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## EFFECTS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ARAB AMERICANS IN WORK AND EDUCATION

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### **ABSTRACT**

What is an Arab? What is an Arab American? Are these ethnicities subject to negative treatment by others? Why is it important to recognize these differences in the treatment of Arab Americans and, in particular, in the realm of the workplace and in education? When preparing this literature review, I found little research on the effects of such discrimination on Arab American students. The research I did find indicates that it leads to poor academic performance and self-fulfilling prophecies. With regards to workplace discrimination, and particularly its effect on earnings, I found a decrease in earnings for Arab men and those perceived to be Arab. This major decrease in wages was short-lived, however, and seemed to be an immediate reaction to national political events.

Many factors contribute to the mistreatment of Arabs in the United States, but particular events have occurred in America that increased and enraged these feelings in many. Within the realm of higher education, knowing how students of different ethnicities feel about their college experience is vital to building trust, understanding and respect amongst each other in an ever-changing world with regard to diversity. Discrimination primarily stems from lack of understanding of a particular culture or group. If there is more awareness, not just about Arab Americans, but about different cultures in general, then we can prosper and become an even stronger nation. With better understanding by all

Americans, students might benefit by having a voice, and worry less about defending their identities, ancestries, cultures or traditions and focus more on their academics.

The second area I will discuss is the effect of discrimination on Arab Americans in the workplace. Discrimination in the workplace occurred in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> and, as with college students' experiences with discrimination, trying to understand it and build better relationships with our co-workers, regardless of their ethnicity, is vital. I will also summarize several articles that discuss earnings of Arab Americans post 9/11, and what factors played a role in determining these earnings.

## INTRODUCTION

Hate crimes targeting Muslims increased by 1600% from 2000 to 2001 (CNN.com, 2002). Hate crimes against people of Middle Eastern origin or descent increased from 354 attacks in 2000 to 1501 attacks in 2001 (Oswald). Arab Americans and Arab-American students are misunderstood, in general, in America. Political, religious and social events have contributed to this throughout history. [September 11, 2001](#) was an historic and dreadful day for many people across the United States. Many Arab Americans and those who looked like Arabs were directly and adversely affected. It didn't matter what you "actually" were ethnically; if you looked Arab or had a foreign name that sounded Arab, you were targeted. The terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> not only brought Arabs to public attention, but also put them at risk and in danger of discrimination and prejudice.

I will define terms noted in the prior paragraph to clarify and make it easier to understand the scope of this literature review. First, what is an Arab? The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee defines Arab as "a cultural and linguistic term" that

includes people who share the Arabic language and Arabic culture (Moradi and Hasan 2004). The truth, however, is that many Arabs do not speak Arabic. Another definition provided by the ADC is that Arab Americans are Americans whose ancestors originated from any one of 22 Arab countries. These 22 countries are as follows: Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

*Harassment* covers a wide range of offensive behavior. It is commonly understood as behavior intended to disturb or upset. Basically, harassment is a severe annoyance caused by being tormented. In the legal sense, it is behavior found threatening or disturbing. *Discrimination* is unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice (Dictionary.com). When harassment is ignored, negative consequences can follow. Students may be hindered and have a difficult time academically, learning or concentrating on their work. It can also undermine their physical and emotional well-being, and may also provoke them to take matters into their own hands and succumb to the hatred. Finally, discrimination can also aggravate conflicts within communities and neighborhoods. The discomfort and frustrated feelings American students may experience leads to retaliation in the form of abusive name-calling and violent crimes against their Arab classmates.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This means schools, colleges, and universities in the U.S. are responsible, under this act, to provide students with a safe and discrimination-free environment to help ensure the best possible learning opportunity for all students. This act reads:

Racial or ethnic harassment is unlawful. It can deny or limit a student's ability to receive or participate in the benefits, services, or opportunities in a school's program — simply speaking it denies students the right to an education free of discrimination. The existence of a racially hostile environment that is encouraged, accepted, or tolerated by a school, college, or university constitutes different treatment of students on the basis of race (US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2001).

Immediately after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, discrimination was much more prevalent for Arabs living in the United States. Nonetheless, there is still discrimination present throughout the U.S., and I can attest to that, as can many of my family members and friends. The language barrier may be one contributing factor, and explains why some people automatically discriminate against others. Another reason people may discriminate stems from the culture shock some Arab students encounter; their cultural behavior may be seen as a threat, or “foreign” to other American students. Differences between American and Arab culture could pose problems for students. For example, many Arabs and Muslims dress differently than do other Americans; their cuisine is drastically different and their traditions are different. All of this can lead to Americans being afraid of the unknown or unfamiliar. Given these two factors, the level of difficulty required to maneuver through the university and really get all students can get from of their college experience becomes troublesome and sometimes lonely if no one is understanding them or trying to help. Specifically, EMU students treating Arab American students differently or negatively could be detrimental to their education. Finally, I will review the political, social and religious factors that too often add to the mistreatment and inequality experienced by Arab Americans.

### **History of Arab Americans**

The map below illustrates the Arab countries in the Middle East. Bonnie Moradi and Nadia Talal Hassan (2004) say that the immigration of Arab Americans to the United States is typically described as having occurred in two waves. The first wave was from 1890-1940, and consisted of Christian merchants and farmers trying to find jobs and therefore motivated by economic factors. After World War I, the second wave of immigrants arrived, which was actually much different than the first wave with regard to religion and socioeconomic status. They included mostly Muslims and were typically well educated.



Source: <http://teajournalandradio.blogspot.com/2011/05/arab-spring-silverline-around-cloud-for.html>

Arab Americans as an ethnic group trace their roots to the Arabic-speaking countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Arab immigration to the United States began in the 1800s, and most Arab Americans today are the descendants of the first wave of Christian immigrants who arrived between 1875 and 1920. A second wave of Arab

immigration occurred after World War II, when an immigration restriction was lifted. Today, most Arab Americans are native-born Americans whose regional, ancestral homelands include 22 Arab countries in southwestern Asia and North Africa. Of these 22 Arab countries, Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine are the origination points of most Arab Americans. A second group of countries contributed a substantial number of Arab Americans, but not as many as Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine, are Egypt, Yemen, and Iraq (McCarus 1994). The image above is a map of the 22 Arab countries herewith described.

Arabic-speaking people began emigrating from the Ottoman province of Syria, which included the administrative district of Mount Lebanon, to the United States in sufficient numbers to form communities in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (McCarus 1994). Like the millions who left their homes in Europe, they were drawn to the New World by the changing character of the United States in that period. While huge tracts of land remained to be cultivated in the West and Southwest, agrarian interests began to compete with industrial interests in the East. Among other problems, both interests faced mounting labor shortages. Even though their numbers were small, distinct Syrian communities were identifiable by the mid-nineties (McCarus 1994).

Arabic-speaking immigrants, now estimated at roughly two million, arrived in the United States in two major waves. The first, or pre-World War II wave, is distinguished from the second, or post-World War II wave, in a number of ways. The first wave overwhelmingly consisted of unsophisticated village farmers or artisans; they were relatively poor but not destitute and were not well schooled, if at all. The second wave had, and continues to have, a very large component of educated, bilingual, politicized, and nationalistic emigrants. Having originated in numerous Arab nations that gained their

independence in the aftermath of World War II, members of this second wave identified themselves as Arabs (McCarus 1994).

Immigration and census statistics in the past are unreliable for many reasons. Before 1899, immigrants from the Eastern Mediterranean were recorded as having arrived from “Turkey and Asia.” Also, the classification of immigrants by the U.S. Bureau of Immigration did not include religion or national identity. Many immigrated, as did the Syrians, from a multinational empire where country of origin did not correspond with national identity (McCarus 1994, pg 23). By World War I, official statistics show that about 100,000 had immigrated and, by World War II, immigrants and their descendants in the U.S. numbered about 206,000 (McCarus 1994, pg. 24). The June War of 1967 is said to be the first awakening for most Arabs to recognize this new identity of being “Arab American.” Before that, few were concerned or aware of their Arab origins (McCarus 1994).

Below is a table of the number of people in the United States who originate from the specified Arab countries. It also gives the percentage of Americans each specific group comprises as of the year 2000.

Table 1.  
**Population With Arab Ancestry by Detailed Group: 2000**

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, non-sampling error, and definitions, see [www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf](http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/doc/sf4.pdf))

Detailed group	Arab ancestry alone		Arab ancestry alone or in combination with another ancestry	
	Number	Percent of U.S. population	Number	Percent of U.S. population
<b>Total</b> .....	<b><sup>1</sup>850,027</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b><sup>2</sup>1,189,731</b>	<b>0.42</b>
Lebanese .....	244,525	0.09	440,279	0.16
Egyptian .....	123,489	0.04	142,832	0.05
Syrian .....	75,517	0.03	142,897	0.05
Palestinian .....	61,691	0.02	72,112	0.03
Jordanian .....	36,104	0.01	39,734	0.01
Moroccan .....	30,352	0.01	38,923	0.01
Iraqi .....	29,429	0.01	37,714	0.01
"Arab" or "Arabic" .....	167,166	0.06	205,822	0.07
Other Arab .....	<sup>3</sup> 81,754	0.03	<sup>4</sup> 82,337	0.03

<sup>1</sup>Includes people who reported Arab ancestry only, regardless of whether they reported one or two Arab ancestries.

<sup>2</sup>Includes people who reported one or two Arab ancestries and people who reported both an Arab and non-Arab ancestry. The total is less than the sum of the rows because most people reporting two Arab ancestries are tabulated in two categories, but only once in the total. People who reported two Arab ancestries not listed above (e.g., Algerian and Tunisian) are tabulated once in the "Other Arab" category.

<sup>3</sup>Includes 68,614 people who reported one Arab ancestry not listed above and 13,140 people who reported two Arab ancestries, whether listed above or not.

<sup>4</sup>Represents the number of people who reported one or two Arab ancestries excluding the ancestries listed above. The total of 82,337 includes 68,614 people who reported one Arab ancestry not listed above (e.g., Yemeni), 1,862 people who reported two Arab ancestries not listed above (e.g., Algerian and Tunisian), and 11,861 people who reported an Arab ancestry not listed above and a non-Arab ancestry (e.g., Kuwaiti and German).

Note: Confidence intervals are not displayed because they round to the percentages shown in the table.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 special tabulation.

Table from US Census Bureau Special Report on Arab Americans.

Source: "We the People of Arab Ancestry in the United States" at: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2005pubs/censr-21.pdf>, accessed July 30, 2006.

## Arab Stereotyping and the Media

Even before September 11, 2001, Arab stereotyping was often vicious. For example, professor and long-time media critic Jack Shaheen has reviewed hundreds of American films that present Arab stereotypes as follows:

“Sub-humans” and “fanatics who believe in a different god, who don’t value life as much as we do, [and who are] intent on destroying us (the west) with their oil or with their terrorism”. The men seek to abduct and brutally seduce our women; they are without family and reside in a primitive place (the desert) and behave like primitive beings. The women are subservient—resembling black crows—or we see them portrayed as mute, somewhat exotic harem maidens (Brittingham & Cruz, 2005).

The late journalist Sydney Harris asserted that “the popular caricature of the average Arab is as mythical as the old portrait of the Jew. He is robed and turbaned, sinister and dangerous, engaged mainly in hijacking airplanes and blowing up public buildings.”

Furthermore,

It seems that the human race cannot discriminate between a tiny minority of persons who may be objectionable and the ethnic strain from which they spring. If the Italians have the Mafia, all Italians are suspect; if the Jews have financiers, all Jews are part of an international conspiracy; if the Arabs have fanatics, all Arabs are violent. In the world today, more than ever, barriers of this kind must be broken, for we are all more alike than we are different (Brittingham & Cruz, 2005).

Backlash against mosques and Arab-owned businesses in the U.S. has accelerated since the crises in the Middle East. Within three days of the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, more than 200 hate crimes were committed against Arab Americans and American Muslims; the same was true for the days following September 11, 2001. One undesirable outcome of vicious Arab stereotyping is a generation that fears the police, within Arab

American communities, and is reluctant to report hate crimes or unusual activity in their midst (Brittingham & Cruz, 2005).

One possibly effective way to reduce and overcome anti-Arab prejudice, is if the media begins to provide more accurate and less overstated information with regard to Arabs, whether from a political perspective or in general, as a population. Programs, dialogue, and commentaries that increase the public's knowledge about the difference between a terrorist and an Arab, or a radical Muslim who claims to be doing the work of Allah and a true follower of Islam, will help reshape Americans' perceptions of the Arabs they seem to fear.

## **Religion**

Louise Cainkar writes that, in Chicago, more than 100 hate crimes against Arabs, Muslims and people who are not Arab but "looked" Arab were reported to the Chicago Commission on Human Relations by the end of December 2001 (2002). The day following the terrorist attacks, predominately Arab mosques in Chicago were surrounded by a mob of hundreds of angry whites, some shouting "kill the Arabs," and some handling weapons (Cainkar, 2002). Later, the rebuilt community was vandalized in March 2002. Muslim women were specifically discriminated against all over the country. In particular, the Muslim women in Chicago reported having their headscarves pulled off their heads and being spat at on the street. Cainkar's article further claims that although there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of discriminatory attacks against Arabs, Muslims and those perceived as Arab or Muslim, there is still at least one report every week across the nation (Cainkar, 2002). As it became apparent that the terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks were connected to an Arab Islamic extremist group, an increase in racism toward

individuals of Arab and Arab-appearing ethnicity in the United States was reported.

According to the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), in the weeks following September 11 there were 27 confirmed cases where passengers of Arab ethnicity were banned from airplane flights, and 520 violent actions directed toward individuals perceived to be of Arab ethnicity (ADC, 2001).

### **Us Government Initiative's Relation to Discrimination**

Since the attacks, the U.S. government's retaliation has had a negative impact on an already alienated group of people. There have been roughly twenty rule changes, executive orders and laws affecting immigrants or non-immigrant visitors, 15 of which predominately target Arabs (Cainkar 2002 *Middle East Report*). In 2002 it was forecasted that the number of Arabs participating in work, trainings, meetings, conferences and school would probably plummet (Cainkar 2002). The federal rules and regulations implemented in regard to airport security have dampened Arab Americans' desire to travel domestically or abroad. In October of 2001, the State Department issued a classified cable imposing a 20-day mandatory hold on all non-immigrant visa applications submitted by men aged 18-45 from 26 countries, most of them Arab. Later, the Justice Department announced its intention to interview some 5,000 individuals who came to the U.S. from Arab and Muslim countries since January 1, 2000 on non-immigrant visas. Cainkar writes:

In 2002, an initiative was launched to track down and deport 6,000 non-citizen males from Middle Eastern countries who had been ordered deported by an immigration judge, but had never left the U.S. Congress has enacted the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform Act. It calls for the integration of INS databases, the development of machine-readable visas, the requirement that all airlines submit to the US the list of passengers who have boarded a plane bound for the U.S. and stricter monitoring of foreign

students, also a restriction on non-immigrant visas for individuals from countries identified as state sponsors of terrorism (Cainkar 2002).

### **Education & Discrimination**

One part of the dual focus of my literature review is the effect of Arab-American discrimination in the context of education, particularly higher education, but despite extensive research, I did not find a great deal of literature pertaining to this area of study. There was some research with regard to young children and high school students, but none for university students studying at American colleges and universities. Nonetheless, what I did find concerning education in general includes how the stresses of negative stereotyping can adversely affect students' performance in school. Arabs, as an ethnic group, tend to value education and "have a higher-than-average percentage (36%) who hold bachelor's degrees" (Samhan 2001). Discriminatory comments by other Americans in the United States usually stem from the assumption that Arabs are either illegally in the country or do not deserve to be living in America. Samhan (2001), however, writes that most Arabs living in the US are native-born, and almost 82% are American citizens. Moreover, the Middle East Studies Association, along with the Middle East Outreach Council, have studied history and geography textbooks where they found that, in the smaller chapters that discuss the Middle East, there was an exaggerated depiction of "deserts, camels and nomads." They also claim that some teachers refer to Arab culture in the context of the Bedouin image. Speaking of Bedouins, only an estimated 2% of Arabs in the world are traditional Bedouins (Wingfield & Karaman, 1995).

American education in recent years has embraced a multicultural approach, yet many teachers and the public at large are not sensitized to the anti-Arab dilemma we face today. Arabs and the Middle East are partly ignored in history and geography textbooks because American

textbooks are often Eurocentric. For example, Arab points of view regarding issues like the Arab-Israeli conflict are either incorrectly stated, or not stated at all. The Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC) studies have also concluded that Islam is poorly presented in textbooks (Wingfield & Karaman, 1995). Some textbooks, for instance, make a correlation to violence, intolerance and Islam, leaving out the similarities and basic grounds related to that of the Christian and Jewish faiths (Barlow, 1994, p. vii). This type of depiction and negative imagery in scholarship and academia only provides a host home for inaccurate views and stereotypes. Students are left to attempt to explain, if they know it, the true origin of their roots and family traditions, culture, or religion. Wingfield and Karaman also write that the more positive a student's self-concept, the higher his or her achievement level (1995).

Educators have a responsibility to regard Arab students as having a rich and living culture, separate and distinct from its portrayal in popular media images, which often depicts false and misleading stereotypes. If no one disproves or condemns these images, they become part of the misunderstanding of that particular culture or group of people. Arab American students need a more inclusive atmosphere in which to attend school and learn, because as Wingfield notes, the more positive a student's self-concept, the higher is his or her achievement level (1995). Feelings of inferiority and shame can come from being viewed as an inferior group, and through the media, news, movies and television. Students can suffer as a result of this, as can their learning and academic performance. Lower self-esteem often then becomes the norm, because they are convinced they are not worthy and may stop trying their best (Wingfield). Some responsibility falls on educators to break this vicious cycle and use knowledge, and history, to help students understand the distinction between truth and myth. Arab Americans and other

ethnic groups should not be feared; rather, the radical and extremist individuals who wrongly claim to represent these people should be shunned.

The table below shows how Arab Americans reacted to discrimination. Hassan and Moradi report that,

Across the various specific experiences, 9% (forced to take drastic steps to deal with some racist thing done to you) to 70% (wanted to tell someone off for being racist) of the sample reported experiencing the event at least once in a while. The prevalence of some events was particularly disturbing. For instance, 53% of the sample reported being treated unfairly by strangers because they were of Arab descent, 47% reported that they had been in an argument about something racist done to them, and 46% reported that they had been called racist names at least once in a while within the past year (Hassan & Moradi, 2004).

Table 1.

*Percentage of Sample Reporting Specific Discrimination Events*

Abbreviated item content	1(Never Sample Mdn	2(Once in Sample happened)	3(Sometimes a while)	4(A lot)	5(Most of the time)	6(Almost all the time)	Sample of the time)	M	
1. Treated unfairly by teachers/professors	73	20	2	2	3	1	1.45	1	
2. Treated unfairly by employer/boss	82	10	3	2	3	1	1.37	1	
3. Treated unfairly by colleagues	63	22	5	7	1	2	1.68	1	
4. Treated unfairly by service jobs	60	22	7	5	5	1	1.75	1	
5. Treated unfairly by strangers	47	31	10	6	3	3	1.93	2	
6. Treated unfairly by people in helping jobs	86	7	5	0	1	1	1.24	1	
7. Treated unfairly by neighbors	77	13	7	2	0	2	1.41	1	
8. Treated unfairly by institutions	73	16	6	3	1	2	1.48	1	
9. Treated unfairly by friends	74	15	5	4	2	0	1.43	1	
10. Accused/suspected of wrongdoing	89	7	2	2	1	0	1.19	1	
11. People misunderstood your intentions	66	20	7	4	3	1	1.60	1	
12. Wanted to tell someone off for being racist	30	30	21	7	7	6	2.49	2	
13. Angry about something racist done to you	55	19	17	3	6	2	1.91	1	
14. Drastic steps to deal with something racist	91	7	1	0	1	1	1.17	1	
15. Called racist names	54	21	10	6	3	6	1.98	1	
16. Argument/fight about something racist	53	19	18	2	5	3	1.93	1	
17. Picked on/hit/threatened	70	16	6	3	3	2	1.56	1	

Same Totally different

18. How different would your life be if you had not been treated in a racist/unfair way? 53 24 17 3 0 4 1.84 1

**Source:** Moradi, Bonnie, and Nadia Talal Hasan. "Arab American Persons' Reported Experiences of Discrimination and Mental Health: The Mediating Role of Personal Control." *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 51.4 (2004): 418-28. Print.

## Workplace Discrimination in Relation to Earnings

Finding a job, maintaining it, and securing a decent wage is a task in itself. Adding workplace discrimination to the mix based solely on perceived appearance is one stressor with which no one should have to contend. A report by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 2001 claimed there was “increased public harassment, hate mail, and workplace discrimination toward Arab individuals (EEOC 2001). Rabby and Rodgers conducted research to gauge the impact the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks had on the U.S. labor market and its effect on individuals with ethnicities similar to that of the terrorists (Rabby & Rodgers 2009). They found that the time elapsed after the attacks and the age of the workers factored into the results; specifically, young Arab American men (or those appearing to be Arab) between age 16 to 25 suffered in hours worked shortly after the attacks (Rabby & Rodgers, 2009). Fortunately, the losses began to disappear by the year 2004. Also, the employment-population ratios and hours worked by older Muslim men were very low, especially when compared to that of the younger pool (Rabby & Rodgers 2009).

Furthermore, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) reported a 64% increase in discrimination complaints by the end of 2002. In 2003 and 2004, complaints increased by 70% and 49%. CAIR also reported civil rights violations increased, with 18 to 26 percent of the reported violations occurring in the workplace” (Rabby & Rodgers, 2009). Similarly, Davila and Mora (2005) found that between 2000 and 2002 (2001 excluded), Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. experienced a significant decline in earnings as compared to non-Latino

Whites. Their sample included men between ages 25 and 40 who worked at least twenty hours per week and for thirty-two weeks or more in the survey year. The target group included men from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, and the Middle-eastern Arab countries (Davila and Mora, 2005). Moreover,

the attacks were associated with about a 14-16 percent decline in the real weekly earnings of 21 to 54 year old Muslim and Arab men. Changes in occupation and industry account for some of the decrease in wages. The distribution of Arab and Muslim men by occupation and industry changed after 9-11 and that these changes adversely affected earnings of Arab and Muslim men. Internal migration of Arabs and Muslims decreased after 9-11; finally they show that over time, the adverse impact of 9-11 dissipated (Kaestner et al.).

Studies by Davila and Mora, and by Rabby and Rodgers, show that labor market outcomes were worse for younger Muslim/Arab men, and that the effects were rather short-lived, beginning to dissipate by 2004. One factor believed to have increased hostility in the workplace, which often led to a decrease in wages for Arab Americans, is the programs the executive branch implemented post 9-11. “We find that 9-11 and the anti-terrorism measures were associated with a relative decrease in employment, hours worked, and the earnings of immigrants from Muslim-majority countries” (Rabby & Rodgers, 2009). Anti-terrorism programs caused a difficult legal environment for Arabs and Muslims, and having mass round ups of predominantly Arab and Muslim immigrants created hostile community relations (Rabby & Rodgers, 2009). Still in discussion is whether the depressing effects on the labor market for Arab/Muslim Americans was due to this legislation, or to the fear that discrimination created among minority workers, causing them to not participate or work.

## CONCLUSION

Today there should be greater public awareness and acknowledgement that racial discrimination is detrimental and contagious. The research I have reviewed has repeatedly referenced how cartoons, video games and movies significantly contribute to negative depictions of Arabs in America. This problem, being exacerbated by the media, makes the process of disproving and changing perceptions difficult.

Very limited research has focused on Arab American college students, their feelings and the effects of discrimination on their academic performance. More qualitative and quantitative research should be conducted in this area. I plan to expand my review of literature and conduct interviews that include both the students of Eastern Michigan University and the faculty, and their thoughts and feelings about Arab Americans. The effects of duress and discomfort that discrimination have on a person can be even more troublesome for a student trying to attain an education.

Research shows that the U.S. labor market for Arab Americans, and for those who resembled Arab Americans, did suffer after the September 11 tragedy. Although the findings suggest that the loss in earnings was short-lived, it is still unacceptable to punish a group of people for the actions of a very small minority. Although I found little, if any research on the effects of discrimination on students, it is also a problem I believe can be decreased by educating teachers, creating more inclusive programs and including Arab and Middle Eastern history in textbooks, instead of depicting them as living only in the desert, leaving a Bedouin image in young students' minds. More research needs to be conducted in the area of Arab American education; I plan to interview college students, both Arab and non-Arab, about their feelings and perceptions of the discrimination they may or may not have faced in the United States, and particularly at Eastern Michigan University. I would

like to include faculty in this study to help understand their points of view, and if they perceive Arab American discrimination in the classroom or academia to be a problem. My expanded research will focus on education. I will conduct qualitative interviews with forty Arab-American students who attend Eastern Michigan University, and the questions will pertain to their feelings about discrimination and their comfort level at the University. I will also conduct qualitative interviews with forty non-Arab students at EMU to gauge how those students feel about the Arab students they encounter and their comfort with the Arab-American community.

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