

# **The Information Behavior of African American Teens: A Sociocultural Case Study**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Research on the information-seeking behavior of teens has produced numerous articles over the past decade. Although a good number of research articles list sociocultural factors, such as identity, as playing a critical role in teen's information-seeking behavior, very few explicitly cover racial identity. The goal of this study is to examine the everyday life information-seeking behavior of African American teens, using previously applied information-seeking models. Though African American teens are not alone in their ethnic experience, they are unique in that decades of systemic racism and inequality impacts their academic standing. The literature review examines research on the everyday life information-seeking (ELIS) behavior of teens, sources of teen information acquisition, modes of information-seeking, and factors that impact teen information-seeking behavior. Additionally, limited existing research on the information behavior of African American communities is reviewed. The findings are that the existing information-seeking behavior research has noticeable contradictory results in regard to African American communities. This mixed-method study will use observations, interviews, and online surveys of African American teens and librarians. The findings will be compared to previous teen information behavior research to see if and how African American teens' information-seeking behavior is impacted by socio-cultural factors such as cultural beliefs, norms, and institutional barriers. This research would assist in clarifying the information behavior of African American youth and potentially influence information literacy education to be more inclusive and culturally responsive, and thus more impactful in lifelong learning for all youth.

## **ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Information literacy; Information needs; Information seeking; Information use; Specific populations.

## **AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Culturally responsive librarianship; Information practices; African Americans; Teens; Sociocultural perspectives

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