THE POWER OF NAMES: EXAMINING NAME-BASED STEREOTYPES IN INDIA

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Abstract: This research paper delves into the phenomenon of name-based stereotypes, investigating the intricate connections between nomenclature and social cognition. Names serve as potent tools that shape initial impressions, beliefs, and expectations, often leading to preconceived notions about individuals. The aim is to contribute to the discourse on inclusivity, diversity, and social justice, with the goal of fostering a more equitable society. To conduct this study 52 participants were randomly selected. The participants were asked to rate 9 names on 3 characteristics- Competence, Trustworthiness and Privilege. After the data was collected, scores were analyzed using methods of descriptive statistics- Mean and Standard deviation, methods of inferential statistics- Confidence interval and MANOVA. The subsequent analysis establishes that the name factor holds a statistically significant effect on the three traits: Competence, Trustworthiness, and Privilege.

Keywords- Indian Names, Name-Based Stereotypes, Social Cognition

I.INTRODUCTION

In the intricate tapestry of human interaction and perception, names serve as powerful tools that shape our initial impressions, beliefs, and expectations. The age-old adage "What's in a name?" fails to encapsulate the profound influence that names exert on our subconscious judgments and social attitudes. The phenomenon of name-based stereotypes, where preconceived notions are attached to individuals based solely on their given names, presents a captivating intersection of psychology, linguistics, and sociology.

Names are more than mere labels; they are integral parts of our identity that reflect cultural heritage, familial legacy, and personal aspirations. This intrinsic significance is intertwined with a complex web of societal perceptions, influenced by historical contexts, media representations, and prevailing biases. The process through which individuals construct assumptions about others based on their names is a multifaceted one, often operating at an implicit level, leading to judgments that can be both subtle and insidious.

The exploration of name-based stereotypes is not merely an academic pursuit; it holds significant real-world consequences. From the schoolyard to the boardroom, names can shape one's educational opportunities, career trajectories, and social interactions. Understanding the mechanisms underlying these stereotypes is crucial for the development of informed interventions aimed at dismantling them and fostering a more equitable society.

In an era where inclusivity, diversity, and social justice are at the forefront of global conversations, unravelling the complexities of name-based stereotypes is an imperative endeavor. By uncovering the mechanisms that drive these stereotypes and fostering a deeper understanding of their repercussions, we can pave the way for meaningful change and a more empathetic society. Throughout this research paper, we will delve into the perceptual differences that underpin the formation of name-based stereotypes, examining the role of implicit bias, heuristics, and cognitive shortcuts.

Stevie Watson (2011) conducted a research to assess the significance of a name as a racial indicator, which can impact evaluators' viewpoints, attitudes, and perceptions regarding minority individuals applying for jobs. This research delved into a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) interaction involving the applicant's name and the type of sales job concerning the initial impressions of Black candidates held by White sales professionals. The outcomes revealed a noteworthy interplay between the applicant's name and the nature of the sales position with respect to the initial impressions formed before the interview. In the context of outside sales roles, candidates with Anglicized names received more favorable initial impressions compared to those with ethnically suggestive names. Moreover, the initial impressions of applicants with Anglicized names were more positive for positions in outside sales as opposed to inside sales. The study concludes by discussing the findings, their implications, limitations, and potential directions for future research.

Conaway et.al (2015) in this investigation, delved into the correlation between underlying attitudes and biases of online educators and student first names that are racially or ethnically indicative. For this purpose, the researchers employed the Brief Implicit Attitudes Test (BIAT)tool, tailored to address this specific context. The study encompassed 147 online instructors, all holding a minimum of a Master's degree in their respective fields. Employing an experimental research design, we ascertained that, to a limited extent, implicit bias does indeed exist concerning names that carry stereotypical associations. Additionally, the research uncovered that instructors consciously perceived themselves as being welcoming and accepting of names that come with stereotypes.

Purpose of the research

The study aims to uncover the extent to which names influence perceptions of competence, trustworthiness, and privilege among individuals.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objective

Analyze the difference between the perceived characters of each name.

Hypotheses

- There will be a significant difference between the perceived level of competence of each name.
- There will be a significant difference between the perceived level of trustworthiness of each name.
- There will be a significant difference between the perceived level of privilege of each name.

Participants

To conduct this study, 52 participants were randomly selected. Each participant voluntarily took part in the study upon being informed about the research's purpose. The study involved all ages and gender groups in India.

Material

The participants were asked to rate 9 names on 3 characteristics- Competence, Trustworthiness and Privilege. The rating scale consisted of 5 points, 1 being Most Unlikely and 5 being most likely.

Data Collection

The data was collected through online mode. All the participants were informed about the aim of the study and given required instructions. The information given by the participants, along with their identities, was kept confidential.

Process of Analysis

After the data was collected, scores were analyzed using methods of descriptive statistics- Mean and Standard deviation, methods of inferential statistics- Confidence interval and MANOVA. The results are represented using graphs and tables.

III.   RESULT & DISCUSSION

To analyze the data, we performed multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in SPSS 16.0 software.

Name	N
Abhishek	52
Elizabeth	52
Jaishankar	52
Kamal	52
Pinky	52
Prakriti	52
Raju	52
Ranbir	52
Shanaya	52

Table1: Between-Subjects Factors

Table1 Between subject factor table shows 9 names -Abhishek, Elizabeth, Jaishankar, Kamal,Pinky, Prakriti, Raju, Ranbir, Shanaya. The number of observations is 52.

Name	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Competence			
Abhishek	3.62	1.013	52
Elizabeth	2.98	1.180	52
Jaishankar	3.25	1.186	52
Kamal	2.94	1.018	52
Pinky	2.54	1.019	52
Prakriti	3.58	.936	52
Raju	2.48	1.075	52
Ranbir	3.00	1.010	52
Shanaya	2.79	1.091	52
Total	3.02	1.119	468
Trustworthiness			
Abhishek	3.52	.980	52
Elizabeth	2.13	1.172	52
Jaishankar	3.15	1.161	52
Kamal	2.65	1.046	52
Pinky	2.62	1.051	52
Prakriti	3.58	1.226	52
Raju	2.52	1.146	52
Ranbir	1.90	.869	52
Shanaya	1.85	.802	52
Total	2.66	1.215	468
Privilege			
Abhishek	3.06	.938	52

Elizabeth	4.35	.814	52
Jaishankar	3.73	.888	52
Kamal	2.40	.846	52
Pinky	1.92	1.118	52
Prakriti	3.04	1.009	52
Raju	1.77	1.022	52
Ranbir	4.04	.949	52
Shanaya	4.29	1.073	52
Total	3.18	1.338	468

Table2: Descriptive Statistics

Table2 shows the Mean and Standard Deviation of the names under three characteristics. Under Competence the total Mean and SD was 3.02 and 1.119 respectively. The highest mean was 3.62 (Abhishek), 3.58 (Prakriti), 3.25(Jaishankar). The lowest mean was 2.48(Raju), 2.54(Pinky).

Under Trustworthiness the total Mean and SD was 2.66 and 1.215. The highest mean was 3.58 (Prakriti), 3.52 (Abhishek), and 3.15 (Jaishankar). The lowest mean was 1.85 (Shanaya), 1.90 (Ranbir).

Under the Privilege the total Mean and SD was 3.18 and 1.338. The highest mean was 4.35 (Elizabeth), 4.29 (Shanaya), 4.04(Ranbir). The lowest mean was 1.77 (Raju), 1.92 (Pinky)

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.942	2.483E3[a]	3.000	457.000	.000	.942
	Wilks' Lambda	.058	2.483E3[a]	3.000	457.000	.000	.942
	Hotelling's Trace	16.301	2.483E3[a]	3.000	457.000	.000	.942
	Roy's Largest Root	16.301	2.483E3[a]	3.000	457.000	.000	.942
Name	Pillai's Trace	.758	19.390	24.000	1.377E3	.000	.253
	Wilks' Lambda	.364	23.063	24.000	1.326E3	.000	.286
	Hotelling's Trace	1.423	27.011	24.000	1.367E3	.000	.322
	Roy's Largest Root	1.147	65.794[b]	8.000	459.000	.000	.534

Table3: Multivariate Tests

Table3 multivariate tests show the results of Wilks' Lambda test. Under the categorical variable-Name, the value of f was 23.063, the p value was .000 at 0.05 alpha level

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	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Competence	1.362	8	459	.211
Trustworthiness	2.768	8	459	.005
Privilege	1.470	8	459	.166

Table4: Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances

Table 3 shows the results of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances. The F value and p value for Competence was 1.362 and .211 at 0.05 alpha levels. The F value and p value for Trustworthiness was 2.768 and .005 at 0.05 alpha levels. The F value and p value for Privilege was 1.470 and .166 at 0.05 alpha levels.

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	Competence	67.692[a]	8	8.462	7.510	.000	.116
	Trustworthiness	174.453[b]	8	21.807	19.441	.000	.253
	Privilege	407.491[c]	8	50.936	54.525	.000	.487
Intercept	Competence	4266.173	1	4266.173	3.787E3	.000	.892
	Trustworthiness	3306.701	1	3306.701	2.948E3	.000	.865
	Privilege	4724.720	1	4724.720	5.058E3	.000	.917
Name	Competence	67.692	8	8.462	7.510	.000	.116
	Trustworthiness	174.453	8	21.807	19.441	.000	.253
	Privilege	407.491	8	50.936	54.525	.000	.487
Error	Competence	517.135	459	1.127			
	Trustworthiness	514.846	459	1.122			
	Privilege	428.788	459	.934			
Total	Competence	4851.000	468				

	Trustworthiness	3996.000	468					
	Privilege	5561.000	468					
Corrected Total	Competence	584.827	467					
	Trustworthiness	689.299	467					
	Privilege	836.280	467					

Table 5: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

   a. R Squared = .116 (Adjusted R Squared = .100)

   b. R Squared = .253 (Adjusted R Squared = .240)

   c. R Squared = .487 (Adjusted R Squared = .478)

Table 5 shows that name has a statistically significant effect on three characteristics Competence (F-7.50, p- .000), Trustworthiness (F-19.441, p- .000), and Privilege (F-54.525, p-.000).

Names	Competence	Trustworthiness	Privilege
Kamal	[2.659,3.2257]	[2.3627,2.945]	[2.1683,2.6394]
Ranbir	[2.7189,3.2811]	[1.6619,2.1458]	[3.7743,4.3026]
Raju	[2.1814,2.7802]	[2.2002,2.8383]	[1.4848,2.0537]
Prakriti	[3.3163,3.8375]	[3.2355,3.9183]	[2.7576,3.3194]
Pinky	[2.2549,2.8221]	[2.3229,2.9079]	[1.612,2.2342]
Shanaya	[2.4848,3.0921]	[1.623,2.0693]	[3.9899,4.5871]
Abhishek	[3.3334,3.8973]	[3.2464,3.7921]	[2.7967,3.3187]
Elizabeth	[2.6523,3.3092]	[1.8083,2.4609]	[4.1196,4.5727]
Jaishankar	[2.9198,3.5802]	[2.8306,3.4771]	[3.4835,3.978]
Total	[2.9176,3.1209]	[2.5478,2.7685]	[3.0558,3.2989]

Table 6: Confidence Interval of names and perceived characteristics.

Table 6 shows the confidence interval of names and perceived characteristics

Standard Deviation
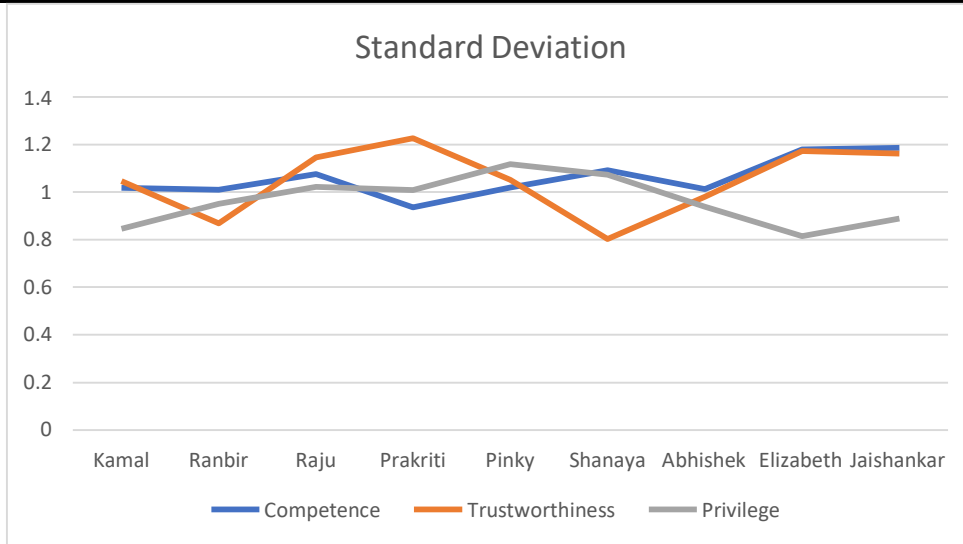
Graph 1: Represents the standard deviation for the names and perceived characteristics.
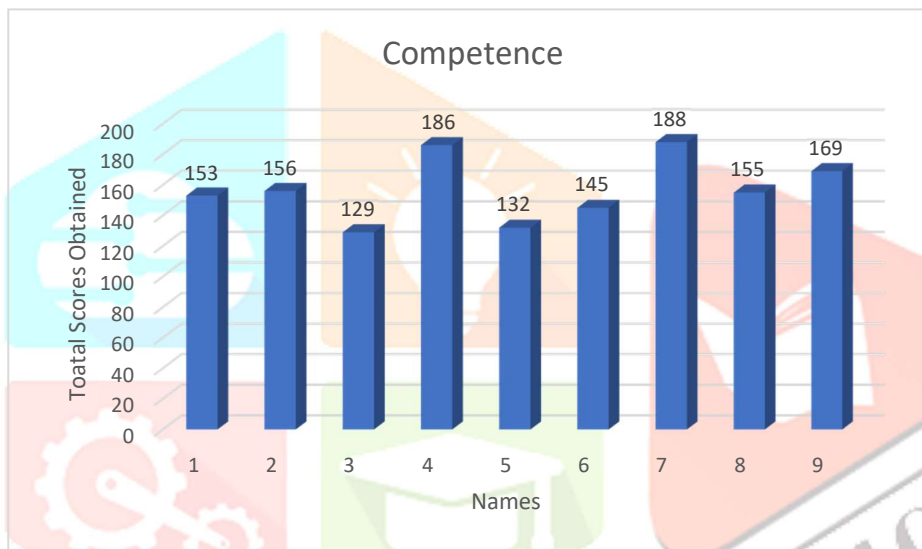
Competence

Graph 2: Represents the total scores obtained by each name on the characteristic- Competence.(Kamal-1, Ranbir-2, Raju-3, Prakriti-4, Pinky-5, Shanaya-6, Abhishek-7, Elizabeth-8, Jaishankar-9)
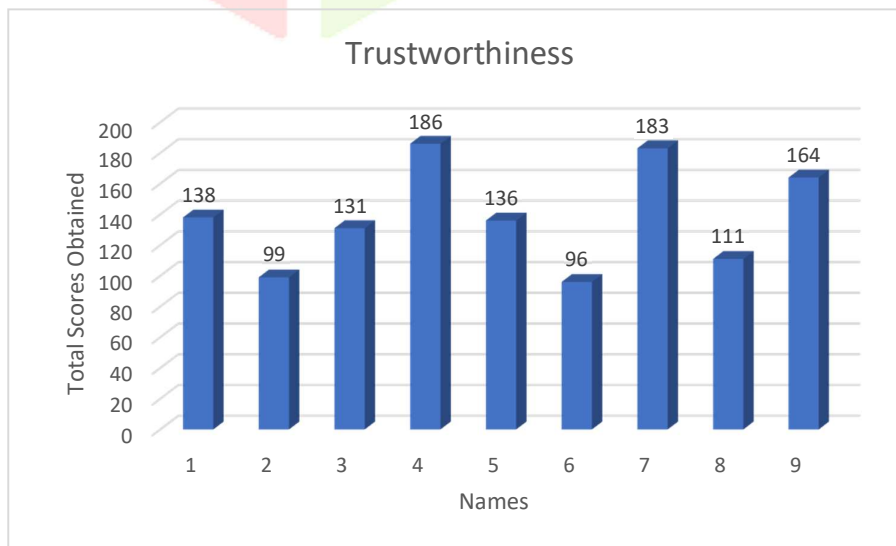
Trustworthiness

Graph 3: Represents the total scores obtained by each name on the characteristic-Trustworthiness. (Kamal-1, Ranbir-2, Raju-3, Prakriti-4, Pinky-5, Shanaya-6, Abhishek-7, Elizabeth-8,Jaishankar-9)

Graph 4: Represents the total scores obtained by each name on the characteristic- Privilege. (Kamal-1, Ranbir-

2, Raju-3, Prakriti-4, Pinky-5, Shanaya-6, Abhishek-7, Elizabeth-8,Jaishankar-9)

Discussion

The dataset provided offers intriguing insights into the perceived levels of competence, trustworthiness, and privilege associated with various names. Names are not merely identifiers;they often carry cultural, social, and historical connotations that can shape our perceptions of individuals.

The competence scores assigned to each name appear to reflect the perceived skill, ability, or expertise that people associate with these individuals. Names like "Prakriti" and "Abhishek" garner relatively high competence scores, indicating that they are seen as capable and proficient. On the other hand, "Ranbir" and "Shanaya" receive varying competence scores, possibly influenced by factors such as cultural stereotypes or media portrayals.

Trustworthiness scores highlight the extent to which people believe these individuals can be relied upon and considered dependable. Interestingly, "Prakriti" and "Abhishek" score high again, not only in competence but also in trustworthiness. This could imply a connection between perceived competence and trustworthiness. However, names like "Ranbir" and "Shanaya" receive lower trustworthiness scores, indicating potential biases in how we perceive certain names in relation to trust. Such biases could have serious consequences in interpersonalrelationships and professional settings.

The privilege scores assigned to each name bring attention to the social advantages ordisadvantages that might be associated with them. Names like "Ranbir," "Elizabeth," and "Shanaya" receive higher privilege scores, suggesting that they may be linked to perceptions of affluence or societal status. On the other hand, "Raju," "Pinky," and "Jaishankar" receive lower privilege scores, which could indicate associations with less privileged backgrounds. This aspect raises questions about the systemic biases embedded in our society and how names can inadvertently perpetuate these biases. The Wilks' Lambda test, a powerful tool for analyzing multivariate relationships, demonstratesthe statistical significance of the categorical variable "Name." The calculated value of the F- statistic, 23.063, accompanied by an extremely low p-value of 0.000, points to a substantial effect of names on the variables under consideration. This indicates that names are not simplyrandom labels; they have a discernible impact on the traits being measured.

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances further enriches our understanding of the data. Inrelation to the characteristics, the F-value and p-value for Competence are 1.362 and 0.211 respectively. For Trustworthiness, these values are 2.768 and 0.005, and for Privilege, they are

1.470 and 0.166. The varying p-values highlight that Trustworthiness is the most sensitive to name variations, followed by Privilege and then Competence.

The subsequent analysis establishes that the name factor holds a statistically significant effecton the three traits: Competence, Trustworthiness, and Privilege. The F-values further substantiate this observation. Competence is influenced by name variations with an F-value of

7.50 and a p-value of 0.000. Trustworthiness is even more responsive to names, showing an F-value of 19.441 and a p-value of 0.000. Lastly, Privilege is remarkably influenced, illustrated by an F-value of 54.525 and a p-value of 0.000.

It's important to note that the intersections of these factors are complex and multifaceted. For instance, the intersection of competence, trustworthiness, and privilege might shape the way individuals are perceived and treated in various contexts. Someone with a high competence score might be more likely to be trusted, but this could be further influenced by their perceivedprivilege. These dynamics can have lasting effects on education, employment, and social interactions.

Limitations and Critiques

- Limited sample diversity focuses on common names, ignoring unconventional ones.

- Societal shifts can render findings outdated as cultural norms evolve.

- Real-world complexity hampers isolating name impact.

- Limited longitudinal data for intervention effectiveness.
- Cultural specificity limits generalization.

Area of future research

Studying name-based stereotypes means looking at many different things. We want to understand how names affect how our brains work and how we talk. We also want to see howstereotypes about names change in different cultures and times. We're curious about where these ideas about names come from when we're kids, and how technology can make these ideasbetter or worse. Names are connected to who we are, like our gender or race, and that makes things even more complex. We're also watching how names change and how different languages and cultures influence these changes. By studying all of this, researchers can help usunderstand how names can make us think differently about people and how we can make thingsfairer for everyone.

IV. CONCLUSION

The results indicate that all three hypotheses were significant. The data on perceptions of competence, trustworthiness, and privilege associated with names sheds light on the intricate ways names shape our judgments. By analyzing and discussing these perceptions, we can work towards dismantling biases, fostering inclusivity, and promoting fairer interactions in all spheres of life. Understanding that a person's worth cannot be determined solely by their name is essential in building a more equitable and just society.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare they have no conflict of interest.

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