

Debunking Model Minority Education Myths

The model minority myth claims that Asians are the most successful among non-White groups. It assumes all Asians to be smart (i.e. naturally good at math, science, and technology), wealthy, hard-working, self-reliant, docile, submissive, obedient, uncomplaining, and not needing assistance (The University of Texas, 2019).

Model minority myths use the accomplishments of certain minority groups to diminish racism (Low, 2021). This process creates tensions between different non-White communities, because it undermines the role racism plays in achieving success (Chow, 2017). Below are myths and facts about Asian education experiences.

Education Myths

VS

Education Facts



All Asian students are naturally good at school and achieve high academic accomplishments - especially in math, science, and technology.



All Asians go to and excel in university. Asians usually graduate at the top of their classes, and rarely require extra help.



The belief that Asians excel at school is a compliment. There is nothing harmful about sharing positive beliefs about a group.



There is strong Asian representation on university campuses, so they must be accepted and treated equally by other students.



Asian students have been stereotyped as high academic achievers. Educators have misused this information, which has resulted in a lack of equal opportunities and support services for Asian students (Lee et al., 2017).



Many Asian students are negatively impacted by their university experience. Common causes of drop-out rates among Asian students include academic challenges, language barriers, lack of academic support, lack of social networks, and mental health challenges (Wang, 2016).



High expectations placed upon Asian students by their parents, teachers, and peers have resulted in stress and isolation, leading to academic decline, dropping out of school, and even suicide - especially among females (Lee et al., 2017).



Asian international students have reported feeling left out and ignored by their peers on campus (especially by White domestic students). They have also reported being bullied for their accent, and experiencing racial microaggressions and discrimination on campus (Houshmand et al., 2014).

Sources

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