

## **COPYRIGHT**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior permission of the author or the University of Zambia.

© Katolo Ackson Dimas 2013

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

A postgraduate programme is a moment of personal sacrifice and endurance of various challenges. This study was made possible through the unwavering support of the following people: My wife Julie for supporting me throughout the course of study, Christopher Mzenje my research assistant for accompanying me throughout the data collection stage and finally to management, staff, pupils and school dropouts of Kimiteto, Kimale, Kabisapi, Luamala and Mushitala primary schools for their willingness to participate in the study.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright.....	i
Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Approval.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of contents.....	vi
List of tables.....	ix
List of figures.....	x
Acronyms.....	xi
Abstract.....	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background.....	1
1.1.1 Global context of school dropouts.....	1
1.1.2 Dropout levels in the African context.....	1
1.1.3 Dropout levels in the Zambian context.....	4
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	6
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	6
1.4 Objectives of the study.....	7
1.5 General objective.....	7
1.6 Specific objectives.....	7
1.7 Research questions.....	7
1.8 Significance of the study.....	7
1.9 Theoretical framework.....	8
1.10 Delimitation of the study.....	10
1.11 Limitation of the study.....	10
1.12 Operational definitions.....	10
1.13 Organisation of the study.....	11
1.14 Summary of the chapter.....	12
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	13
2.2 Global situation of School Dropout.....	13
2.3 School Dropout situation in Africa.....	16
2.4 School Dropout situation in Zambia.....	19

2.5 School factors influencing dropping out.....	19
2.6 Strategies for reducing dropping out.....	28
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>33</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	33
3.2 Research Design.....	33
3.3 Target Population.....	33
3.4 Sample Size.....	34
3.4.1 Characteristics of respondents.....	34
3.5 Sampling Procedure.....	35
3.6 Data Collection Instruments.....	35
3.7 Data collection.....	36
3.8 Data Collection Procedure.....	36
3.9 Data Analysis.....	36
3.10 Ethical Consideration.....	37
3.11 Summary.....	37
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	38
4.1 School factors contributing to pupils dropping out of school.....	37
4.1.1 Responses from School dropout pupils.....	39
4.1.2 Responses from teachers.....	40
4.2 School strategies for preventing dropping out.....	42
4.2.1 Responses from dropout pupils on actions taken.....	42
4.2.2 Responses from dropouts on actions that should be taken.....	43
4.2.3 Responses from teachers.....	43
4.2.4 Indicators of dropping out.....	44
4.2.5 Strategies to prevent dropping out.....	44
4.2.6 Effectiveness of the strategies for preventing dropping out.....	45
4.2.7 School efforts to reach dropouts pupils.....	46
4.2.8 Help dropout pupils receive from school.....	46
4.2.9 Linkages between home and school.....	47
4.3 Signals pupils receive from school environment	
influencing dropping out behaviour.....	48
4.3.1 Signals from constituent elements.....	48
4.3.1.1 Pupils' views on general cleanliness of the school.....	48

4.3.1.2 Pupils’ views on whether the classrooms were clean and ideal for Learning.....	49
4.3.1.3 Pupils’ views on whether the classroom furniture was in good condition and adequate.....	49
4.3.1.4 Pupils’ views on whether had clean, adequate and safe toilets to use.....	50
4.3.1.5 Pupils’ views on whether the school had source of clean and safe drinking water.....	50
4.3.1.6 Pupils’ views on whether members of staff were friendly and attended to pupils’ needs.....	51
4.3.1.7 Pupils’ views on whether the school staffs show interest in all pupils and kindly speak to them.....	52
4.3.1.8 Pupils’ views on whether the school had sufficient learning materials for pupils to use.....	52
4.3.1.9 Whether pupils find time in school as most interesting part of the day.....	53
4.3.1.10 Whether things pupils learn in school were very helpful to their daily lives.....	54
4.3.1.11 Whether the school has fair rules which protect the interest of the pupils.....	54
4.3.1.12 Whether methods of implementing discipline in school match the offences committed and were acceptable.....	55
4.3.1.13 Whether pupils were happy with the procedures of getting permission from school authority.....	56
4.3.1.14 Whether pupils related well with other pupils.....	56
4.3.1.15 Whether all pupils related well with respondent and was given respect.....	57
4.3.1.16 Whether pupils loved school and wished to continue stay in school to completion.....	58
4.3.1.17 Whether teachers always attended to their lessons.....	58
4.3.1.18 Whether teachers were impartial and professional in their conduct of duties.....	59
4.3.2 Signals from five components of the school environment.....	59



<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>63</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	63
5.1 School factors contributing to dropping out.....	63
5.2 School strategies for preventing dropping out.....	71
5.2.1 Indicators of dropping out.....	73
5.2.2 Linkages between home and school.....	74
5.2.3 School actions towards dropouts.....	75
5.3 Existence of negative signals pupils receive from school environment influencing dropping out behaviour.....	76
5.4 Classification of signals pupil receive according to five components of the school environment.....	76
5.4.1 Place.....	77
5.4.2 People.....	77
5.4.3 Programmes.....	78
5.4.4 Policies.....	78
5.4.5 Processes.....	79
5.5 Summary.....	79
<b>CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>81</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	81
6.2 Conclusion.....	81
6.3 Recommendations.....	84
6.4 Recommendations for future research.....	85
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>94</b>
Appendix A: Consent form.....	94
Appendix B: Semi-structured interview guide for dropouts.....	95
Appendix C: Semi-structured interview guide for teachers.....	96
Appendix D: Questionnaire for pupils.....	97

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: National Basic school dropout rates from 2000 to 2010.....	5
Table 2: Solwezi district primary schools dropout statistics.....	5
Table 3: Percentage distribution of both current and dropout pupils by gender.....	34
Table 4: Percentage distribution of both current and dropout pupils by age.....	34
Table5: Whether there are any school factors that contribute to pupil dropout.....	37

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Distribution of dropout pupils by last grade attended.....	35
Figure 2: School factors contributing to pupil dropouts.....	41
Figure 3: School strategies for preventing pupil dropouts.....	44
Figure 4: School clean and well looked after.....	48
Figure 5: School has clean classrooms.....	47
Figure 6: School has adequate furniture.....	49
Figure 7: School has clean, adequate toilets.....	49
Figure 8: School has source of clean drinking water.....	51
Figure 9: School has friendly staff.....	51
Figure 10: School staff show interest in all pupils.....	52
Figure 11: School has sufficient learning materials.....	53
Figure 12: School time most interesting part of my day.....	53
Figure 13: Things learnt in school important in my daily life.....	54
Figure 14: School has fair rules.....	55
Figure 15: School methods of discipline match offences.....	55
Figure 16: Happy with school procedures of getting permission.....	56
Figure 17: I relate well with other pupils.....	57
Figure 18: All pupils relate well with me and respect me.....	57
Figure 19: I love school and wish continue to completion.....	58
Figure 20: Teachers always attend to their classes.....	59
Figure 21: Teachers are impartial and professional in their conduct.....	59
Figure 22: Pupils' responses on signals in the school environment.....	60

## 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.