



HOMELAND GHANA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM PROGRAM

STUDENTS SURVEY REPORT

N=10

NOVEMBER 2024

INTRODUCTION

Homeland Ghana Educational Foundation conducted a detailed survey to understand students' perspectives on their school wear. With the support of teachers, the survey evaluated the academic performance, behaviour, and class participation of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The survey focused on children between the ages of four and ten years.

Teachers also participated in the survey to ensure comprehensive feedback. The primary objective was to help the foundation assess the impact of school uniforms on children's academic performance and social interaction.

Respondents were interviewed, and teachers recorded their responses on the questionnaires on behalf of the students. The questionnaires consisted of two sections: the teachers' assessment of the students and the students' opinions on their school attire.

This survey report includes a summary, analysis of results, conclusions, and recommendations to help the foundation support students.

BACKGROUND

Students' experiences at school are shaped by their sense of belonging and inclusion among classmates. Students who enjoy going to school value the chance to learn and interact with friends. Others attend school primarily because their parents require it, which can sometimes lead to less positive experiences. These students may feel excluded or disconnected, especially if their school attire sets them apart.

Standardised uniforms were introduced to promote a sense of equality among students. However, children from less privileged backgrounds may sometimes wear uniforms that are worn out or do not fit properly. Often, these uniforms are hand-me-downs from relatives and may not always be in the best condition. This can lead to feelings of self-consciousness and impact on their confidence.

Homeland Ghana Educational Foundation surveyed to explore how school uniforms influence students' social and academic experiences, aiming to enhance inclusion and a sense of belonging for all students.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Attitude Towards School:** 80% of students have a positive attitude, enjoying the chance to learn and make friends, which helps their growth and sense of belonging. However, 20% feel excluded and disconnected, leading to low enthusiasm and motivation.
2. **Clothing and Uniforms:** One-third (33%) of students, especially those from less advantaged backgrounds, wear hand-me-down uniforms from siblings. Despite uniform policies, 67% dress differently from their peers.
3. **Impact of Non-Standard Uniforms:** 90% of students say wearing non-standard uniforms causes social pressure, sadness, and feeling like an outsider, which hurts their learning and social engagement.
4. **Influences on Learning Readiness:** Peer pressure, personal goals, and resilience all play a role. While 40% feel pressured to match their peers' appearance, 60% stay focused on making their parents proud or succeeding despite challenges.
5. **Benefits of New Uniforms:** All students agree that new uniforms would boost their confidence, sense of belonging, and peer relationships. This would improve their self-esteem, motivation, and participation in school activities, creating a more supportive environment.
6. **Challenges Affecting Students:** For 5 out of 8 students, a lack of stationery and reading materials affects behaviour and academic performance. For 1 out of 8 students, their confidence and appearance significantly impact class participation.

ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

Assessing Students' Attitudes Toward School

80% of students enjoy going to school because it gives them the chance to learn and spend time with friends and teachers. For these students, school helps them grow academically, build friendships, and feel included.

Teachers' assessments show that 7 out of 10 students behave well, 5 out of 10 regularly participate in class, and 7 out of 10 have shown academic improvement compared to the previous term. However, teachers believe they could perform even better with the confidence and sense of belonging that a proper uniform might provide.

However, 20% of students do not enjoy school because they feel left out or different from their classmates. This makes them less enthusiastic and motivated to attend.

Figure 1:

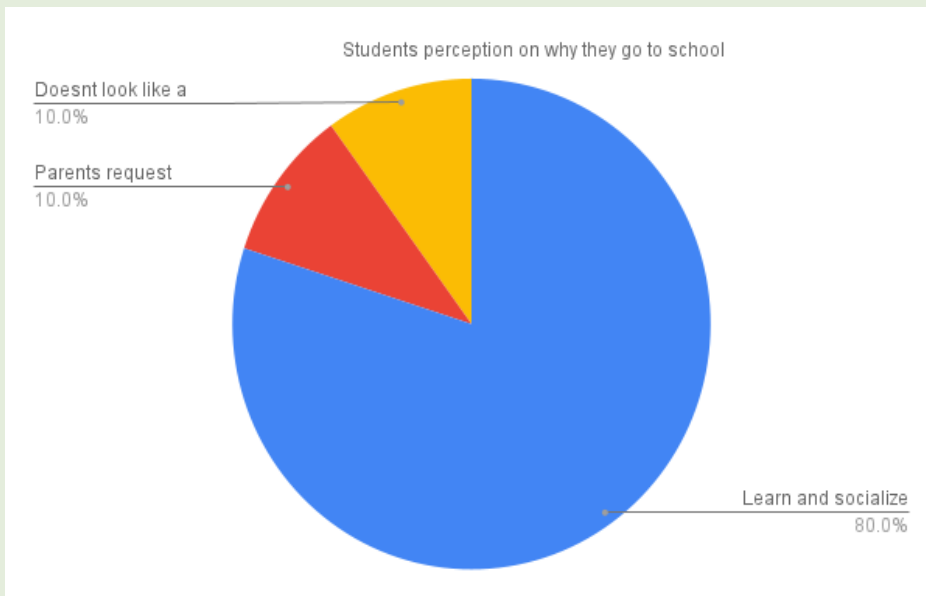
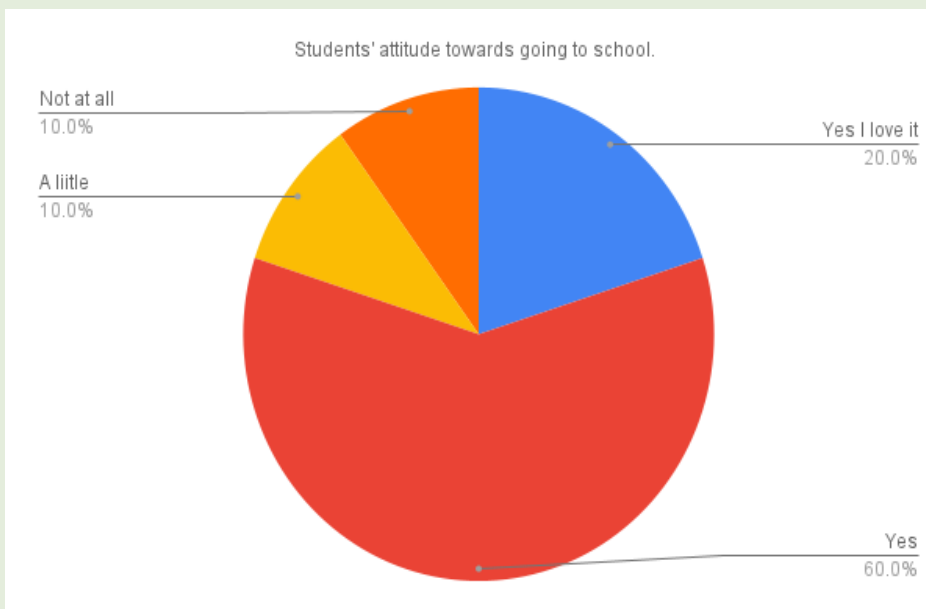


Figure 2:



Students' Views on Their School Uniforms

When asked about their school uniforms, students gave and the following responses:

- 1 in 10 students felt “happy.”
- 5 in 10 students felt “okay.”
- 2 in 10 students felt “sad” or “very sad.”

These feelings are linked to the fact that 67% of students wear uniforms that differ from their peers, while 33% wear hand-me-downs. Although reusing clothes is practical, these uniforms may not fit well or might be torn, which affects students’ confidence.

Some students are teased or treated differently because of their uniforms, leading to a sense of inequality. Ensuring all children have proper uniforms can help them feel included and create a positive, supportive learning environment.

Figure 3:

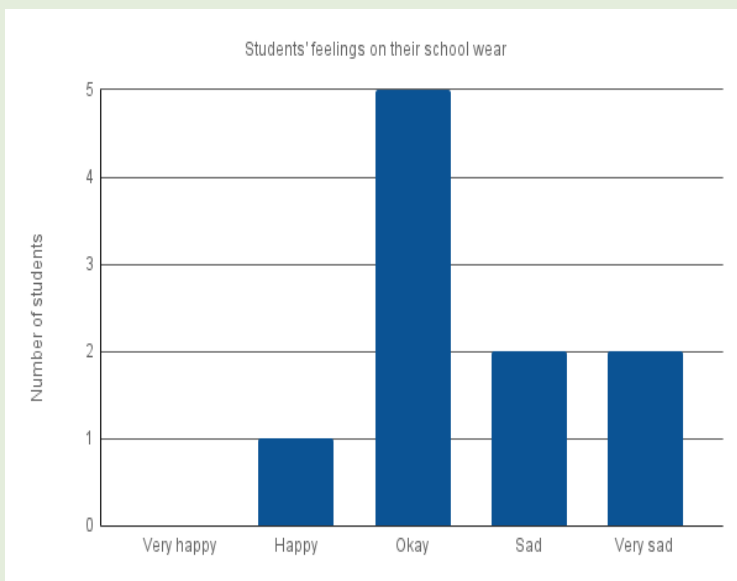
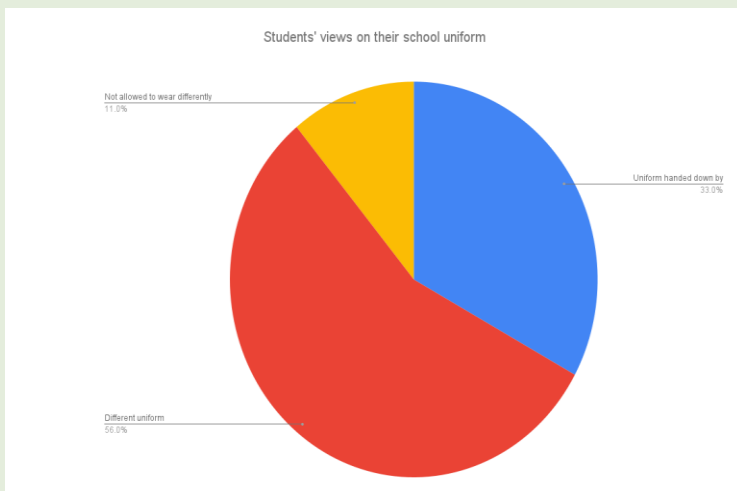


Figure 4:

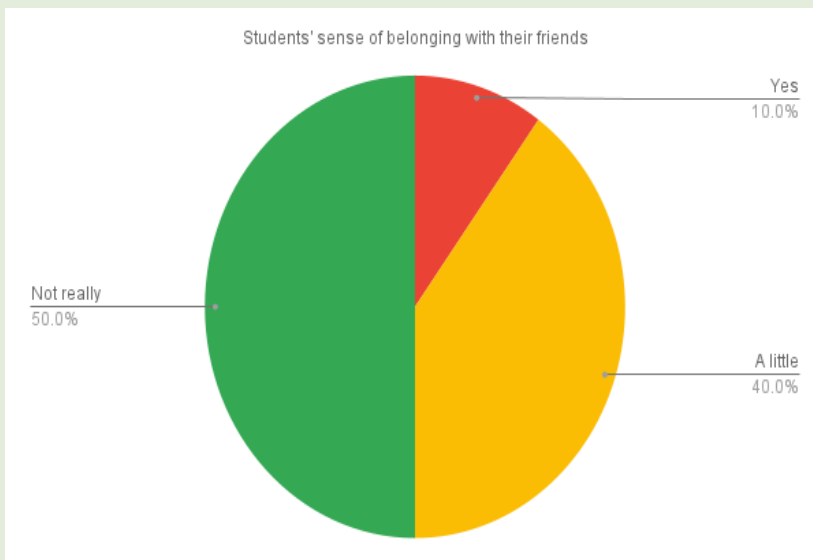


The Role of School Uniforms in Building Peer Belonging

The survey showed that 90% of students felt they didn't fit in with their friends because of differences in their school uniforms. Many faced teasing or were treated differently, which made it harder for them to participate socially or academically.

Over time, feeling excluded can lead to sadness and low self-esteem, as students may start to believe their appearance makes them less worthy. These challenges can impact both their learning and overall well-being.

Figure 5:

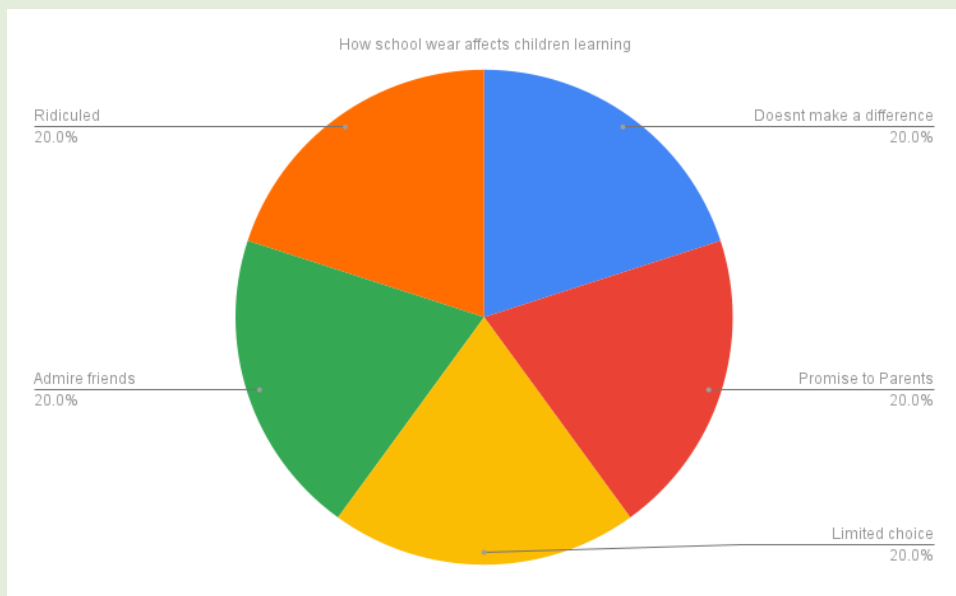


The Effect of School Uniforms on Learning Readiness

Students shared different views on how their clothing affects their ability to learn:

- **Peer Influence and Acceptance:** 20% of students feel pressured to dress like their peers to fit in, which affects their self-esteem and shifts their focus from learning to appearance. Another 20% face teasing, which also impacts their confidence and learning.
- **Commitment to Parents and Goals:** 40% of students wear what they have because it's their only option. Despite this, they stay motivated to work hard, driven by a desire to make their parents proud and improve their future.
- **Contentment and Resilience:** 20% of students are less concerned with peer comparisons and focus on their belief that hard work will lead to better opportunities. Their dedication to academics earns respect from their peers over time.

Figure 6

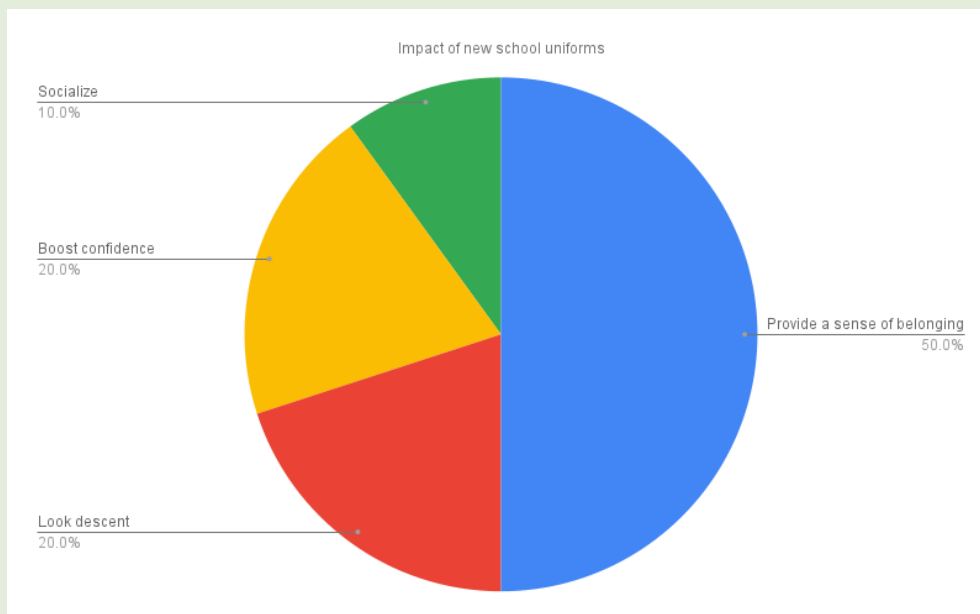


Students Reactions to Receiving New School Uniforms

All students were confident that new school uniforms would improve how they felt about going to school. Half of the students believe new uniforms would help them feel more included, while 20% feel it would boost their confidence.

Standardised uniforms remove differences between students, helping them feel neat and presentable, which positively affects their self-esteem. These students are more likely to engage with their peers and participate confidently in school activities. Overall, this increases their enthusiasm and motivation to attend school.

Figure 7:



CONCLUSION

When school uniforms aren't the same, students may feel left out and isolated, which affects their well-being and causes them to develop a negative attitude toward school. Creating a sense of belonging is important for their success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide standardised uniforms for all students, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, to promote inclusivity, improve friendships, and boost students' confidence and excitement for school.
2. Ensure funding for uniforms in schools so no student is excluded or made fun of because of their clothes and create guidelines to help schools implement these programs effectively.
3. Schools should have programs to teach students to show empathy and understanding toward their peers.
4. Provide learning materials like exercise books, textbooks, and stationery to support students in need.

FINAL THOUGHTS

School uniforms are more than just a dress code; they promote equality and help students feel a sense of belonging. Providing free uniforms to students in need will positively impact their learning and relationships with classmates.