But Why Do We Need the Bomber to be Studying for a Science Test?: Racialized Arab Femininities and Masculinities

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In order to understand the schooling experiences of Saudi students and their families across gender and age in the U.S., this article draws on a multi-sited, multi-age ethnographic study with an Arab family from Saudi Arabia living in the Midwestern region of the United States. Through this study, I empirically illustrate the impact of gendered racialization of Arab femininities and masculinities in educational settings through the stories of Sarah, a 40-year-old undergraduate student, and her 14-year-old son, Ayman. The results of this study highlight the ways these gendered racialized experiences differ based on age and gender and how the participants respond to them. The discussion and implications sections focus on the importance of exposing the hierarchies of violence of complicit anti-Arab racisms as well as areas for improvement for school administrators, policymakers, and teacher education programs.

Keywords: gendered racialization; anti-Arab racism; Saudi Arabia; international students; Arab families; Arab femininities and masculinities; schooling experiences, Arab immigrants.

Note: all names in this article are pseudonyms.

Introduction

Saudi students are the fourth largest group among all international students studying in the United States following Chinese, Indian, and South Korean students (Institute of International Education, 2017). As of 2017, even as the number of Saudi students declines, there are still an estimated 53,000 thousand Saudi international students in the U.S. (Institute of International Education, 2017). However, the extensive literature available on international students tends to focus on students coming from East Asian countries, while the experiences of international Saudi students are underrepresented (Lefdahl-Davis & Perrone-McGovern, 2015).

The Saudi Arabian scholarship system provides financial support in the form of tuition, as well as for personal and family expenses to the majority of Saudi students in the United States. This scholarship system has provided an avenue for many Saudi women to continue their higher education in the U.S. along with their families.

Few studies have been conducted to understand how Saudi families' experiences in the U.S. fit into prevalent gendered discourses of anti-immigration and anti-Arab discrimination in American educational systems. However, due to the global mobility of international students, the experiences of Saudi families have transnational implications that exemplify and trespass the confines of the United States. Anti-Arab discrimination and essentialist views of Arabs, though with differing particularities, are on the rise not only in the U.S. but also in many European countries (Buhagiar, Sammut, Rochira, & Salvatore, 2018). While, the case study discussed in this article focuses specifically on international Saudi families in the U.S., it also captures a systemic view of the complicit hierarchies of violence of anti-Arab racisms that has transnational implications.

Racialized Arab Femininities and Masculinities

The study of Saudi international student families' experiences must be contextualized and located within the increasingly pervasive anti-Arab racism in the U.S. society, political and media discourse as well as schools (Brown, Ali, Stone, & Jewell, 2017; James, 2018). Reductionist understandings of Arabs and Muslims often lead to the conflation of these two categories, which have become synonymous with each other, and lump together people from various backgrounds, religions, and ethnicities based on perception, rather than on reality (Beck, Charania, & Al-issa, 2017; Brown et al., 2017; Chan-Malik, Alsultany, Khabeer, & Kashani,

2014; Kagema, 2018; Naber, 2012; Raza, 2018; Nguyen, 2018). Within such conflations, anti-Arab racism and Islamo-racism are compounded and work to further gender and racialize Arabs in particular essentialized ways, regardless of their background or religious affiliation (Beck et al., 2017). Within this conflation, and compounded power structures of racisms, Arabs and Muslims are put into categories such as "backwards, barbaric, uncivilized, oppressed women, men who oppress women, violent, unreasonable, terroristic..." (Chan-Malik et al., 2014, p.19). These modes of racialization discourses contribute to colonial discourses that tend to marginalize and exclude certain groups of people (Kubota, Lin, Rich, & Salah, 2006) and justify their bodies as unworthy of rights (Chan-Malik et al., 2014; ; & Tatch, 2017). Drawing on Said's (1978) concept of Orientalism, Naber (2012) concludes that Arab masculinities are often reduced to one hegemonic masculinity that is terrorist and violent. Hegemonic Arab femininities, on the other hand, are framed as passive and oppressed or as extensions of terrorism. Arab femininities as oppressed; thereby position Arab and Muslim women as in need of being saved (Abu-Lughod, 2013). Thus, hegemonic Arab femininity and masculinity are gendered differently and translate into gendered racisms (Naber, 2012). Accordingly, understanding the process of racialization that Arabs undergo, helps with understanding the specificity of anti-Arab racism and its global consequences (Abu El-Haj, Ríos-Rojas, & Jaffe-Walter, 2017). Hence, the theoretical orientation of (Kubota et al., 2006) draws upon the constructions of gendered racisms of hegemonic Arab masculinity and femininity to understand how they operate in educational settings through the stories of Sarah, and her son Ayman.

Setting, Story, and the Researcher's Positionality
Setting

The data used in this article stem from an ongoing multi-sited ethnographic study of Saudi families who live in the Midwest of the United States. One of the methods of tracing a multi-sited ethnography is by following the research participants and the plot of people's stories (Marcus, 1995). I followed this family in their transition from a rural area to the suburbs of a larger Midwestern city. The rural town where the family lived had a total population 5,500. The school in this area had only one building, which was divided between three distinct sections: 800 students attended K-6, 200 students attended grades 7 and 8, and 350 students attended the high school. The student body was 96% White. Below, I describe two events that Sarah and her son Ayman had each narrated on separate occasions.

While my visits started at the participating family's home, they often entailed going to multiple locations, resulting in a multi-sited ethnography. This study includes eight months of fieldwork and audio recordings. My field notes focus on regular participant-researcher observations within the context of daily routines, most of which are home-based, but also includes observations of one trip to a hospital emergency room, two visits to the children's schools, two to restaurants, and multiple mutual visits with the family. I wrote 21 field note entries, and created four hours of voice recordings of daily interactions among the family members, and recorded 16 hours of interviews. These home-based visits entailed at one time a five-day immersion in their home and school dynamics, staying overnight, seeing how they lived ~~with~~ their daily routines, ten visits that involved spending twenty-four hours at their home, and ten other visits of at least two hours each.

The story

The goal of this ongoing ethnographic study is to understand how Saudi families who have moved to the U.S., with one or both parents continuing their higher education, and understand the gendered dynamics of their educational experiences and daily lives. I became interested in this topic due to my interactions with Saudi fathers who had come to the United States. Most of these men had established careers in Saudi Arabia and supported their wives' educational endeavors.

The focus of this study is on one Saudi family, particularly on their experiences with racialization in school settings as representations of gendered Arab masculinities and femininities and how these diverse ways of being are reduced to one hegemonic model of masculinity and femininity—a model that emerged from the data. As I combed through the first cycle of data analysis, in preparation for in-depth biographical interviews, I noticed a recurring central theme of the various ways essentialized discourses of race and gender emerged. Out of these initial analyses, I generated the following questions, which guide this article:

1. In what ways do Saudi families living in the Midwest encounter racialization?
2. How do these experiences of racialization intersect with age and gender?

Researcher positionality

My research interest developed from previous interactions with Saudi families and my own intimate experiences with racialization and marginalization as a Syrian immigrant who navigates the daily violence of non-belonging (Zaatari, 2011). I was born in Saudi Arabia, and I grew up in Syria. I speak Arabic, and my personal history has played a role in being welcomed into Saudi families. I was acquainted with some of the participants before starting the study. The fact that we had built a friendship helped the participants and me to share experiences and cultivate "relationships of care and dignity" (Paris, 2011 pp. 147). My ethnic and linguistic affiliations, place of birth, and close friendships within my own community provided me with relatively easy access to this particular family. At the same time, there were instances when I was categorized as just Syrian, American, Arab-American or Syrian American depending on the particularity of a situation or an event. Often, this meant that I would fluctuate on a dialogic continuum of insider-outsider status depending on the situation. Instances of this were visible whenever the parents were curious about a cultural or linguistic question related to the United States. The question was typically introduced with the phrase "as an American," and followed by "does this have the same weight or meaning in Arabic?" I was thus asked to draw both on my outsider knowledge as an "American" and the insider knowledge of being Syrian or Arab and related certain dialects and subcultures. This felt like a dialogic interaction in which I was positioned as both an insider and outsider simultaneously.

Through the process of working with study participants, I learned how to suspend my judgment and seek understanding, listen more intently, and probe my own normalized understanding of childhood, religion, sexuality, parenting, and education. As Kinloch and San Pedro (2014) state,

> Ideological struggles result in part from listening with others as we consider questions, and debate diverse views that may, in fact, conflict with our own...Yet our ideological and epistemological stances are heavily shaped by what we hear, do not hear, and understand about ours and other's thinking as we engage in listening. (p.27)

Hence, I had to confront the many ways I internalized orientalism about myself and other Arabs. For example, one thing I needed to probe was my normalized understandings of childhood.

I was positioned as a "sister" by the parents in this family, and the children started calling me "auntie" which is a common practice in some Arab families that shows a sense of endearment and trust. From the type of care and compassion that the family offered me when I needed help, I soon learned that the family members had positioned themselves as relatives, and that their expectations of me were those one would have from a "sister." I happily accepted such positioning which meant that I might have had to be committed to spending more time with the family when a family member was sick, and that I supported them in navigating the complexity of the American educational and healthcare systems. Moreover, it meant offering babysitting, dropping off a prescription at the pharmacy, driving a family member to the emergency room, attending a parent-teacher conference, or assisting with a school intervention for one of the children. This Saudi family reciprocated the kind of support I offered them with so much more generosity.

Methods and Analysis

The ethnographic analysis followed different stages. In his description of stages of analysis Saldana (2015) describes coding as "a cyclical act" (p. 9). I started drawing on descriptive codes that evolved into parent codes and then into thematic categories. I first worked on creating a parent code for schooling experiences. Under the theme of schooling experiences, I created sub-codes to determine different types of it. Then, I wrote conceptual memos, which I used to expand questions during biographical, in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews with participants. Later, I transcribed the interview sections that were relevant to the specific theme of schooling experiences. Within this category, the sub-code of racialization became more evident. While in the field notes, racialization was sub-coded casually under a parent code of schooling experiences, the interviews revealed the nature of these racialized encounters. Finally, I started to look more closely at how implicit or explicit these experiences of gendered racialization were.

Findings

In this section, I highlight two stories of gendered racialized encounters that Ayman and Sarah elaborated on during their in-depth one-on-one interviews. Ayman had mentioned racism in school, but until the interview he had not described what racism looked like to him and how extreme his experience was. Sarah, on the other hand, had always been vocal about her experiences.

Racialized Arab masculinities: "Bomber" and "Rapist"

Compared to his other family members, Ayman was very reserved. I have heard Sarah's stories multiple times. When Ayman was a 14-year-old, he emotionally struggled at the school he attended in a rural area. The school administrators had reported his parents to social services because of Ayman's absences and consequently Hamed, his father, had to go to court. The incident caused Ayman a lot of anxiety and he feared being removed from his family. Indeed, Ayman seemed to be missing too many school days as I saw him at home during some of my friendly visits that took place during the day. I feared that he had started struggling with depression like his younger brother, but he often explained that he was suspended. According to his parents, Ayman was issued a total of 55 suspensions and detentions for one year. However, since moving to a new school, Ayman has a good attendance record, and he has been on the honor roll multiple times.

When I asked his parents for permission to interview Ayman one-on-one in a café near their home, he seemed excited. During the interview, Ayman told me that the worst experience of his life was attending that school. When I asked him to explain why it was one of his worst experiences, he responded, "racism." So, I asked him if he could tell me what he meant by that. Ayman has a darker complexion, and he told me he was one of three students in school who were brown. During the interview, Ayman informed me that he rarely ever laid out what was happening at school to his parents. Sarah, the mom in this family, was suffering from health complications during a pregnancy, and neither Ayman nor his brothers wanted to cause any troubles that might exacerbate her health situation. Ayman also narrated how a boy from his class came up to him and told him his friends that "the KKK were smart." He went on to state that the football coach would never select him to play on the team. He also mentioned that during the first two quarters of the year, he had heard from other people what was being said about him. However, in the last two quarters, some kids started calling him slurs to his face. At this time, he started voluntarily missing more school. In the passages from the transcript of our conversation below, Ayman describes how he had been called a "bomber." In the second passage, I asked about school interventions, and whether they helped alleviate the racist comments. (In the following excerpts, A stands for Ayman, Y stands for myself, and the bolded text was initially said in Arabic).

Y: Can you tell more about these fights?
A: Did I tell you about the bomber thing? One time it was when we were helping and the other time we were preparing for the state exam and we were getting ready to take the test and one of the kids in the class said, "I get why everyone is studying for this test, but why do we need the bomber to be studying for a science test…so he's gonna make it?"
Y: Was that during class?
A: Yes.
Y: Was the teacher there?
A: Yes, and the teacher said, "Don't say that out loud" and then he said it outside again and that's when I…
Y: That's when you hit him?
A: Yes, that's when I hit…it wasn't a full fight, but that was my problem. He was getting me mad and I just hit him. It was one of the worst days. Mom was getting mad and it was the end of the year, and when I hit him, he got hurt. I hit him on the right side [pointing to the right side of his jaw] *and he bled from his mouth.* It doesn't matter what the kid did. He didn't hit me. I hit him. I am the one who got in trouble, not him.

These were not the only incidents in which Ayman was called a "bomber" by classmates. He recounted a few more. For example, he mentioned the time when he got a C and was upset about his grade, and he was told again in class (as narrated by Ayman), "It's Ok. He'll just go bomb something and will be happy. Like any other bomber." Ayman related that he ignored most of the comments that were directed at him by his teachers and his peers. In the passage transcribed below, I inquired if he ever complained to the school about the disparaging comments he received.

Y: Did you complain to the school?
A: I complained to the school about two times. Then I stopped, because I noticed when I do complain things get worst; they don't get better.
Y: They get worse in what ways?
A: Like instead of them just calling me a bomber or something...bomber, rapist...and a lot of other things.

During this interview, I asked Ayman why he had so many suspensions. He described an incident during which he had used an expletive. I asked what it was, supposing on my part that it was the "F" word, and he replied, "I said damn." Ayman was suspended for three days for saying "damn." I had heard this story from Sarah, too. I thought that she was being dramatic, and my initial response was to think, "No way!" he must have said something far worse. Sarah was slightly offended by my reaction and strongly affirmed that that is exactly what her son had said. She said that she even went to the school and challenged the principal. She told him that it seemed that when it came to her son, suspension was the first solution that came up.

Furthermore, Ayman quickly discovered the school's ambivalence about his experiences with racism. As he mentioned, he stopped complaining "because I noticed that when I do complain, things get worst, they don't get better." He went on to say that some of his classmates would call him a "bomber," "rapist," or other things, and he would just have to accept it. The use of the "rapist" exemplifies pervasive discourses about Arab masculinities as both criminal and violent towards women.

 Ayman's experiences during his time at the rural school speak to the theoretical framework of this article, of racialized Arab masculinities' that are reduced to the context of terrorism, patriarchy, and violence toward women. This is evidently a racialized gendered masculinity that is fully accepted by the teacher and administration at the school to the point that they neither see it worthy of addressing, nor worthy of being dismissed by merely instructing the student who had the made the remark to not say "that out loud." In this case, the teacher and school administrators perpetuated and exercised violence against Ayman by their repeated adamant refusal to confront the racist behavior from his peers.

Racialized Arab femininities: oppressed passive victims and obedient wives
I had known Sarah for a few months before we started building a solid friendship. I had been asked to help with some over-the-phone interpretation, as she wanted to challenge a grade she had received. She was very outgoing over the phone, and told me that we should get to know each other. A week later, she invited my family and me and to dinner. I was introduced to her five children at the time, and to her husband Hamed. I met with Sarah a few times after that, and my visits to their home started to increase as we developed our friendship gradually. Then, as I started this study, I began visiting her weekly for at least two hours.

The following excerpt is from a conversation that we had at the lunch table. During this conversation, she narrated an incident that had happened with her English language instructor. Sarah described the class as having around 20 students. There were multiple Saudi men in class. It seemed that the teacher always made negative comments about the Saudi men who were predominantly stay-at-home dads. She told me the story in the excerpt again after we had the conversation. When the conversation first took place, I did not have my audio recorder on, so I asked Sarah to retell the story, which would enable me to transcribe it as she spoke; however, she just narrated the gist of the story rather than going into the full details that she had related earlier. Thus, I noted the following exchange:

> S: She asked, is it possible that your husband is Saudi?
> Y: Why did she ask you that?
> S: She asked me and another Saudi female student, she asked us if our husbands help us around the house, and we told her yes. And she asked me what kind of help, and I told her she…he vacuums the floors and cleans the kitchen and takes care of the kids, and she asked me again is...he a Saudi man? So I told her Yes. So she asked me if he was originally from Saudi Arabia. She always used to comment that Saudis are lazy…and then I asked her, "Does your husband help you at home?"

While Ayman had had explicit encounters with the racialized portrayals of Arab masculinities, Sarah's narrative was more implicit. She explained that her instructor was surprised that Hamed, her spouse, actually helped take care of some of the home responsibilities. Sarah's affirmation that her spouse helps around the house—"he vacuums the floors and cleans the kitchen and takes care of the kids" —led the teacher to inquire if her husband was actually from Saudi Arabia. When Sarah's answer remained the same, the instructor moved to ask again if he was "originally from Saudi Arabia." Her questioning whether or not Hamed was Saudi, and then questioning again if he was originally Saudi, illustrates how implicit images of racialized Arab masculinities and femininities operate within the classroom.

Discussion

The two stories above illustrate the guiding questions of the study and shed light on the ways that Saudi families living in the Midwest encounter racialization and how these experiences might differ based on age and gender. The stories highlight the pervasiveness of discourses of a hegemonic Arab masculinity and femininity that reduced all masculinities into one of a terrorist and misogynist while framing femininities into one hegemonic femininity of "oppressed women" who lack agency compared to their White western counterparts (Mahmood, 2011). Ayman was racialized within the discourse of "bomber", "rapist" among others. In addition to that, Sarah's spouse Hamed, as he appeared in her story, seemed to contradict the perception of Arab men as oppressive. Sarah's instructor, a White self-identified liberal Midwestern woman, did not use her conversation with Sarah as an opportunity to disrupt her own perceptions of Arab men. Rather than accepting the diversity of Arab masculinities, she questioned Hamed's origin.

Helping around the house is an image that conflicts with the idea of Arab men as patriarchal and oppressive of women, and of Arab women as passive, laboring at home to please their spouses. Interestingly, the question posed by the instructor relegates household duties in the women sphere. In return, Sarah's response, throwing the question back to her instructor and asking if *her* husband helps at home, was assertive, and was her way to challenge her instructor's assumptions. To which the instructor's response was that her spouse, unlike Sarah's, is American. This conforms to what many scholars have already reiterated that Arab women are seen as passive and oppressed compared to their Western White counterparts (Abu-Lughod, 2013; Chan-Malik et al., 2014; Naber, 2012). Sarah continued challenging her instructor's assumptions by responding with "so what?" which indicates Sarah's assertive position and her unwillingness to accept the instructor's gendered assumptions about Arab women and men.

These gendered racializations of Arab masculinities and femininities are not innocent practices. Indeed, they have a wide range of implications and coincide with findings of similar studies on the racialization of Arabs in educational settings. A recent study examining if elementary school children held prejudicial attitudes towards Arabs and Muslims reported that children in the U.S. regardless of their race or ethnicity have rated Arab Muslims as the least favored marginalized group in the United States (Brown et al., 2017). The study reported that children associated the categories of Arab Muslim males as anti-American and hostile and that Arab women and girls were viewed as more oppressed than other women and girls.

Other ethnographic work with Palestinian students in K-12 schooling in the U.S. highlights that media and political discourses manifest as explicit and implicit enactments of anti-Arab racism by teachers and school administrators (El-Haj, 2015). As Arab and Muslim get conflated (Naber, 2012; Shams, 2018), anti-Arab racism and Islamo-racism become intertwined, thereby submerging the particularity of the experiences of Arab and/ or Muslim students. These experiences with racism are not unique to the United States. This type of gendered Islamo-racism is also prevalent in Europe (Jaffe-Walter, 2016). Furthermore, the increase of asylum seekers from the Arab Middle East to Europe means students are entering schooling systems in North America as well as Europe at higher rates. Hence, it is even more important for educators to be aware of their implicit and explicated gendered biases towards their Arab students also means that these sentiments are only on the rise.

The results of this study show the ways teachers and school administrators are complicit in enacting anti-Arab racist practices at the school level as well as the social services level. Sarah had confidence in advocating for herself in an English Learners classroom. She was not passive and directed the question back onto her instructor. However, Ayman initially chose to take action and complain to the school. After the school took a complicit and racist approach, he decided to ignore the treatment to which he had been subjected, resulting in anger and frustration. In both Ayman and Sarah's cases, understanding complicity as a form of violence is important for unpacking how they are racialized. Furthermore, while Ayman took a silent approach, he critically understood how racism operated in his school impacting his educational attainment as well as that of the other students of color in his class.

Complicit hierarchies of anti-Arab racism

Beyond the guiding questions of this study, teachers and the educational administrators responded with complicity to the enactments of anti-Arab racisms. Ayman's examples speak to the racialized discourses of Arab masculinities, and how these discourses manifest themselves in the lives of some Saudi students who study in the United States. It also showcases how anti-Arab racisms are perpetuated in ways that are implicit, ~~and~~ explicit, and complicit.

This complicit nature of gendered anti-Arab racisms has moved on a hierarchy of complicit/ implicit silence to explicit violence on the part of school administrators and teachers. Ayman expressed to me that he initially complained to school administrators, who met his complaints with silence. This led to an increase in

racial slurs against him in the school hallways, and the teachers' response to the comment on Ayman being a bomber. The resulting enactment of zero-tolerance policies, such as the 3-day suspension because Ayman used the word "damn," shows a progression of complicit/implicit silence. Finally, the result was the more violent explicit anti-Arab racist practices, such as reporting the family to social services. This move baffled Ayman's parents since the school administrator has caused their son to miss so many days due to suspensions. Furthermore, Islamo-racism, as well as anti-Arab racism in social services, has been the center of conversation in the U.S., and other Western nations more recently. The rise of students being bullied based on their country of origin, religion, among others have prompted the U.S. Department of Education to issue new mandates for reporting such incidents.

Another level of violence resulting from reporting Ayman's family to social services beyond showing an explicit enactment of anti-Arab racism was the anxiety that this process caused Ayman's family. Within this context, Ayman was left with very few options to survive in such a school environment. Another layer of violence was that Ayman's complained, and the complicit silence of his teachers and administrators has opened him up to further retribution from his peers in the hallways. One of the very few viable options for Ayman to continue his education was to move to a new school. Because this was such a small college town, changing schools meant relocating the entire family to a place where there are better schooling options. Ayman's siblings have encountered similar experiences, and this had taken a mental toll on his younger brother who could not go to school due to depression and anxiety. In all of this, Ayman had to endure the trauma of racism, the fear of losing his family and feeling the burden of having his entire family relocate to a new city.

Educational administrators taking an anti-racist stance

A notable difference that emerged during the time I spent with this family was how the administration in Sarah's experience responded to her complaints. In fact, other Saudi students had similar encounters with the instructor that with whom Sarah talked about in her story. However, when Sarah voiced her concern about this instructor, her complaints were not taken lightly. Having a clear anti-racist stance from other teachers and administrators opened up the opportunity for other Saudi students to complain about similar incidents that took place with this instructor. On multiple occasions, I was asked to do some interpretation for students who came forward to make sure that the administration understood the students' complaints. Eventually, the instructor was not allowed to teach any more Saudi students. While this anti-racist stance and response might have been motivated by economic factors to ensure that Saudi students enroll in their course, the administrators' position opened an avenue for these students to voice their concerns and witness positive results.

Implications

While beyond the scope of this study, one of the future directions for research can be exploring similar anti-racist practices adopted by school administrators and teachers where they exist. For example, in the case of Sarah, asking for an interpreter, inviting more students to voice their concerns, and removing a teacher who had practiced anti-Arab racisms from working with Arab students showed a clear administrative stance. Such an anti-racist stance can curb complicit hierarchies of anti-Arab racisms and mitigate a progression towards explicit racist violence.

The progression of complicit and explicit racism in Ayman's story has wide implications for on understanding educational policy. Creating accessible, clear, and safe channels of reporting racism must also include ensuring that identifiable students are protected from further retribution from their peers as well as other school personnel. Families of marginalized students should not have to move and uproot their children out of fear from schools. The onus of proving that an educator had enacted racist practices should not fall on the student who had been subjugated to such violence. Furthermore, anti-Arab racisms, like other forms of racism, should not be folded under the fluid category of bullying.

Teacher Education programs can benefit from courses that are specifically designed to make complicit anti-Arab racist practices and other forms of racism explicit. Pre-service and in-service teachers can learn to examine and reflect on their own complicit racist stances by foregrounding the importance of diversity- focused courses. Furthermore, while research proves that in-service and pre-service teachers benefit from hearing the voices of professors of color, there is little diversity among professors within teacher education programs (Wilder, Sanon, Carter, & Lancellot, 2017; Tarman, 2012;2010). At the same time, there is enough documented evidence that when pre-service and in-service teachers learn about their own cultures as

the well as the cultures of the students, they experience a shift towards better teaching, and especially, understanding culturally responsive pedagogies (Bittman, et. al., 2017; Bittman & Russell, 2016; Essary & Szecsi, 2018).

Conclusion

Ayman and Sarah's experiences illustrate how the local connects with the global. When this family moves back to Saudi Arabia, they will carry with them these schooling experiences as part of their experiences in the United States. As Saudi students studying in the United States experience racialization in some American schools and universities, the discourses employed on such campuses may help with cross-cultural understanding. The two cases presented in the study showcase the fact that teachers and school administrators need to actively examine how the media and political discourses that racialized Arabs are subjected to impact their American and Arab students alike. Their stories exemplify that schooling experiences of Arab students map out on the racializing media and political discourses against Arabs and Arab-Americans. not only in the U.S., but also in Europe and other countries.

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