

Harmonizing Character Education and Academic Excellence: Unraveling the Impact of Government Regulations on School Uniforms for Enhanced Discipline, Behavior, and Student Learning Achievement

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Abstract:- Uniforms have become a tradition in educational institutions, the aim of which is to foster a sense of unity and discipline among students. The author will explore various aspects of this issue, considering different perspectives and providing a comprehensive analysis of the implications of uniforms for student behavior and vocational education. The aim of this study is to confirm the influence of the minister's stipulation of government regulations regarding school uniforms in vocational schools. Can the application of this uniform for vocational education students have a good influence in terms of character education, discipline, behavior and learning achievements of vocational education students? The research method used in this study is qualitative research because it discusses research results descriptively about related literature from previous research results. The data collection method used in this research is a literature review, data on the influence of ministerial regulations was collected from the results of research related to Ministerial Regulation No. 50 of 2022 concerning School Uniforms and their influence on character education, discipline, behavior and learning achievements of vocational education students. The influence of the regulations regarding school uniforms analyzed is generally international and is expected to have the same influence on the use of uniforms for vocational students in Indonesia. This study shows that the use of uniforms in vocational education plays a very important role in increasing discipline and professionalism. Uniforms are believed to instill a sense of responsibility and belonging among students, preparing them to face the expectations of the world of work. Wearing a work uniform in accordance with the agreed provisions, students will always try to wear the school uniform determined by the school. Uniforms have the potential to instill professionalism and a sense of belonging. The implementation of uniforms in vocational education should be carried out by considering these factors in a balanced manner, taking into account the special needs and objectives of each educational institution.

Keywords: School Uniforms, Vocational Education, Student Behavior.

1. Introduction

Uniforms have been a long-standing tradition in educational institutions, with the aim of fostering a sense of unity and discipline among students. However, the debate regarding the effectiveness of uniforms in influencing student behavior and its impact on vocational education continues to be an interesting and debated topic. This article will explore various aspects of this issue, considering different perspectives and providing a comprehensive analysis of the implications of uniforms for student behavior and vocational education. Instilling a spirit of nationalism

and discipline in students as well as improving the image of educational units at the basic education level and secondary education through formal education, it is necessary to wear school uniforms for students at the basic education level and secondary education through formal education. Accommodating the need to regulate school uniforms in accordance with national education and community development policies, the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology is given attribution authority to regulate the wearing of school uniforms in a Ministerial Regulation based on the provisions of Article 8 paragraph (2) of Law Number 12 of 2011 concerning Formation of Legislative Regulations and provisions of Article 5 and Article 6 of Government Regulation Number 17 of 2010 concerning Management and Implementation of Education as amended by Government Regulation Number 66 of 2010 concerning Amendments to Government Regulation Number 17 of 2010 concerning Management and Implementation of Education [1].

Regulation of school uniforms aims to: a) Instill and foster nationalism, togetherness and strengthen brotherhood among students b) Foster a spirit of unity and oneness among students c) Increase equality regardless of the socio-economic background of parents or guardian of students d) Increase discipline and responsibility of students. The models and colors of traditional clothing as referred to in article 4 are determined by the Regional Government by taking into account the rights of every student to practice religion and belief in the Almighty God according to their beliefs. Schools are institutions that carry out teaching and learning activities related to the educational process. Schools as formal educational organizations have the responsibility to improve the quality of education. As formal educational organizations, schools are very synonymous with things that require discipline. One of the disciplinary attitudes is the use of school uniforms. Schools officially have rules regarding the use of school uniforms for students and students for various reasons that school uniforms are a tool for discipline, neatness and orderliness for students and students in carrying out education. Through school uniforms it is also a form of discipline and does not differentiate between diverse students. Student behavior that can be seen is dressing sloppy, changing clothes, which is contrary to school regulations, examples that are often done include changing the size of the school uniform from long to short, so that the body shape is visible, wearing excessive make-up, pulling up trousers, and not wearing enough makeup neat [2].

Many students modify their school uniforms. Students do not wear neat clothes, which will result in students receiving sanctions and punishment from the school. Regarding student compliance in wearing Muslim clothing, most of them fall into the moderate category (60%), namely students deliberately modifying school uniforms outside the provisions that allow female students to shorten their clothes, use headscarves that do not cover their chests, and the habit of wearing school uniforms that fashionable to look attractive. The male students modified their trousers to make them look cool. It is recommended that parents collaborate with the school in an effort to train school discipline in wearing school uniforms [2].

Researchers are of the opinion that schools in Indonesia are still poor in terms of character formation, the educational process only involves learning knowledge as a substitute for developing attitudes and behavior. Values and norms related to national and state spirit are not internalized by students [3]–[5]. Educational institutions have not implemented the character of education well. The curriculum is not yet responsive and contextual to the need to realize the importance of an active civil society, as expected in a democratic country. Character education is not grounded due to lack of experience or discussion of cases in class. Students' diverse backgrounds, including religion, ethnicity and family, can be used as a source for discussions about character. Likewise, the social environment provides defenders a course rich in material about attitudes and behavior. A student can be molded into a change maker, hero, or sage with the help of narratives gathered in a participatory activity. Students' eyes and ears can record daily social events that occur and discuss this information as a form of rich learning material in the classroom. Techniques like this will be a powerful method in developing student character because it supports their involvement [6].

Modern nursing schools, nurses' professional identity is built on the professional attributes described by Florence Nightingale, taking into account the principles of nursing, administration, discipline and nurse training. The socialization process that builds this professional identity consists of interactions between individuals from the same group, supported by theory and practical knowledge, which guarantees the expertise of this group and,

consequently, the group members' recognition as professionals [7]. The increase in uncontrolled behavior by children, especially in adolescence, has become a concern in Indonesia [8]. Adolescence is a period where individuals are looking for identity [9]. Children at this age are very vulnerable to various pressures and negative influences from peers [10]. Student character behavior problems can occur due to the loss of boundaries between teachers and students. In comparison to the past, there are significant differences regarding students' responses to teachers. Many children and teenagers cannot differentiate between how to behave towards their peers, parents and younger people. Children who cannot control themselves because of their short thinking patterns are reactive, spontaneous and emotional [11].

Mass media as a social institution has a significant role in presenting news from the 3rd Ministerial Decree regarding the policy on the use of uniforms or attributes in schools in Indonesia. This policy makes the public, especially students, confused because there is a lot of news circulating from Kompas.com and Republika.com. [3]. Character is often associated with personal behavior, ethics, morals, or personality. The word character comes from the Greek *charassein* which means to carve. Torrave is defined as a carving or scratch [11]. Defines character as something in a person who can respond to situations and conditions in a good way [12]–[15]. Students are experiencing moral decadence which requires support for the integration of character education in learning and anticipating various obstacles to the integration of character education in learning. Supporting factors include teachers, principals, parents and inhibiting factors include teachers, principals (internal) and parents (external) [16]. Recommends that increasing discipline in implementing compliance with school rules must also be balanced with religious practices by holding Dhuha prayers and group recitations so that it will boost students' morals in a positive and religious direction [2]. Character education rooted in local Sundanese cultural wisdom. The “Special Seven Days Value Education” program is broken down into certain different habits where character formation is developed. Social construction in this research was developed on the basis of interactions between teachers, students, society and the environment. Through this model, character education as a way to adjust students' behavior, so that they become good future citizens has been determined [17].

Affirming character education helps students to discover universal values, core values, and moral education, so as to enable students to think and act in a moral scope. The content of character education includes science and morals which emphasizes moral cognition, moral emotions and moral behavior. Moral cognition views that students should be taught to recognize moral values, and should be able to predict their sensibility and influence moral behavior. Moral emotion education, students must be able to overcome existing problems of individual preferences and the influence of moral character on future behavior. Morally behavioral students must be taught to make moral judgments, identifying models of right and wrong behavior. The relationship between students' perceptions of the impact of school uniforms and students' socioeconomic status. Examination of individual survey items revealed older students were more likely to report that school uniforms helped reduce bullying and teasing, and some high school students of socioeconomic status reported that uniforms helped reduce arguments with parents about clothing. Student responses to the 10 survey items were grouped into one factor called school climate, which reflects students' perceptions of how uniforms affect the school climate. The analysis showed no significant relationship between school climate factors and socioeconomic status. However, Hispanic students reported much more positive responses overall than non-Hispanic students. These findings suggest students of varying socioeconomic status view school uniforms equally, but older students are most likely to experience the same with reduced bullying [18].

The purpose of this research is to confirm the influence of the minister's stipulation of regulations regarding school uniforms in vocational schools so that every week students and teachers must wear typical clothing for departments, scouts and local cultural or traditional clothing in accordance with local government regulations as the implementer of these material regulations. Can the application of this uniform for vocational education students have a good influence in terms of character education, discipline, behavior and learning achievements of vocational education students? Based on the results of research conducted by previous experts regarding school uniforms, it is hoped that this can become a reference for the next government policy in issuing school uniform regulations that will have a positive impact.

2. Methodology

This research is a type of qualitative research and discusses research results descriptively about related literature from previous research results. The data collection method used in this research is a literature review, data on the influence of ministerial regulations was collected from the results of research related to Ministerial Regulation No. 50 of 2022 concerning School Uniforms and their influence on character education, discipline, behavior and learning achievements of vocational education students. Literature on the influence of the use of uniforms in schools internationally from previous research results is also a reference in this study. The influence of the regulations regarding school uniforms analyzed is generally international and is expected to have the same influence on the use of uniforms for vocational students in Indonesia. The results of research on the influence of school uniforms, 10 articles after filtering according to the topic, were collected and analyzed for their respective effects on character education, discipline, behavior and learning achievements of vocational education students. Then it is discussed in the analysis as a basis for drawing conclusions and recommendations.

3. Results and Discussion

One of the main arguments in favor of uniforms in vocational education is their role in enhancing discipline and professionalism. Uniforms are believed to instill a sense of responsibility and belonging among students, preparing them to face the expectations of the world of work. In a vocational school environment, such as a technical school or trade program, uniforms can simulate a professional environment and help students develop a mindset that is conducive to their future careers. Uniforms can minimize distractions related to clothing choices, allowing students to focus more on their vocational training and education.

Building character through the teacher model at SD Negeri 2 Gelumbang succeeded in cultivating positive character in students. Starting with strengthening the personal character of teachers because school principals and teachers believe that teachers who have positive character will make students feel more confident and grow in personality character. Furthermore, the model is manifested in polite speech, attitudes based on religious character, discipline (both time discipline and school discipline), democracy, nationalism, behaving gratefully to God Almighty, caring for the environment and society, all efforts to shape student character through The teacher's model is not instant but is carried out continuously and consistently [17], [19]–[21].

3.1. Teachers as Models in Building Student Character

Another way teachers instill character in students is by wearing work uniforms in accordance with agreed provisions. The use of uniforms for teachers will result in a lack of information for students, so students will always try to wear school uniforms determined by the school. Students will be embarrassed if they make mistakes or violate school rules if they wear uniforms. Wearing comfortable clothes is also an act of character discipline that teachers try to exemplify to students. Uniforms for teachers are not only ordinary uniforms but also professional identities and student uniforms. It is hoped that wearing a school uniform will make students feel proud of their identity. discipline in the uniform of a deep-rooted sense of pride and the need to continue the habituation of values, as well as the transfer of understanding applied by teachers to students, then they will also have the same thoughts and feelings [22]–[25].

The teacher's disciplined character arrives on time to teach class and goes home according to the schedule determined by the school unless there are other sudden things. Teachers' uniforms are adjusted to the applicable rules, such as wearing official uniforms on Mondays, black and white uniforms on Wednesdays, and sports uniforms on Saturdays. The democratic character of teachers never differentiates between students who have different social and economic backgrounds [26]–[28]. Effect of uniforms One of the main claims in previous research is that school uniforms help improve behavior, defined by attendance rates, reported offenses and bullying, and safety defined by measures of gang presence, violence and bullying in schools. Many researchers have studied whether uniforms have an effect on bullying, gang violence and other disciplinary problems [29].

Character education is an important part of building a nation of character through education. The character of the nation will be formed in accordance with its uniqueness and national identity when the involvement of government

structures provides policies that make it important for all elements of society to be actively involved. Character education is needed in an era of openness [30]. is the main originator of character education who believes in the existence of absolute morals, so absolute morals need to be taught to the younger generation of society so that they truly understand what is good and right. Character education has a higher meaning than moral education, because it does not just teach what is right and what is wrong. More than that, character education instills habits (habits) about good things so that students become understanding (cognitive) about what is right and wrong, able to feel (affective) good values and want to do them (psychomotor). As Aristotle said, character is closely related to "habit" or habits that are continuously practiced and practiced [31]. Based on research that has been conducted, there is no significant influence of age and experience on the teaching effectiveness of teachers in developing character education for Integrated Islamic Elementary School students in North Sumatra Province. This proves that the higher the teacher's age does not significantly influence the higher the efficacy of their teaching. Teachers' higher experience does not significantly influence their teaching effectiveness. Aspects of religiosity, there is a significant influence of religiosity on teachers' teaching efficacy in developing the character education of Integrated Islamic Elementary School students in North Sumatra. Statistically, religiosity shows a significant influence on teaching effectiveness. This shows that the higher the level of teacher religiosity, the higher the effectiveness of teaching in developing integrated character education for Islamic School Students in North Sumatra Province [31]–[34].

3.2. Perceptions of School Uniforms Related to Socioeconomic Status

This research also supports the claim that uniforms help to reduce bullying and can reduce conflict between parents and children regarding clothing choices. Ultimately supporting the idea that school uniforms contribute to a more positive school climate even with relatively high SES populations. Most schools that have uniform policies have larger low SES populations [35], but research conducted in schools with lower populations of low SES students shows communities with higher SES populations also experience the same thing supports uniform policies [18]. One of the main arguments in favor of uniforms in vocational education is their role in increasing discipline and professionalism. Uniforms are believed to instill a sense of responsibility and belonging among students, preparing them to face the expectations of the world of work. In vocational environments, such as technical schools or trade programs, uniforms can simulate a professional environment and help students develop a mindset that is conducive to their future careers. Uniforms can minimize distractions related to clothing choices, allowing students to focus more on their vocational training and education.

Research on how school uniforms affect families also appears to be more consistent than academic or behavioral research. Researchers have found that most parents tend to view the use of school uniforms as reducing preparation time in the morning, arguments about clothing and financial burdens on the family [36]–[38]. That a child's clothing values are influenced by their parents' clothing values [36]–[38]. Parents who choose to have their children attend schools may require the same uniform values regarding clothing regardless of their educational attainment or qualifications. These values can be passed on to their children, which may explain why there is not much difference in how students of different SES (social economic status) perceive the impact of school uniforms suggesting that uniforms may help hide some signs of low SES, which may encourage students not to classify themselves with low academic grades. The fact that this study shows little SES variation in the perceived impact of uniforms on academics may support Wiederkehr's idea that high and low SES students who wear uniforms do not understand their socioeconomic differences and therefore perceive their academic worth as equal.

Many of these students have been at this school since kindergarten and have not had much experience finding peers to socialize with by judging others' clothing. The SES of students is disguised by school uniforms, it helps all students appear equal in this regard. Suggest students look for peer groups of similar SES, which they first see through clothing. The fact that this study had similar results from a wide range of student SES may suggest that students socialize with peers with a wider variety of SES. This variety of socialization can increase a sense of belonging at school because the fear of not being accepted is reduced from social groups of peers of different SES [39], [40].

3.3. Effects of Character Education Based on Student Age

The impact on character education is greatest for high school students, the second largest for middle school students, and the smallest for elementary school students. This trend is especially visible in measures of academic achievement. These results are very striking considering the large percentage of efforts to place character education in schools carried out at the elementary school and kindergarten levels. There are two possible explanations for these results: (a) Character education may simply have a greater impact on adolescent students than it impacts younger students (b) The results of character education may be so strong at the secondary school level because it has a cumulative effect and is captured by research is this aggregate effect. Regarding the first point, these findings reflect the fact that adolescents face broader issues such as moral decisions that include premarital physical acts of intimacy, illegal drugs, alcohol consumption, and other consequential choices for which character training can be especially helpful and beneficial. . The second point is that a number of studies included in this meta-analysis that examined character education in high school have had character teaching in place for several years. Considering this meta-analysis also shows that longer initiatives are associated with stronger results, it is likely that the larger impact for middle school students reflects, in part, the possibility of a cumulative phenomenon [41].

3.4. The Effect of Character Education on Achievement and Behavior

The explanation for the finding that character influences achievement and behavior certainly makes sense. In fact, the degree to which each argument seems logical is such that further research should be conducted to determine the extent to which each of these factors is at work [42]. One of the most prominent patterns in the data is the extent to which education is characterized is associated with higher academic outcomes in almost all subject majors and is also associated with almost all types of positive behavioral outcomes. From this meta-analysis it will be seen that there is a relationship between character education and scholastic and behavioral education. The results are quite extensive. The fact that it is influential for character education to adhere to so many specific scholastic and behavioral outcomes seems to provide the impetus for further research on this topic and the implementation of character education programs. The meta-analysis also likely provides insight into why educators for more than 2,000 years of doing so have placed so much faith in the efficacy of character education [42].

This externalization process will give rise to students' opinions and attitudes towards the character of the educational program. Habituation occurs in students as a process of adapting to new rules. The results of the research are that students have new habits, namely waking up early, throwing rubbish in its place, praying and reciting the Koran without having to be told by their parents, eating healthy food, caring for plants, fasting sunnah Mondays and Thursdays, and being more independent in taking care of their own needs. Character education is carried out by getting used to positive behavior and staying away from negative behavior [43], [44]. To get used to it at school, there are rules and regulations prepared regarding the implementation of teaching and learning activities at school. The principal and teachers are role models for students, so that the principal and teachers set an example. The results show that there is a statistically significant relationship between character education teaching and overall student outcomes. Overall, the results of the meta-analysis indicate a relationship between character education for kindergarten through adolescent freshmen as expressed in combined academic and behavioral outcomes. The results presented use analysis based on the assumption of random errors. The reason for presenting these results is rather than using fixed errors. The assumption is to use an analysis that produces a more conservative effect size [45]. As expected, analyzes based on fixed error assumptions yielded larger impact sizes [41]. Some indications are that the relationship may be somewhat worse between teaching character and student behavior than with education and achievement, especially for young children. These findings are consistent with what would be expected, considering that character instruction inherently prioritizes the hearts and behavior of adolescents rather than their academic outcomes [46], [47].

3.5. Student Uniforms Professional Identity Development Strategy

The uniform used at EEAN(Anna Nery Nursing School (Escola de Enfermagem Anna Nery or EEAN)) in the period under study constitutes a structure whose elements are important because they are interconnected by a set of collective standards, which are mainly expressed in the rituals that sanctify their use, which regulates the order

of things on its wearer, granting it value as clothing. This research has dimensions in other fields of study, for example historiography, sociology, anthropology, social sciences and fashion, as discussed in this theme, beyond the meaning of clothing, its relationship to the formation of professional group identity and more specifically the case of the identity of nurses trained by EEAN through the use of uniforms at graduation. These uniforms are discussed here, considering the set of elements that show the history of problems, social and cultural life of a group and society at that time, thus allowing for an understanding of social relations, life and daily realities that are built through their use. Though the method chosen for research has a defined place, time and group, nurses' representations of identity should trigger reflection about professional and academic practice. This reflection makes this theme a current issue, considering the ongoing identity crisis in the nursing category and in the health sector as a whole. That uniforms are a strategy for determining identity professional qualities in the daily reality of lectures at EEAN, according to former students, is one element of the prominent position and behavior of this group, allowing the graduating nurses to understand their possible roles in society at that time. Many authors agree that identity acquisition is a continuous process that changes over time [7].

Opponents of uniforms argue that uniforms limit students' expression of individuality and creativity. Vocational education, where students are encouraged to explore their talents and develop practical skills, some believe that uniforms can stifle the diverse forms of creativity that are important in certain vocational fields. For example, in a design or culinary program, personal expression through clothing and presentation may be considered an integral part of the learning process. The implementation of uniforms has the potential to deter students who feel that their individuality is not valued or respected. Another aspect to consider is the role of uniforms in promoting equality and social cohesion in vocational institutions. Removing markers of socioeconomic status, uniforms can create a more inclusive environment, where students are judged on their abilities and character, not on their clothing. This is important in vocational education, which often attracts students from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Uniforms can contribute to a sense of unity and belonging, enhancing a shared identity among students regardless of their personal circumstances.

3.6. Differential Relationships Between Characteristics and Educational Outcomes

Studies of the relationship between character strengths and achievement have relied almost exclusively on school overall achievement, or GPA. The first clue to the difference in relationships is represented by the finding that character strengths are generally related to core grades in academic subjects compared to grades in non-academic subjects for example, physical education and the arts [48]. Academic achievement is not a unidimensional construct and therefore, using overall school achievement or using only school grades as a criterion may not allow for uncovering relationships with specific components of achievement. This idea is supported by findings that show the nature of the relationship between different outcomes of the personality dimensions of the five-factor model for Teacher-centered learning is characterized by the teacher's primary role in the presentation of lesson content, either in the form of lecture presentations or through moderated conversations in class. When working on individual assignments, students work on their assignments independently. Group work is characterized by students working together on tasks in groups. Different social environments characterize these different learning situations: Teacher-centered learning usually involves primarily interaction with the teacher, with the entire class present. Individual work has minimal interaction with others and a singular focus on the assigned task. In contrast, Occupational groups are characterized by a lot of interaction with peers and a need for cooperation [49].

Perspective character strengths and teamwork were positively related to teacher- and self-rated performance in group work. Traits are narrower than character strengths, and traits such as teamwork in particular, may be more congruent than broader, "neutral" dimensions of suitability. describe individual differences that are relevant to performing well on tasks completed in groups. However, the character's strong love and kindness were not related to teacher and self-assessment of achievement in group work. These two strengths have been found to be of particular relevance for positive peer relationships in the classroom [48], but it appears that these advantages do not necessarily extend to improved performance in situations that require collaboration with peers related to the flow of experiences in learning different situations. Character strengths show different patterns of relationships such as love of learning, which was related more strongly to flow in individual than in task groups, or self-

regulation, which showed the strongest relationship to flow in individual tasks), many others showed associations across a variety of learning situations. Strengths can be assumed to be conducive to entering a flow state (such as enthusiasm or hope) or remaining in a flow state in the face of disruption (such as persistence or self-regulation; see [50], [51]).

Learning situations vary in their demands, types, and amounts of social interaction which should then be considered as contextual factors in understanding relationships this complex. Strength-related behavior varies as expected in different learning situations. The three learning situations we studied represent only one of many aspects in which achievement and positive learning experiences may vary in characteristics, such as subject content as well as relationships with the classmates and teachers involved, perhaps of equal importance. Nonetheless, performing well across different types of social interactions may also be relevant later in life, such as in university education or in the workplace. The findings may also have implications for character strengths related to various aspects of performance in adulthood [52]. The role of students' character strengths in predicting educational outcomes beyond the influence of cognitive abilities. Specifically that which students perform well and have positive experiences of different situations at school, regardless of their intelligence? focused on three learning situations and the results showed that the associations differed between the two situations. Character strengths are quite relevant when predicting different educational outcomes and a narrow definition of strengths allows for differential relationships to be depicted [49].

3.7. The Impact of Uniforms on Educational Outcomes

Wearing a uniform looks simple. but the questions that arise within it are complex and complex regarding deep views of what is normal, traditional, and socially acceptable. Uniform use has real impacts on health and education, both good and bad. Uniforms are an appropriate diagnosis for creating environmentally just learning, providing cost-effective clothing compared to career learning student clothing, and reducing competitive psychological pressure. The efficacy and effectiveness of uniforms as a vehicle for equitable access to education and good health depends on the right prescription for uniform policies and garment designs that eliminate the potential negative impacts on poor communities of garment designs and policies. A public health perspective reveals that many school uniform design and garment use policies negatively impact poor communities, girls, religious and ethnic minorities, and gender diverse students. It is a sad irony that it is precisely this group who can benefit most from the fair access to education that uniforms are supposed to facilitate. Showing how environmental hazards, health and safety concerns, and clothing comfort are ignored by all uniform wearers. There is no negative impact on education and health of school uniform design and clothing policies. Evidence of the impact of uniforms on health and education provides a starting point for ensuring uniforms are healthy and promote education to the greatest extent possible and take advantage of the benefits uniforms offer. Examining the evidence on how uniforms and the impact uniform policies have on students' health and wellbeing, it will be easier to develop a general idea of the purpose of school uniforms, with a view to improving the quality of the wearer's experience. If uniforms have an impact on education and health there is clearly a possibility to improve the experience of the wearer to ensure that clothing is desirable, fair, healthy, and safe and good clothing policy for all students to learn and thrive in modern life [53].

There needs to be a change in the educational paradigm in the future, not only producing students who are intelligent and virtuous, but also those who are active in developing their nation and state in the global community. State interests including budget policies, government regulations and curriculum need to be reviewed. So that it does not reduce the school's creativity in adding local wisdom to educational aspects and giving students the competencies needed to engage with real life. The government should not play the role of "owner" of schools demanding compliance, but as a "facilitator" of education that supports needs in order to achieve its vision and mission. With the autonomy status obtained by the school, it will provide a conducive climate for the school to emerge various approaches to character education that are based on their respective ideologies of difference. This diversity will lead to personality enrichment and enable educated people to identify and solve problems with a more comprehensive approach [6].

Shaping the character of school students should not only be done through learning activities but also designing planned non-academic activities. The non-academic character education pattern is implemented through two activities. The first is habituation activities including the routine smile day program, ant operation (ant operation), reading the Koran, uflag-raising events, and short-term Islamic boarding schools. The second is carrying out extracurricular activities which include scouting, choir, dance and drama, scientific creativity clubs, etc. These non-academic activities have a positive impact on the formation of students' positive character. Students are accustomed to practicing religious values such as honesty, tolerance, discipline, hard work, creativity, independence, democracy, curiosity, love of the country, communicative, love of peace, environmental care, social care, and responsibility in daily activities [6]. Character education, both through academic and non-academic programs, facilitates students in improving their achievements in terms of knowledge, skills, and behavior or character. Through educational character, students are expected to have positive values including religious, honest, tolerant, disciplined, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious, nationalist, love of the country, respectful, good academically, friendly, love of peace. , bookish, environmentally conscious, socially concerned, and responsible [54].

The formation of student character through non-academic activities is an educational character that is integrated into extracurricular activities and routine activities. Extracurricular activities are carried out through educational activities outside of subjects to help the development of students in accordance with their needs, potential, talents and interests through activities organized specifically by competent and authorized educators and education staff at the school [55]. Character education can be implemented through various methods. Character education can be applied through three methods. The first is the knowing method, which provides knowledge about the importance of practicing positive character values. Through this method, character education can be packaged through the delivery of information at every opportunity and can be integrated into learning. The second is the practice method, namely direct practice of character values. The last one is the habituation method, namely continuous and routine practice of character values in daily activities [55].

The pattern of student character education through non-academic programs at vocational schools has a positive impact in shaping student character. The principle applied is "forced and accustomed to". to" turned out to be successful in getting students used to practicing positive character. Through the development of discipline and extracurricular activities, students were trained to directly practice character values, including religion, honesty, tolerance, discipline, hardworking, creative, independent, democratic, curious. , love of the homeland, friendly/communicative, love of peace, environmental care, social care, and responsibility consistently and continuously. The success of the character education program at SMKN 2 Palembang City can be seen from several things, such as the strength of the program (concept), leadership factors, system factors, competency factors, and supporting factors for student parents and other stakeholders [3].

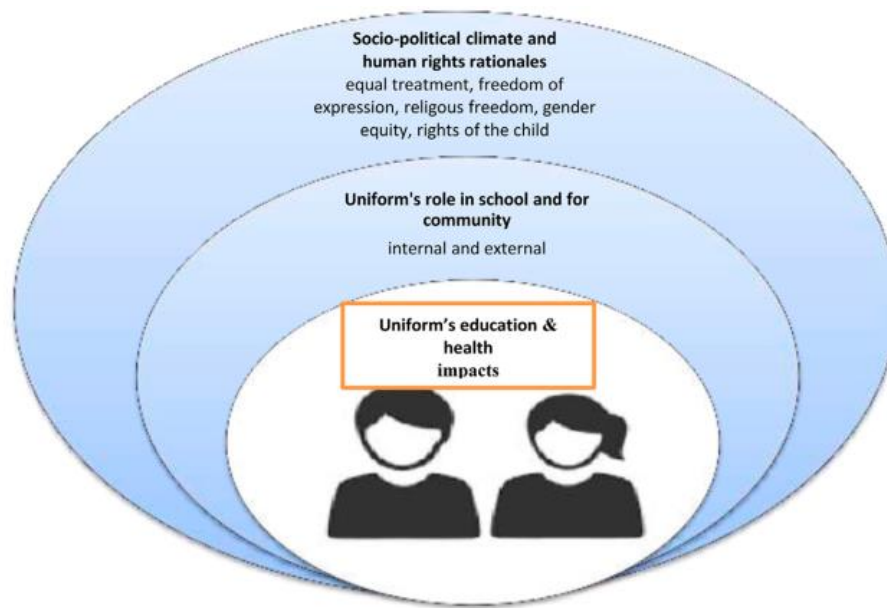


Figure 1. Organization of evidence regarding uniform use.

3.8. Exploring the Social, Cultural and Political Reasons for Wearing Uniforms

Uniforms do not have a positive effect on academic achievement and can have a negative impact on physical and psychosocial health, what drives their use? Why are known issues in uniform policy and design addressed? To answer these questions, it is important to consider the broader context in which uniforms are used. The literature that answers these questions can be divided into three groups. The first group examines the role of uniforms in institutions and society; secondly, the interaction between human rights and uniforms; the third is a uniform relationship with the idea of children as a vulnerable group of people who need special protection. Institutions, human rights law and society's perceptions of children and childhood are important determinants of health and educational outcomes. All of the above elements contribute to broader social arrangements that facilitate or prevent access to what people need to enjoy good health and education [53].

a. Uniforms as a Reflection of School and Society

Schools are institutional extensions of overlapping communities: geographic, religious, or ethnic. Societal norms reflect broader institutional and societal regulations. Uniform signals of internal culture to students and provide cues to outsiders about the character of the school. Uniforms reinforce the culture of the institution, signaling the school's values to students, thereby identifying the wearer with a purpose beyond the self. Along with school facilities and symbols, a disciplined student body is associated with certain types of clothing. Uniforms contribute to students' sense of affiliation, belonging, and pride in the school, especially after the recent introduction of uniforms. Affiliation is related to solidarity; but there seems to be a tipping point where solidarity is undermined if uniforms are too expensive and exclude students. Charter school students where he studied in America, the uniform alone is one element to increase participation and is less important than other variables such as family dynamics. Claims about uniforms fostering solidarity are not supported by empirical research on students' feelings of belonging in school contexts. Research on school belonging has found no significant relationship between school uniforms and a sense of belonging to a school community. Rather, a sense of belonging is fostered by a supportive, respectful atmosphere. Uniforms also signify tradition, and communicate their place in educational institutions to outsiders, especially the discipline and academic climate of a school. The factors that influence a school's choice to require uniforms are in turn influenced by broader socio-political climate and human rights forces [56], [57].

b. Wider Forces: Socio-Political Climate

Individual health and educational impacts uniformly lie in the broader school culture, which in turn is influenced by the broader socio-political context, influenced by societal values. A country's history, power structures, and socio-economic patterns thus play a role through uniforms. Dominant societal values are the lens through which human rights and other implicit and explicit values are projected. Wearing a uniform can be intrinsic to the greater good, or instrumental in achieving other goals. With this in mind, is there any data on the socio-political factors that influence uniform design and garment policy? Uniform designs and policies slowly change along with social changes and developments in educational policy. So, New Zealand, uniform design has changed along with New Zealand educational policies and socio-political context [49].

Wearing a uniform is a form of government, a process of subconscious internalization of external values designed to maintain existing power structures. In this way the uniform is a “disciplinary tactic” that embodies honor, cleanliness, humility, and inoffensiveness. Conformity means meeting the standards of an institution, explicitly serving ideals of equality, and implicitly preserving the power dynamics of society expressed through institutions. The use of uniforms seems to be closely related to the greater good of society. High PISA scores are associated with well-disciplined classrooms, which are intrinsically linked to broader societal values. The authors hypothesize that in South Korea and Japan, Confucian values of self-discipline and conformity to ritual inform practical aspects of daily life. Conforming to social norms is part of being a good Confucian; thus, any penalty for violating uniform standards (social norms) is explicitly and intrinsically linked to becoming a better Confucian [53].

c. Uniforms and Freedom of Expression for Children and Adolescents

Freedom of expression is one area of human rights that often experiences uniform clashes. The right to freedom of expression may be restricted with respect to the rights and reputation of others, the protection of national security, and public order. Freedom of expression is given weight according to the child's age and development. Some people argue that school uniforms are inherently restrictive, arguing that school uniforms inhibit the right to expression and normal exploration of identity, constitute an intrusive control of group behavior and symbolize oppression [53]. Looking at expressions and developmental stages, self-expression is divided into two categories: mere expression, and substantive expression. Mere expressions are simply about what someone likes/dislikes, while substantive expressions are an outward manifestation of deeply held values or other specific intentions. Young children lack the cognitive ability to express substantively because they do not have the psychological capacity to do so. Children need time to think about being their moral selves. School uniforms provide explicit teachable moments, opportunities to think using different moral frameworks to examine the social usefulness of different clothing and freedom of expression in context, and children's understanding and critical thinking about the social appropriateness of clothing that improves learning outcomes [3].

4. Conclusions

The implementation of government regulations regarding the use of uniforms in vocational education has many implications, including considerations of discipline, individuality, equality and social cohesion. While uniforms have the potential to instill professionalism and a sense of belonging, they also raise concerns about limiting creativity and self-expression. The implementation of uniforms in vocational education should be carried out by considering these factors in a balanced manner, taking into account the special needs and objectives of each educational institution. Decisions regarding uniforms should prioritize students' overall well-being and development in their vocational fields. The results of this study suggest that teachers and leaders need to revisit the potential value of character teaching. Further research on this topic requires broader implementation of character education. Greater utilization of character instruction will likely result in several benefits such as, further practicing character instruction will result in academic outcomes in school and behavioral benefits in the community. Further moral and behavioral studies will be facilitated. Today's schools will act more consistently with strategies that benefit both the school and society.

Recommendation: Based on an analysis of various perspectives and research findings, it is apparent that the debate surrounding school uniforms is multifaceted and complex. Future research in this area should focus on longitudinal studies, qualitative assessments and comparative analyzes across different educational settings.

Policymakers and educators should engage in inclusive discussions with students, parents, and community members to consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of implementing or revising uniform policies. The influence of school uniforms on various educational and social aspects of students needs to be studied further.

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The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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