

**INTRO**

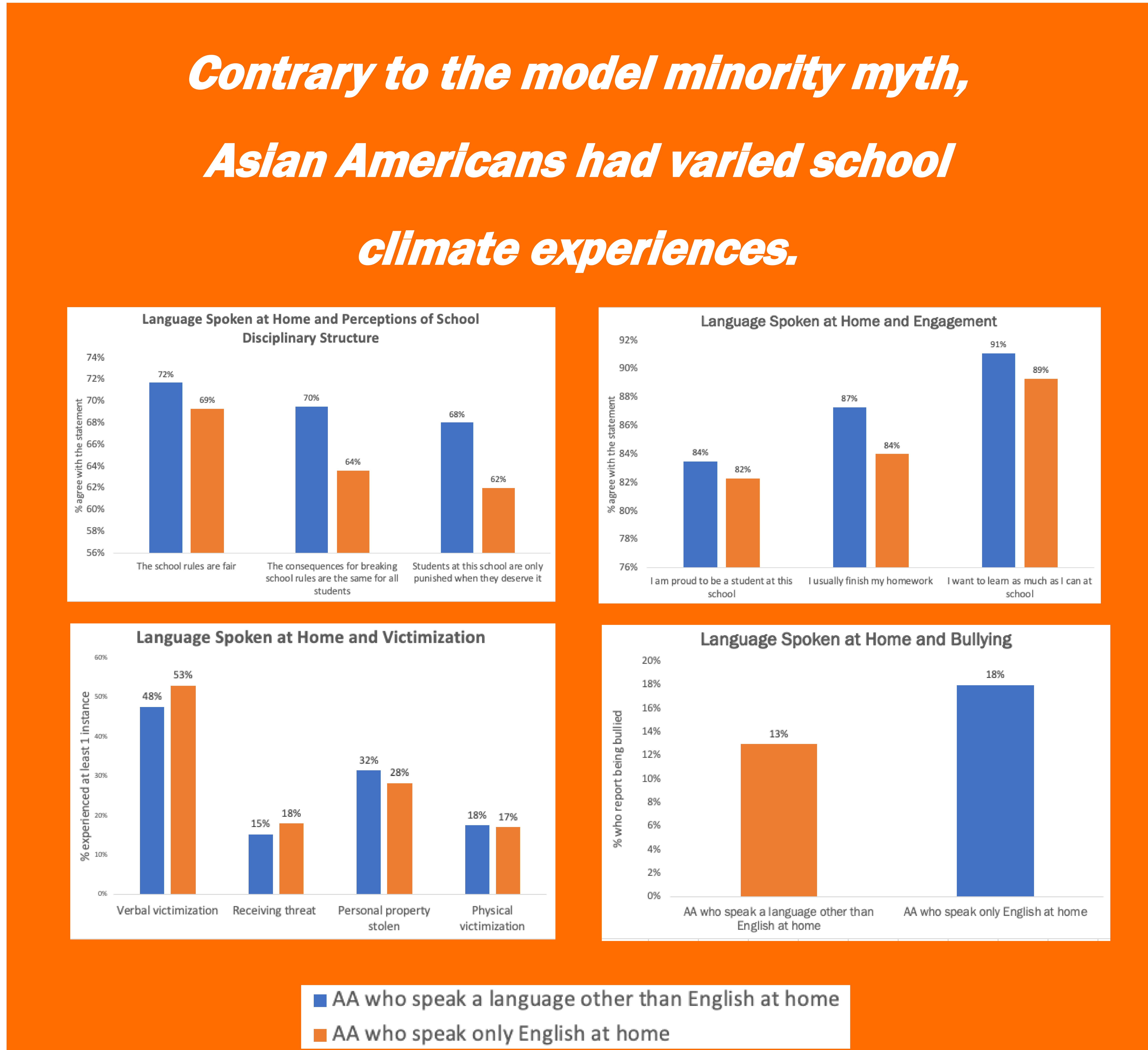
Asian Americans continue to be stereotyped as the “model minority” (portrayed as thriving academically and economically), despite steep differences in high school graduation rates, dropout rates, and eventual income within AA groups (Yip et al, 2021).

**METHODS**

1. Statewide school climate data were collected from 92% of Virginia high schools in spring 2020. The sample consisted of 6,183 self-identifying AA students in 9th-12th grade.
2. Student experiences included:
  - School Support, which measured the degree to which students perceived teachers and other school staff as being respectful, understanding, and helpful to students.
  - Disciplinary Structure, which measured the perception that school rules are fair.
  - School engagement, which measured how much students generally liked their school and felt motivated to do well.
  - Bullying, which referred to experiences of ongoing physical, verbal, social, and cyber-bullying, as well as bullying by an adult at school within the past school year.
  - General victimization, which assessed instances of physical victimization, stolen personal property, verbal victimization, and being threatened at school within the past school year.
3. ANCOVAs examined within-race differences in student experiences with gender, language spoken at home, and free or reduce price meal- (FRPM) eligibility as covariates.

**RESULTS**

Among AA, acculturation (as measured by family speaking a language other than English at home) was more closely associated with school experiences than gender or socioeconomic status (FRPM). Controlling for gender and FRPM, AA students who spoke another language at home reported higher levels of engagement at school. They also endorsed more positive views toward the school disciplinary structure (e.g. 68.3% agreed that “Students at this school are only punished when they deserve it,” compared



**RESULTS (Continued)**

Less acculturated AA within this sample reported significantly fewer experiences with bullying and victimization than more acculturated AA. 13% of those who endorsed speaking another language at home reported that they were bullied within the past school year, whereas 18% of those who spoke only English at home reported the same. Regarding the four types of victimization that were assessed, only English-speaking AA were more likely to endorse having experienced at least one incident of verbal abuse or being threatened, but less likely to endorse at least one incident of having their personal property stolen.

Perceptions of school support and rates of physical victimization did not differ between AA students based on language spoken at home.

**DISCUSSION**

These findings are in line with the immigrant paradox, a well-documented phenomenon in which immigrant youth have better developmental outcomes than U.S.-born youth or more highly acculturated immigrants, despite their lower parent education levels (Marks et al., 2014). In this sample, acculturation was negatively associated with perceptions of school climate and positively associated with more experiences of bullying and victimization. These results indicate that the ‘model minority’ myth is inaccurate and obscures the barriers that subgroups of AA students face in schools.

A limitation of this study was its assumption that more recently immigrated (and thus less acculturated) Asian Americans would be more likely to speak another language at home, and future research should collect data by AA student ethnicity and include more measures of acculturation.