

The myth of universal education in rural Zimbabwe: Evidence of challenges faced by pupils with albinism

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Abstract

The lives of children with albinism have not given much attention in the scholarly literature, in particular school-aged children with albinism. The study investigated the challenges faced by secondary school pupils with albinism in accessing universal education in a selected rural area in Zimbabwe. The study utilized qualitative methodology, including in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and FGDs to collect data from pupils, their parents and some community members in Rusape rural area. Using the Human Rights Based Approach, the analysis showed that school children with albinism experience various challenges which affect their access to education. Being in mainstream schools, they experience discrimination, lack of understanding from teachers, segregation, negative self-concept, no sense of belonging, and name calling. They also experience physical challenges, such as, visual impairment, headaches, and sunburns which affect their educational experience. This study concluded that the authorities responsible for ensuring that children's rights are met should work hard towards the inclusion of children with albinism in mainstream education without the fear of stigma and discrimination.