellious. Thus, majority of albinos lack education, parents/guardians sometimes refuse to educate children living with albinism often considering it a waste of resources. Some who struggled through the education system face discrimination while in search for jobs as chances of persons with albinism securing employment are extremely slim. The category of albinos that suffer most are the ones from poor backgrounds, because even when they have information stating solutions to their problems, they still cannot afford the remedy.

Albinism is associated with a lot of myths and beliefs in many Nigerian societies especially in the Yoruba ethnic group. These beliefs have led to all manners of negative behavior towards people living with albinism. Investigation by *Leadership weekend* reveals that Nigerians living with albinism suffer discrimination from their families, school mates and peers. Many albinos drop out from school partly because of uncorrected refractory errors and partly because of discouragement [16]. Some families even commit infanticide on babies born with albinism.

The less enlightened the society, the worse it makes life for albinos. The Founder/CEO of one of the Albino Foundations, Epelle J. told *Leadership weekend* that although people with albinism usually face discrimination in different forms in the society, the most difficult one is securing employment even for positions they are qualified for. Employers often consider albinos as incapable of strenuous and efficient work due to the health challenges associated with the condition [16].

Growing up in the Yoruba ethnic group, the researcher has observed that majority of children with

albinism feel that they are the butt of rude jokes and they often complain of being taunted in school and in the community. Social life is very difficult for albinos; albinos are taunted at home and in school as neither their relations nor anyone else would agree that most albinos are normal in every respect except for the absence of pigment in their skin, hair and eyes [16]. Some albinos have stated clearly that taunting makes them feel unsafe and inferior. People make offensive jokes which can be annoying about them, especially in the community and school. They are often laughed at when approaching people and sometimes, people's countenance changes whenever albinos are sighted. Grace, a lady also living with albinism, noted that people with albinism in Nigeria endure a lot of daily social challenges, but they feel affected the most by the mockery, side talks and name-calling such as Oyinbo (white woman), Bature, Sani or Dada – meaning cursed people. She pointed out that the colour of their hair and skin is the reason why they are treated differently in the society and this makes persons with albinism feel bad and inferior.

There are also misconceptions that the society attaches to people living with albinism in the Yoruba ethnic group. A further investigation by *Leadership weekend* shows that in some communities in Nigeria, it is a common belief that a child born with albinism was conceived because the mother had sexual intercourse while she was menstruating. In other communities, the belief that albinos are a punishment or a curse from the gods or the ancestral spirits due to wrong doing in the family is prevalent. According to Okoro [16], weird aetiological theories among Nigerians range from punishment from the gods, conception during menstruation, to seeing frightening sights during pregnancy. Albino children are seldom treasured as other children because the inherent delicacy of albinos is well known. It is gathered that many Nigerians, especially the Yoruba ethnic groups are of the opinion that body parts of persons living with albinism make potent love potions and charms that can make people rich and successful. Some also believe that albinism is a contagious condition. However, with availability of information, many educated people have come to understand that there is nothing actually wrong with albinos except that society has not been fair to them by treating them with discrimination and stigmatization [3].

Nnadozie, Nnadozie, Ogugua, Egwim and Ossai-Onah, [15] revealed in their study, the existence of a Nigerian town in the Yoruba ethnic group namely Ibule-Soro where giving birth or accommodating albinos is totally forbidden. Ibule-Soro is a town in Ifedore Local Government Area of Ondo State. The town which literally means 'turning land to wealth' is reputed to have very good palm wine. However, Ibule-Soro is a out of bounds for 'Albinos' as it is believed that they would die on getting to the town which is located very close to the state capital. Okeowo, a reporter at *New Telegraph* who visited the town reports that Jooro, a river goddess in the town, abhors men and women of light skin. People

generally, except albinos, are warmly received in the agrarian community where the best palm wine is sold because it is believed that the river goddess in the town forbids albinos from entering the town. Apart from the fact that an Albino cannot enter the town, no indigene of the town has ever given birth to an Albino. A source in the town said Jooro kills any Albino given birth to by any indigene of the town wherever they may reside.

According to the *New Telegraph*, no single resident of the town is an Albino or even someone that is 'excessively' light in complexion. The people of Ibule-soro town witness an influx of visitors from neighbouring Akure, the State capital, on a daily basis. This is because it is generally believed that the nearest place to get good palm wine and bush meat is Ibule-Soro. Top government functionaries and political office holders usually troop to the town to enjoy the undiluted palm wine while other people also visit the town to purchase these items for their families or their bosses. This background of inexplicable rejection of albinos in Ibule-soro town calls for scholarly investigation without which albinos within that region will definitely continue to live in fear and suffer rejection.

## 5. Purpose of the Study

This study intends to provide answers and give clarification on the hazy questions surrounding the rejection of albinos in Ibule-soro land. The researcher intends to achieve this by;

- Investigating if albinos exist among inhabitants of Ibule-soro.
- Examining the history of Albinos in Ibule-soro land.
- Investigating the perception of Ibule-soro people about Albinos.
- Finding out if there are other underlying issues peculiar to Albinos in the community.
- Investigating if there are spiritual benefit/negativity of having Albino as a child, friend or neighbor
- Finding out if the people see Albinism as a disease

## 6. Methodology

The population of this study consists of the 536 residents comprising the elderly, adults, youths and children of Ibule-soro town. Purposive sampling was adopted to select six respondents who are prominent persons among the native/residents on gender basis in Ibule-soro land, Ifedore Local Government Area of Ondo State. The rationale behind this selection is that since the study has to do with historical beliefs, the most reliable source of information is the prominent adults who are both residents and natives of the town. 3(50%) of the participants are male while 3(50%) of them are

female. 3(50%) of the respondents are below the age of fifty, while 3(50%) of them were above age fifty. 3(50%) of them is holding a chieftaincy post while 3(50%) of them holds a chieftaincy title. However, all the respondents are natives of Ibule-soro land. Considering the nature of the study, an ethnography method of qualitative technique was adopted, using key informant interview (KII). In doing this, prominent members of the community were selected for interview in order to ensure the reliability of the data collected.

## 7. Result of the Study

From the key informant interview (KII), majority of the respondents had similar responses, except for very few additional information on albinos. All the respondents (100%) confirmed that no native of Ibule-soro has ever given birth to an Albino, home and abroad since it has become a taboo. They equally (100%) reported that the history of albino rejection from their town was mainly based on the river goddess's request for a sacrifice of albino in order for it to expand to an ocean. This request was declined by the towns people because they feared the total destruction of the town by the resultant ocean. All the respondents (100%) reported that albinos were not rejected or forbidden to enter the town until the deity made its historic request. All the respondents (100%) reported that Ibule-soro people perceive albinos as unacceptable and would neither accommodate them nor enter into any relationship with them. All (100%) the respondents confirmed that there has not been any disaster recorded on account of albinos because every member of the community is always on the look-out for albinos so as to prevent the loss of lives and properties that might befall the land if the river turns into an ocean. All the respondents confirmed that they have no expectation about the life style of albinos since they do not relate with them. 40% of them gave additional information based on their experience outside Ibule-soro land. According to them, albinos who eat plenty of salt do develop spotted skin which makes them appear ugly and unrepresentable. As a result, albinos should be bathed with salt water at birth in order to save them from developing spotted skin later in the future even if they take excessive salt. 80% of them confirmed that there is no spiritual benefit or disadvantage associated with having an albino as a child while all respondents (100%) concluded that albinism is not a disease.

The result of this study corroborates with the report of *New Telegraph* in an interview of the highest ranking chief in the town, Chief Isaac Olawale Adegboye, the Oluoye of Ibule-Soro, who said the people are generally hospitable but not to albinos because of Jooro River which usually kills Albino who come into the town. It is also in line with the report of the Priest of the River, Chief James Jayeoba, who said the present residents of the town should not be blamed for the taboo as the history of the town predates many of them. They both

claimed that the presence of an albino in the town will so infuriate the river goddess that it will flood the entire town destroying lives and property until the albino is killed. According to the priest, their forefathers told them that if they bring an Albino near the town, the river will turn into an ocean and wash away all the inhabitants of the town. He stated further that, apart from Albino, the river also forbids beads to be brought near it [15]. No one is allowed to go near Jooro with beads, except the priest only. When asked what actually led to the river goddess forbidding Albinos, the Priest said he was not told about it, but that it is a tradition handed down from generations past. He informed the researcher that the river which is worshipped yearly by adherents, accepts pigeon and kolanut, and in turn prevents calamities from befalling the town. The River is said to be useful for the indigenes and non-indigenes alike because of its curative powers.

## 8. Information Services Targeting Albinos

ALIA states that, as a matter of priority, and at all levels, library and information services professionals should embrace the responsibility to promote and facilitate the development of the information literacy of their clients [4]. It is essentially imperative that IPs begin to take critical notice about information provision on the cause of albinism, the psychological orientation of persons with albinism, the health care of the skin and the eyes. They have to play their role in creating the much needed information services to gain a comfortable environment for persons with albinism to thrive in, as every individual irrespective of gender, race or disability. Albinos and their parents are greatly in need and search for information-based solution that will make them fully acceptable, granting them utmost respect and highest regard in the society. Thus, IPs are to provide information services based on the following needs:

## 9. Health

Information about balance diet to earn a good living should be provided to Albinos. They should be provided with information on how to care and properly maintain a beautiful skin; that will not damage the skin colour. It is cheaper to buy a tube of sunscreen, use an umbrella and wear protective clothing, live a healthy life style, use glasses to aid sight than combating ill-health like skin cancer and neglects from society due to damage skin. Information on optical vision should also be provided to prevent terrible vision impairment and help the sight of Albinos by use of glasses or some eye drops that may take care of eye-related problems. When persons with albinism look good with a beautiful skin and a sound health, they are likely to be accepted in the society. At least, they will not be the cause of any negative reactions against themselves in the society. This information provision can be achieved by providing health information centres that constantly initiate information

awareness of preventive measures and care of Albino's body system free of charge or at a much subsidised fee to make the services affordable. IPs have the role of intermediary between the information clients and governments, soliciting for help on behalf of their clients and informing clients of where the services needed are available.

## 10. Psychological

Psychology as the science of behavior and mental processes emphasizes training and knowledge about such aspects like development over the lifespan, learning, motivations, experiences, emotions, cognition, social behavior and attitudes, personality. It strives to understand how biological, behavioral, and social factors influence health and illness. In the case of Albinos, there exist information deficiencies in thoughts, feelings, and their actions that influence their behaviour. They naturally perceive themselves as an unacceptable entity in the society; they feel bad and inferior and consequently isolate themselves from several activities that could interest them. Thus, the IPs plays a major role of a psychologist in understanding how biological, behavioral, and social factors influence health status. They are to be equipped with training skills and knowledge to promote positive cognition, emotion, motivation, development, personality, social and cultural interaction in persons with albinism and to re-orientate the perception of the public against Albinos. This will help affect the abilities of persons with albinisms to function in diverse settings and roles in the society and help them modify their behavior and lifestyle so as to prevent and recover from health-related problems. In addition, it will help the cognition of the members of the society to socially accept persons with albinism and grant them the respects and regards they need to keep their life ongoing.

## 11. Social

Library and information services are key actors in providing unhindered access to essential resources for economic and cultural advance. In doing so, they contribute effectively to the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom, safeguarding democratic values and universal civil rights. They encourage social inclusion, by striving to serve all those in their user communities regardless of age, gender, economic or employment status, literacy or technical skills, cultural or ethnic origin, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability. Thus, IPs have the responsibility of providing information that serves the briefing function which obtains a background understanding of persons with albinism, fact-finding function on causes of albinism, the current awareness function to keep information on albinism up to date and the research function that

investigates ways of preventing birth of child with albinism. These information services will provide Albinos social needs to boost their self-confidence, encourage their participative role in the society and prevent them from feeling inferior among other people. On the other way round, the above mentioned information services will educate the society and the general public that being an Albino does not implies they are bastard, cursed people or with any contagious condition. The Nigerians especially the Yoruba ethnic group should be well informed to prevent all manners of negative behavior; neglects, discrimination and social exclusion towards people living with albinism from their families, school mates, peers, society and general public.

## 12. Educational

Information on availability and the importance of sound education for Albinos is vital. Education is a basic right of every citizen of a nation. It empowers persons with albinism with hope and dignity, a tool to promote their social inclusion, build a better future that overcomes poverty. Albinos have special educational needs that make it harder for them to learn than many other children. Social, emotional or mental health difficulties; making friends or relating to school mates and sensory or physical needs - such as visual impairment, suffering from sun burn which might affect them in school setting. IPs in collaboration with the head teacher/principal plays a key role in determining and provision of information-based solution to strategically support the raising and achievement of the Albinos in their schools. Librarians have always played a key role in education, forming relationships with subject specialists to build library collections to support instruction in the classroom and provided instruction in the form of classes on library skills and have conducted library instructional orientations sessions to assist students doing research in their classes. The instructional orientation sessions should now be frequently provided not only by request as it has usually being to bridge the gap of information need of persons with albinism and their school mates or other members of the community.

## 13. Conclusion

This paper has given an insight on Information, its role of empowering individuals, organizations, societies and nations to achieve their stated goals and objectives. The educational and technical skills needed by IPs, their general and technical roles in providing information-based solutions to the diversity of information users especially persons with albinism were discussed. It based the information seeking behavior of Albinos on the Kuhlthau's ISP model which focus on the emotional states that accompany the stages, which was considered most suitable for this study. This paper has given an insight into the peculiarity of reaction to albinism among

the people of Yoruba ethnic group, especially Ibule-soro community in Ondo State, Nigeria. The information obtained in this study reveals that albinos have never been accused of any misdeed by the people of Ibule-soro land neither has there been any verifiable incidence that called for rejection. The Ibule-soro community only rejects albinos in order to prevent the catastrophe predicted by the river goddess. Part of the belief of members of the community inferred from the study is that Albinos could be free of spotted skin if they were bathed with salt water at birth (although this has no scientific prove). Finally, people of Ibule-soro believe that there are no spiritual benefits or detriment associated with having an albino as a child, friend or relative.

Based on these findings, one can safely conclude that there is no concrete or verifiable reason for the rejection of albinos in Ibule-soro town. Since the Chief priest who is the mouth piece of the deity could not clearly state the reason for the deity's threat, it is only logical to assume that the traditional belief which has a religious undertone could have run its full course many years ago and that albinos still suffer rejection and stigmatization in that locality for no just cause. Also, the real nature of the transaction between Joro and the people of Ibule-soro concerning albino appears shrouded in superstition and fear. Since the account of the deity's request for an albino sacrifice dates back to preceding generations, it is hard to determine the truth of the current version making the rounds. There is an obvious need for the people to revisit the issue with the aim of ridding their land of superstition and discrimination.

The IPs are to push out into public space as much information on albinism as they can and reach out through aggressive media drives, social media, sensitization workshops, trainings, pamphlets and booklets in cognizant of the strength proper awareness has in bringing about social change and remarkable solutions to problems. This paper therefore confirmed that Albinos are one of the identified diverse population recognized with some information deficiencies and tends to provide the information-based solution that takes care of their information needs.

This paper therefore recommends that Information Professionals should devise various means of giving out effective and efficient information-based solution services to Albinos and their families in the Yoruba ethnic group and Nigeria in general. Health information centres that constantly create healthcare awareness dedicated to the prevention, reduction and mitigation of health-related problems associated with albinism should be introduced as the most avertable means of saving lives remains in prevention. Above all, members of communities where rejection of albino is a communal stance need to be educated concerning the real cause of albinism. A re-orientation through which albinos will no longer be seen as bastards, cursed or infectious should be provided in communities like Ibule-soro so as to bring an end to the discrimination and social exclusion Albinos

suffer from family members, school mates, peers and the society at large.

## 14. References

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