



Health, Nutrition, Safety and Security in Early Childhood Development Programmes in Zimbabwe: What are the Implications to Children with Special Education Needs?

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ABSTRACT The aim of the study was to establish whether primary schools attaching ECD classes in Chiredzi district in Zimbabwe were catering for the health, nutrition, safety and protection needs of the children with special education needs. The study was underpinned by the Ecological Systems Theory. It adopted a mixed methods approach. The researchers triangulated the following instruments: interviews, questionnaires, observation, document analysis and focus group discussions. The results show that in many schools, children with special education needs' health and nutrition were, to a very large extent, ignored. Some schools made efforts to provide nutrition to all ECD children, but there were no efforts made to identify specific meals for children with chronic diseases. All the schools did not have legislations to protect such children, resulting in discrimination and abuse. The study recommends more concerted efforts from stakeholders on the health, safety and protection of learners in ECD settings.