

**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**CONCEPTUALISATION OF ALBINISM AND ITS PSYCHO-SOCIAL  
IMPLICATIONS ON PERSONS LIVING WITH ALBINISM AMONG RESIDENTS OF  
KWALE COUNTY, KENYA**


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**RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL  
SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY) OF KENYATTA  
UNIVERSITY.**

**JUNE, 2021**

## DECLARATION

This proposal is my original work. It has not been presented to any university, institution of higher learning or organisation for any purpose.

Signature.....  .....date..... 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2021 .....

**Justus Mochumbe Onsongo**

(Reg. No: C50/MSA/PT/27665/2014)

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I confirm that the work reported in this proposal was done by the student under my supervision.

Signature.....  .....date..... 8/6/21 .....

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## ABSTRACT

Albinism is an aspect of humanity that affects people of every origin. Many human communities worldwide have for a long time maintained myths and superstitions that erroneously explain the condition of albinism and lives of persons living with albinism. Reliance on erroneous beliefs has led to community challenges like ritual attacks, trafficking in persons with albinism, discrimination and abandonment of children born with albinism, among others. Community conceptualisation of albinism has therefore become an issue of global concern. The purpose of this study was to find out how the residents of Kwale County, Kenya, conceptualise albinism and to establish the psycho-social implications of this conceptualisation on persons living with albinism. The study employed a descriptive survey design. Purposive and stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain a sample of 384 participants. A questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data, while a Focus Group Discussion schedule was used to gather qualitative data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to aid analysis of quantitative data. Qualitative data was analysed using the thematic content analysis approach. Triangulation based on the integration of quantitative and qualitative data was done, to draw conclusions. To establish conceptualisation of the nature of albinism for the variables of age, level of education and gender, the data were subjected to descriptive statistical analysis which generated percentages, means and frequencies. The study established that misconceptions of albinism were widespread among residents of Kwale County, Kenya. It emerged that education level determines how the residents of Kwale County conceptualize albinism. It was further established that the variables of gender and age had an effect on the conceptualisation of the nature of albinism. Misconceptions were found to be higher among male residents of Kwale County compared to the female residents. The study found out that most of these misconceptions were constructed through cultural beliefs and practices. This study recommends that awareness programmes be put in place to sensitize communities on the nature and causes of albinism.