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The Pros of Wearing School Uniforms

There are two major opinions in the educational systems that are opening up a lot of discussion about a big issue in Taiwan, which is whether or not the students in Taiwan have to wear school uniforms. I have seen many news reports in Taiwanese media that the Ministry of Education in Taiwan would like to change the rule of whether or not to require uniforms for high school students. The government authorities wanted the students to have more individualism, in order to respect students' body autonomy, and recognize their right to freedom. However, most people disagreed with this new policy, and started to fight against it. For the schools in Taiwan, they face a dilemma of confining students' clothing freedom or loosening the restrictions of what students can wear on campus. Both parents and students fall on both sides of the argument, some of them support the new policy while others believe it is a total disaster to the society of Taiwan. Therefore, I am wondering "What is the positive influence of students who wear school uniforms to the development of the society?" And my most important concern is, "What is the advantage for students to wear school uniforms when they are on campus?" Last but not least, I narrow down the topic by writing only about the pros in this paper.

First, wearing a uniform is easier for schools to control the students. If everyone wears different clothes, it is quite possible for strangers to get into the campus. Shu-zhen Lu is a politics and law major in her graduate school of National Taiwan Normal University. Lu mentioned that wearing uniforms is the combination

of the theory of unity, control and identity. Uniforms are a symbol that help everyone in the school to recognize other students and faculty members which allows for maintenance of campus safety (Lu 31). Take my school, Wenzao for example: The police came to Wenzao several months ago because a man wearing casual clothes was hanging around in the women's restroom on campus. My schoolmates mistook him as a university student who was servicing the women's restroom, but after the investigation, we found out that this was not true. Fortunately, tragedy did not result from this event. As can be seen, schools that allow university students to wear casual clothes, also allow strangers to easily get into campus. "Schools which have adopted policies with the stated purpose of improving the quality of education to have thus far prevailed as courts are apparently willing to permit at-risk schools, like Traner, to pilot programs aimed at providing a "safe and disciplined learning environment" (Daugherty 393).

Second, it may be uncomfortable to wear uniforms, and this seems to be affecting students' concentration and grades. However, according to David L. Brunisma, who is from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and Kerry Ann Rockquemore, who is from the University of Illinois-Chicago, "The simple fact, supported by our research and by the ETS study, is that policymakers who are interested in raising academic achievement should not count on school uniforms to deliver an academic miracle. Ultimately, we stand by our findings and look forward to future empirical analyses that build on, extend, and challenge what we already know about school uniforms: They will not increase academic achievement" (Brunisma and Rockquemore 76). In my opinion, uniforms have nothing to do with grades, but it can definitely save time and be convenient!

Next, wearing a uniform is a way for students to obey school rules, and improve the unity in the campus. If everyone wears whatever they like, people may start to compare what they are wearing instead of focusing on studying. According to Lee, Hsin-Yu, who has a master's degree in Private Chinese Culture University, "In addition to easy and the convenience of management for school authority, student uniforms also represent the sense of honor, spirit, and value of a high school. Students could also cultivate their behavior by wearing uniforms" (Lee 77). Based on current various high school uniform styles from this paper, this research focuses on girl uniforms in a private church school in Taiwan. The church school may make an effort to maintain a certain kind of sense of honor and the reputation of the school. Besides, the goal of church school is to educate students to form group identity instead of just pursuing academic performance, and this may also be a step in improving unity among students on campus.

Last but not least, wearing uniforms provides a more peaceful atmosphere and discourages bullying on campus. "Social class is based on a family's income and wealthiness. Wealth inequality should not be on the forefront of students' minds" (Lu 34). Often school uniforms are cheaper than the typical clothes that students may wear to school. When I was in elementary school, one of my classmates whose mother lived in Taipei came from a single family. Because her mom could not spend much time with her daughter, she bought her many brand-name merchandise. However, some of the classmates envied her and started to bully her. Nowadays, bullying is a serious issue. As far as I am concerned, if students are allowed to wear casual clothes to school, bullies will become more serious in the campus.

Wearing uniforms brings much more positive effects for both the school and students. The benefits of wearing uniforms are providing a safe campus, being

convenient for students, representing a sense of honor, spirit, and value of a high school, and creating no different status on campus. Before making a decision about this dispute, in my opinion, it is better to put on the uniforms instead of changing the policy rashly. Most people may say no to this topic directly before they have really thought about it; however, from now on, everyone should try to stand in others' shoes, accepting different opinions instead of denying them without considering. People's actions should be focused on figuring this issue out, and creating a win-win solution. All in all, wearing uniforms is not only one of the best parts of students' memories, but it can also bring about student success.

Work Cited

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