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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, **Ackson Dimas Katolo** hereby do declare that this dissertation represents my own work and it has not been submitted at this or indeed any other university.

Signed _____

Date _____

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late parents who despite themselves not having obtained formal education, they valued the education of their children and who through persistent disciplining of their children cultivated in a sense of endurance, a virtue that has made the writing of this work possible.

APPROVAL

This dissertation by **Katolo Ackson Dimas** is approved as fulfilling part of the requirement for the award of the degree of the Master of Education in Educational Psychology of the University of Zambia.

Signed _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____

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ACRONYMS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
CFS	Child Friendly School
CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
EFA	Education For All
EPDC	Education Policy and Data Centre
FAWEZA	Forum for African Women Educationalist of Zambia
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoE	Ministry of Education
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education
NLAS	National Learning Achievement Survey
NQTs	Non-qualified Teachers
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
QSL	Quality of School Life
SES	Socio-economic Standing
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UIS	Unesco Institute for Statistics
UPE	Universal Primary Education

ABSTRACT

The study investigated school factors that contribute to pupils dropping out of school among primary school pupils in Solwezi district of Zambia. School factors are more detrimental because they create a negative image about school which make it difficult not only for school dropouts to be brought back into school but also for the would be entrants to be enrolled. Dropping out of school confines children to poverty and diminished opportunity by limiting their participation in social, economic and political affairs of their nation in later years as adults. The problem of school dropouts demands an aggressive approach using all means possible and acceptable with strategies focusing on preventing dropping out because the fight to bring them back dropouts into school may be much more difficult to be won.

The study used descriptive survey design and involved 250 participants purposively selected who included teachers, pupils and school dropouts drawn five primary schools. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used.

The study found that school factors contributing to pupils dropping out of school were prevalent in schools under study such as: poor teacher-pupil relationship, manual work, lack of readiness to learn, lack of functioning pupil support structures, unstimulating school environment and punishments. The study found that school factors complimented each other with other factors in order to cause dropping out. The study found that school strategies aimed at preventing pupils dropping out of school were ineffective and were not seriously enforced. The study further found that five components of the school environment (place, people, policies, programs, processes) to a certain degree transmitted negative signals to pupils resulting in negative attitude formation, which to some extent influenced pupils' decisions and behaviour leading to dropping out.

The study recommended that:

- School staff and parents need to work together to identify early pupils who show risk signs of dropping out and make early interventions.
- Teachers and school management to play an active role reinforcing school strategies for preventing dropping out and creating inviting school environment.
- Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education should invest adequately in developing and strengthening capacities for career guidance and counseling in primary schools to enable them prepare children for careers early which is essential for pupils' continued stay in school.