

# School uniforms policy on safety and discipline



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Debate over outfitting school children into their uniforms started in 1983 in response to the report *A Nation at Risk* warning America of its eroding educational foundation marred by the “ rising tide of mediocrity”. Then in 1987, four years after the disturbing status of the American educational system was detailed, Cherry Hill Elementary School in Baltimore, Maryland became the first to implement followed by the Long Beach Unified District in Long Beach, California. In the case of the Long Beach District, the uniform policy yielded positive outcomes such as decreased school violence and increased attendance which prompted former president Bill Clinton in his State of the Union address in 1996 to endorse this policy in public schools for the curtailment of violence and promotion of discipline. Supporters of the movement argued that the policy has the potential of decreasing rate of student victimization (Scherer, 1991), lowering gang violence (Kennedy, 1995; Loesch, 1995), and distinguishing strangers from students within the school premises (Gursky, 1996). Academically, school uniforms enhanced student learning and promoted positive attitudes toward school (Stover, 1990), heightened sense of pride for the school (Jarchow, 1992), high level of student achievement (Thomas, 1994), enhanced school preparedness (Thomas, 1994), and compliance to school ideals (La Pointe, Holloman, & Alleyne, 1992; Workman & Johnson, 1994). On the behavioral aspect, mandatory school uniform policies reduce discipline problems such as suspension, substance abuse, and absenteeism (Gursky, 1996). Moreover, it was supported by various schools because self-esteem of students was increased (Thomas, 1994) and feelings of unity among students were reinforced (La Pointe, Holoman, & Alleyne, 1992).

Though the number of advocates to the school uniform movement continues to grow, opponents argued there is mounting evidence that the policy does not deliver the effects as stipulated by those in favor of the school uniform policy. Key findings of longitudinal analyses from kindergarten to tenth grade found empirical evidence to disprove the claims of the supporters. From the paper of Brusma (2006), it would be gleaned that school uniforms had no impact on school's climate except among eighth grade principals' perceptions that wearing uniforms compromises school safety. Another close inspection of Brusma's synthesis revealed that the policy had no effect on academic performance of elementary, middle, or high school students save for its negative impact on reading performance. Moreover, evidence points to the policy's inefficiency in creating a positive learning milieu. In terms of its impact on school attendance, no significant effects were detected among the eighth and tenth graders. Another argument critics have against the policy is its violation of the students' First Amendment rights... and go way beyond just having a reasonable dress code that promotes safety and decorum in school" (DeMitchell, 2006).

Safety and discipline will be the main issues in the study as an effect of the proposed school uniform policy. Both have become in recent years any institution's number one thrust amid numerous school-related shootings and gang activities within campus premises. Being mandated by law to protect faculty and students from harm, schools have adopted a variety of strategies and interventions to ensure a safe learning environment. The success of these most importantly necessitate approval and cooperation from the

school administration, members of the academic community, the student body, families of students, and community.

Do the perceptions of middle school students in Southport Middle School lean towards the advocates or the opponents of the school uniform policy? This will be the principal question to be explored in this proposed study.

#### Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of this proposed study is to determine whether implementation of the school uniform policy will produce a perception of a safer and more disciplined learning environment for students of Southport Middle School in St. Lucie County.

#### Research Questions:

This research will delve on the perceptions of middle school students on the effects of the proposed uniform policy in Southport Middle School.

Specifically, it will shed light to the following research questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups?
2. How did the respondents perceived the effects of the proposed school uniform policy on safety and discipline?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perceptions of the respondents towards the policy when grouped in accordance to age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups?

### Hypothesis:

The above information indicates that school uniform policies appear to have value. Therefore a research on the views of middle students on the effects of this proposed policy in Southport Middle School warrants scientific attention. The null hypothesis that will be tested at 0.05 level of significance is stated as follows: Perceptions towards the effects of the proposed policy on safety and discipline are not influenced by age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups.

### Rationale and Significance of the Study:

Numerous published studies on school uniform policy implementation have been successful in meeting some goal or purpose. This study serves as another stepping-stone that will offer insight so that researcher can test the opinions about a policy that may actually be implemented and is of great interest to the concern of the middle school population on perceptions of safety and discipline on a sample population limited to middle school students in St. Lucie County, Florida. A disciplined and safe learning environment should be a priority requirement for a good school, as students who are safe and secure are better students (Donohue 1996). In response to growing levels of violence in schools, teachers, parents, and school officials have come to see school uniforms as one positive and creative way to reduce discipline problems and increase safety. They believe that the adoption of school uniform policies can promote school safety, improve discipline and enhance the learning environment.

### Nature of the Study:

<https://assignbuster.com/school-uniforms-policy-on-safety-and-discipline/>

In order to provide evidence of a causal link between variables, this study attempts to establish a statistical relationship between following variables. Study implementation will employ the descriptive, quantitative, and cross-sectional design. It will describe the perceptions of the middle school students on the effects of the proposed school uniform policy on safety and discipline in the campus. Five demographic characteristics will be defined and numerous samples will be drawn from the student population in order to conduct an analysis on the views towards the proposed policy. This study is expected to determine the link between the variables the study will ascertain.

#### Assumptions and Limitations:

For this study, it will be assumed that the respondent population will follow a normal distribution and that classes in each demographic factor will be adequately represented. Since a stratified random sampling method will be conducted, the conclusion could be generalized to reflect the overall view of the middle school population in Southport Middle School towards the proposed policy. Another assumption will be that the respondents

One limitation is that the data will be based on the self-report of the respondents based on their perceptions towards the proposed school uniform policy. Only the perceptions of the middle students regarding safety and discipline will be determined and the independent variables will be limited only to age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups. Therefore views of school administrators, teachers, parents, and community leaders are beyond the scope of this

study. Although self-reports obtained from self-administered questionnaires serves its advantage since scoring could be done with relative ease, validity and reliability must first be established. It is also possible that the respondents might merely copy the answers of their seatmates during questionnaire administration thereby introducing bias to the data set. Another possibility is that some students might not fully understand the items in the questionnaire considering that the respondent pool will be composed of different racial backgrounds whose English facility is not excellent. To remedy the language barrier, the questionnaire will be translated into their native tongue. To allay any anxiety during test administration, the investigator will emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

## Chapter 3. Methodology

### Research Design:

The study will follow a descriptive, quantitative, cross-sectional method designed to determine the perceptions of the sample population to the effects of the school uniform policy in Southport Middle School. The research is also expected to link the perceptions on the effects of the proposed school uniform policy on safety and discipline among middle school students with demographic variables such as age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups. Responses will be obtained through self-administration of questionnaires to the target key informants.

The study will be conducted at South port Middle School which has a student population of 1, 216 students.

#### Sampling Design:

Because the student population in Southport Middle School has a large variability with reference to these selected demographic factors, a stratified random sampling procedure will be carried out to ensure that different categories are fairly represented in the sample. In this sampling procedure, the student population will first divided into groups or strata each of which is homogeneous with respect to the given characteristic feature. From each stratum, samples will be drawn at random. It is therefore necessary to obtain a cross-tabulation of gender and racial background of the population. Once this information is established, percent distribution will be computed by dividing the frequency of each category by the total population. This will represent percent representativeness of each category in the cross-tabulation. After which, the sample size will be determined using through the table of sample sizes. Because the total number of students is 1, 216, the number of samples will be set at 291. The percent representativeness in each category will then be multiplied to the sample size to determine the number of respondents under each stratum in the cross-tabulation. Each student will be assigned a number and using a table of random numbers, the samples will be drawn without replacement.

#### Measures:

The researcher will develop a questionnaire-checklist that determines the perceptions of middle school students on the effects of the proposed school

<https://assignbuster.com/school-uniforms-policy-on-safety-and-discipline/>



uniform policy on safety and discipline in Southport Middle School. It will be comprised of two parts, namely: demographic profile of the respondent and the questionnaire proper. In the first section, the student will be asked to encircle the answer that best reflects their demographic information comprising of age, gender, monthly household income, racial background, and membership in groups. In the questionnaire proper, there will be ten questions each for the safety and discipline perceptions. The responses will depend on the students' degree of agreement or disagreement to the statements using a Likert-type scale as follows: 5- Strongly agree, 4- Agree, 3 - Undecided, 2 - Disagree, 1 - Strongly disagree. The respondents will be directed to read the statements carefully then check the box corresponding their answer. Prior to administration of the data gathering tool, it will undergo face validity and pilot testing. Details of which will be explained in the later sections of the methodology.

#### Data Collection:

Before the conduct of the study, permission will first be secured from the Dean of the Graduate School after approval of the research proposal by the Oral Examination Panel of the University. After which another letter will be addressed to the Principal of Southport Middle School in St. Lucie County stating the intention of the investigator to conduct the research at the said institution. The researcher shall set a meeting with the school administration and faculty members to discuss the details of the study which will require their cooperation and participation most specifically during data collection. Once the schedule for data gathering will be finalized, list of middle school students which will serve as the sampling frame will be procured from the <https://assignbuster.com/school-uniforms-policy-on-safety-and-discipline/>

Principal's Office so that stratified random sampling would be done prior to data gathering. All the selected students will receive written notifications that they will be part of the school-based survey. In coordination with the classroom advisers, the participants will be asked to proceed to the school auditorium so questionnaire administration can be done at the appointed time. Questionnaires will be self-administered and immediately retrieved to ensure 100% response rate. Responses to the questionnaire-checklist will be entered into the computer system and subjected to the appropriate statistical analysis techniques.

#### Data Analysis:

After administering the questionnaires, responses will be tabulated and analyzed using the appropriate approaches in data analysis. To answer the first objective which is to determine the profile of the respondents, frequency and percentage will be obtained. For the second problem, response means will be computed for individual statements for safety and discipline perceptions. Overall means for both will also be ascertained. In order to interpret the mean in each statement, its verbal description is dependent on the magnitude of its numerical value. If the statement recorded a mean of 1.00-1.80, it will indicate that the respondent strongly disagreed; 1.81-2.60, disagree; 2.61-3.40, undecided; 3.41-4.20, agree; and 4.21-5.00, strongly agree. For negatively worded statements, scoring of items will be reversed. Statistical differences in the means will be determined using Analysis of Variance and t-test for Independent Sample for multiple and two-level variables respectively.

### External Validity:

The research has high external validity because the sampling method will ensure that representative samples will be obtained from the population. In this way there would be no gender and racial bias that will be introduced resulting from sampling discrepancies.

### Peer Review Discussion:

### Expected Findings:

It is anticipated that the null hypothesis will be rejected and the research perceptions of safety and discipline among students are affected by the implementation of school uniform policies, will be supported. According to Jolly (1999) school districts across the country are considering school uniform policies because they appear to provide ready solutions to some of the aspects of school safety, gang violence, weapons in school, and assaults associated with theft of expensive clothing.

### Ethical Issues:

To protect from harm the researcher will acknowledge respect for person the participant's autonomy and obligation to respect that autonomy to protect participants with diminished autonomy from possible exploitation, and example of this would be the children. In this study Beneficence will also be applied, which obligates the researcher to protect participants from harm as well as minimize risks resulting from the research. Confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity: The researcher will make adequate provisions to ensure that participant's identities will not be revealed during the course of the research

<https://assignbuster.com/school-uniforms-policy-on-safety-and-discipline/>

or dissemination of study outcomes. Then, the students will be asked to fill the Informed Consent, which may also be needed referring to “ Assent” if the potential research participants are children of appropriate aged and have the ability to comprehend it means agreement to participate in research is needed and or waiver of assent due to age if the research involves no more than minimal risk. Finally, Justice, that requires equitable distribution by avoiding selected participants solely because they are accessible or easy to influence.

Conclusion: