#1 AGGREGATED DATA

Educational attainment data collected by states aggregate data for all Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students regardless of their ethnicity. However, the AAPI population is made up of 48 ethnicities, all of which have different cultures, historical, educational, religious, and financial backgrounds.\(^1\)

As a Result...

- The real and individual experiences of AAPI, including Southeast Asian students, are overshadowed by aggregated data.
- The lack of disaggregated data denies Southeast Asian students access to resources supporting their educational success.

#2 EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES & ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

SEA Lack of High School Diploma in U.S.

- 39.6% of Hmong Adults over age of 25
- 38.5% of Cambodian Adults
- 34.3% of Laotian Adults

SEA Bachelor's Degree Attainment in U.S.

Lowest:

- Hmong (7.5%)
- Laotian (7.9%)
- Cambodian (9.2%)

Highest:

- Asian Indian (63.9%)
- Pakistani (54.3%)
- Chinese (48.1%)

Among the most economically disadvantaged are Cambodian, Hmong, and Laotian war refugees from the rural regions of Southeast Asia, many of whom struggle with long-term poverty, language and literacy issues, and post-traumatic stress disorders associated with their forced migration.\(^2\)

- SEA college students, as a group, experience challenges like poverty, language barriers, and cultural tension, which hinder them from excelling in academic work.\(^3\)
- SEA students experience intergenerational conflict, which occurs when SEA students' acculturation is not guided by their parents whose acculturation has not "caught up" to that of their children.\(^4\)

#3 THE MODEL MINORITY MYTH

The Model Minority myth is a stereotype suggesting:

- All Asian students are high academic achievers and perform at a better rate than white students.
- Asians are naturally good at math.
- All Asian families perceive education to be highly valued.
- All Asians are the same and possess the same culture, language and appearance and perform the same when it comes to academic achievement.
- Asians do not experience and suffer from racial discrimination like others.\(^8\)

Although the myth appears to be a positive foundation for AAPIs and diligence and a hard work ethic can be seen as positive characteristics, these aspects of the myth can encourage AAPIs to adopt or internalize the model minority stereotype.\(^9\) AAPI students who have real barriers may also try to conform to the myth resulting in increased stress and pressure.\(^10\)


10 Museus, S. D., & Kiang, P. N. (2009). The model minority myth and how it contributes to the invisible minority reality in higher education research. In S. D. Museus (Ed.), *Conducting research on Asian Americans in higher education*. New Directions for Institutional Research (No. 142, pp. 5-15). San