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**A Sociolinguistic Study on Parental Naming Practices:
Case of Young Generation Children (2013-2025) of
Bouhamza, Algeria**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
Master's degree in Linguistics**

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Abstract

This dissertation reports on the findings of a study that primarily aimed to uncover the major factors that influence naming practices among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, a commune in the Bejaia province of Algeria. Employing a qualitative research design, data were gathered through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with a convenience sample of thirty-four (34) parents of children aged between one (1) day and twelve (12) years old. Thematic analysis of the data revealed that naming decisions were shaped by a complex interplay between five main factors: cultural, religious, familial, musical and aesthetic, and modern influences. The findings indicated that cultural identity and heritage remained foundational, with many names reflecting the community's values such as social privileges and personal aspirations. Religious motivations, particularly the adoption of Muslim names, were prominent, with parents expressing a sense of duty towards this practice, emphasising the importance of instilling a religious identity in their children. Familial tradition, such as naming after ancestors, persisted but was sometimes viewed as a constraint by parents seeking greater autonomy in the naming decision. Aesthetic considerations, including the musicality of names, also played a significant role, especially in the creation of a harmoniously coherent family naming system, or in marking distinctiveness of children through unique names. Finally, modern influences driven by globalization and media exposure were increasingly evident, especially through the adoption of foreign trendy names for children. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the anthroponymic systems in the Kabyle Berber society and Algeria more broadly, offering valuable insights into how names are more than simple labels, functioning as markers of identity, heritage, social and cultural values, as well as personal preferences and contemporary trends.

Key words: Bouhamza, Children Names, Factors, Naming Practice, Sociolinguistic,

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Dedication

I lovingly dedicate this work

*First and foremost to my beloved **Parents**,*

whose deep and unconditional love is the soil from which I grew. This journey is as much theirs as it is mine. Their unshakable faith and endless sacrifices have always been the strength behind my courage and determination to succeed.

*To my entire **Family**, my dear **Husband**, my precious **Siblings** and closest **Friends**, whose support, constant presence and belief in me have made all the difference through this experience.*

May these lines echo the gratitude that fills my heart for the wings you helped me find.

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General introduction

Once a human being sees life, he is given a name that accompanies him all his life and even after death. At that moment, as the name is chosen and spoken, it becomes more than just a label; it becomes a symbol of identity and belonging (Aksholakova, 2014). Naming is a universal practice that has existed since the dawn of human existence. From the earliest societies to the present day, the act of assigning names has been fundamental to human communication, social organization, and identity formation. Across cultures and generations, the act of naming a child carries a deep sociolinguistic significance, reflecting personal, familial, cultural, religious, and societal values (Şahin, 2017). In this regard, the process of choosing a first name is therefore more than just a personal decision; it sits at the crossroads of many constantly evolving influences, making the analysis of naming patterns complex and multifaceted. Within the field of sociolinguistics, naming provides valuable insights into the social and cultural dynamics of a given community. Algeria, a nation characterized by a rich variety of languages, ethnicities, and historical influences, offers a unique context for examining naming practices as reflections of cultural and societal values. This study focuses on the Kabyle Berber society, with a particular emphasis on Bouhamza, a village located in the mountainous heights of Bejaia province, Algeria. It explores the factors that influence naming practices among parents of young generation children aged between one day and twelve years old, focusing on how parents navigate the interplay between tradition, faith, family ties, aesthetic preferences, contemporary trends and naming customs. By examining these dimensions the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the role of personal names within the society, not only as personal identifiers, but as living and dynamic expressions of personal and collective identity.

1. Background of the study

The study of names, known as Onomastics, is a branch of linguistics that studies proper names, their origins, historical development, meanings and usages; with the aim to analyze and understand the onomastic systems present within a language or a culture (Ikromjonovna & Kizi, 2023). According to Al-Zumor (2009), onomastics includes two main branches: anthroponomastics which deals with personal names and toponomastics, which is concerned by place names. Anthroponomastics examines individuals' names reflecting the values, beliefs, and cultural norms of the society in which they originate, and revealing insights into people's backgrounds, professions, traditions, social status and fashion (Al-

Zumor, 2009). Anthroponomastic studies operate on the theory that there is a deep connection between people's language and cultural practices. This perspective illustrates how language functions both as a reflection of cultural identity and as a tool for interpreting the worldview of a specific community (Agyekum, 2006). Through the study of names, one can thus gain a deeper understanding of a society's social dynamics and everyday life. Building on that, the current research, which is about the factors influencing the naming practices in Bouhamza, is an anthroponimic study that arises from a sociolinguistic interest. In this context, personal names, which are part of language, will serve as a microscopic lens for this investigation to view and understand the sociolinguistic factors that shape parents' naming decisions.

The study of names has in fact been a matter of discussion among researchers, gaining significant interest of semanticists, anthropologists and philosophers over the world. However, research specifically addressing the factors influencing the naming process remains limited, particularly in understudied contexts. For example, Agyekum (2006) dealt with naming as an important aspect of the Akan society in Ghana, and looked at the typology of Akan names through pure linguistic anthropology. According to him, names are not arbitrary labels but are socio-cultural tags that have socio-cultural functions and meanings. To confirm the notion that personal names reflect important aspects of the culture of societies, Al Zumor (2009) in his socio-cultural and linguistic analysis of Yemeni Arabic personal names argued that personal naming customs can play a significant role in broader cultural shifts, and provide valuable insights into the social and cultural organization of diverse communities. In the context of Jordan, Tarawneh and Hajjaj (2021) carried a sociolinguistic study of personal names where they examined how sociolinguistic factors affect the personal naming in respect to gender, generation, and geographical distribution. Similarly, Azieb and Qudah (2018) in Algeria looked into the factors influencing the naming patterns in the province of Jijel, noting that in order to choose a name for their children, parents often take different factors into account, depending on the gender and the generation in question. In the context of the Kabylie region of Algeria, particularly in Bejaia province, the majority of earlier researchers including Abdelli and Aissani (2022) followed a purely linguistic approach focusing on lexical, morphologic and semantic analysis of names across different regions. This shows that anthroponomastic research, perhaps, has not received adequate attention from a sociolinguistic perspective in Algeria. The present study thus aims at contributing to filling this gap through exploring the factors influencing the naming practices among parents of young generation children in the context of Bouhamza, Algeria.

2. Statement of the problem

Personal name selection is a sociocultural practice closely tied to the society's social, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds, making it a dynamic process that evolves alongside social and cultural changes (Şahin, 2017). This implies that naming is not a random or purely individual decision; rather, it is deeply embedded in the social, cultural, religious, and familial structures that shape both personal and collective identity within a community. However, despite the central role that personal names play in shaping individuals and the society as whole, the sociolinguistic factors influencing naming practices remain underexplored, particularly within specific cultural contexts such as Bouhamza, Algeria. Existing research works have generally explored naming patterns in the broader Algerian society; for example, Azieb and Qudah (2018) explored the naming factors in the province of Jijel; Bennacer (2020) examined the role of sociocultural and symbolic representations in the anthroponomic construction in the city of Bejaia, while Aouchiche and Tidjet (2024) studied the choice of children's first name in the region of Timezrit. Previous studies, including that by Abdelli and Aissani (2022), have also dealt with the morphologic and semantic study of names, but few have comprehensively explored how different influential factors shape name choices in the Algerian society, particularly in little known places like Bouhamza. Therefore, addressing this gap is essential for a better understanding of the naming process, as this research will examine the factors influencing the naming practices among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, contributing to deeper insights about the naming process in the broader Algerian context. In order to fill the research gap, the present study raises the following question:

What are the main factors that influence the choice of personal names among parents of young generation children aged between one day and twelve years old in the region of Bouhamza?

3. Research objectives

Despite the fact that naming is a universal practice, its process still differ from a country to another, from a community to another and even from a family to another. This difference is explained by a variety of variables that govern it and which are unique to each society (Bramwell, 2012). Therefore, the main purpose of the present study is to examine the factors that influence the naming customs among parents of young generation children belonging to the Algerian Berber community of Bouhamza. The study aims at exploring the reasons behind the choice of the personal name for children aged between one day and twelve

years old; which can be impacted either by culture, religion, family, musicality, modernization and many other concepts. Therefore, this research sheds light on the complex interplay between sociocultural factors and the process of naming in the context of Bouhamza.

4. Significance of the study

The dissertation's primary object of study is personal names. It studies the factors influencing the process of naming in the region of Bouhamza through exploring the concepts parents take into account when selecting names for their children. The current study thus holds a notable academic and social significance, as it addresses the gap of understanding naming customs in particular context like Bouhamza, and sheds light on the cultural and societal values of this community. Building upon previous contributions, our study moves the field forward because it advances knowledge about the intricate relationship between naming decisions and sociocultural factors, and sheds light on the naming customs of this little known and understudied social group. In addition, it will draw attention to the fact that names are more than just individual identifiers, but are deeply ingrained in the society as they represent broader cultural and social progress. Finally and most importantly, this research may have implications for understanding naming practices in other indigenous communities and for comparative studies across different cultural contexts.

5. Population and Sample

The targeted population of this study includes all the parents belonging to the Algerian Berber community of Bouhamza who have children aged between one (1) day and twelve (12) years old. As for the sample, thirty-four (34) parents were deliberately selected through convenience sampling method to participate in in-depth interviews about the factors influencing their choice of names for their children. Our choice of this population is done on purpose reflecting the study's focus on understanding the naming practices within a specific context. Previous research including that by Azieb and Qudah (2018) revealed that naming practices have significantly evolved among young children marking a generational shift in the naming process. Building on that, this study sought to identify factors shaping name choices for children in the relatively understudied and little-known region of Bouhamza.

6. Methods

The present study seeks to investigate the factors influencing the naming practices among parents of young generation children in the region of Bouhamza. It aims to shed lights on the reasons behind the choice of the names that children currently bear. To this end, a qualitative method was adopted to achieve the research aims, with interviews serving as the primary instrument for data collection. The choice of a qualitative approach is justified by the exploratory nature of this study, which sought to understand why parents select particular names for their children. As Denzin and Lincoln (1998) emphasized, qualitative research enables researchers to study and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them. This highlights the interpretive nature of qualitative research needed for a thorough exploration of the factors that shape the naming decisions. In addition, the use of interviews allowed for the collection of rich and detailed data about the parents' naming experiences; because according to Kothari (2004), interviews enable researchers to obtain more and in-depth information about participants' perspectives and thoughts.

7. Data collection methods and analysis:

The present study employed a qualitative data collection method, primarily, semi-structured interviews to explore the factors influencing the naming practices among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza. To gain a deeper understanding of the sociolinguistic variables that shapes the naming process, thematic analysis was employed to examine, to report and to analyze the data obtained from the interviews conducted with members of the sample (more details are provided in section 1, chapter II, p. 23). These approaches allowed for the identification of the core themes covering the major factors that direct the parents' naming decisions in the region of Bouhamza.

8. Structure of the dissertation

The present dissertation is organized into two main chapters, in addition to a general introduction and a general conclusion, each serving a distinct purpose in the exploration of the factors influencing the choice of personal names for children in Bouhamza village. In the first chapter, consisting of three sections dedicated to the theoretical considerations, we provide a comprehensive literature review essential for the exploration of the research topic. The initial section presents an explicit overview about the history, function and significance of proper names, addressing important theories from early philosophical to recent linguistic eras. The

second section, dealing with the sociolinguistics of naming process, provides a framework for a better understanding of naming in the Algerian and broader contexts, approaching key concepts like the act of naming and the factors influencing it. The third section reviews existing literature on the study of names, drawing on research conducted in different settings. Concerning the practical part, chapter two is divided into four sections dedicated to the key stages of the research process. The first section describes the research design including the participants, methods, and procedure followed in the process of data collection and analysis. In regard to the second section, it reports and analyses the findings obtained from the collected data, while the third section discusses and interprets the results in relation to previous research. As for the fourth section, it cites the limitations of the current study, lists certain recommendations and provides suggestions for future research. Finally, the dissertation concludes with a general conclusion that summarises the whole study and states clearly the answer to the research question. The list of references and appendices are presented at the end of the study.

Chapter I: Theoretical consideration

The practice of naming humans is one of the oldest traditions that can be traced back to the very first human that existed on earth. This explains the importance of theoretically examining the concept of naming to the exploration of the factors influencing its process. As such, this chapter is organized in three sections. The first section provides a general overview of the evolution and history of personal proper names, exploring diverse theories and definitions of the concept of “name” as introduced by key figures from the philosophical to the linguistic eras. The second section addresses the sociolinguistics of the naming process, focusing on the factors that influence name selection both globally and within the Algerian context. It examines how cultural and social dynamics shape naming conventions across different societies, with particular attention to Algeria. Finally, the third section analyzes existing literature related to the topic, highlighting studies on the naming process conducted in various settings.

Section one: Overview about the History, Function, and Significance of Proper Names

Proper names, like "Marry", "Paris", or "Einstein" hold a special place in linguistic and philosophical research making them an intriguing subject of matter. Despite these names refer to particular people, locations or objects, their nature and sense have been investigated from a variety of perspectives over time. In other words, the exploration of personal names has for so long been tackled across various fields; what makes the consideration of the concept of “Name” crucial for the study of the factors influencing the choice of labels for children. Hence, spanning from classical philosophical debates to modern linguistic analyses, this section highlights the evolution and the theories surrounding personal proper names from the philosophic to the linguistic era.

1. Names in Classical Philosophy

Starting by the classical times where philosophy was the prominent approach to research, the study of personal proper names can be traced back to the works of ancient scholars and thinkers that include Plato and Aristotle.

1.1. Plato:

Bagwell (2010), in his study of Plato's *Cratylus*, asserted that the source questions the correctness of names and considers whether they are naturally or conventionally correct. It is

a dialogue that examined the nature of names and how they relate to the objects they refer to, offering two opposing viewpoints via the characters Hermogenes and Cratylus. According to Cratylus, names are inherently linked to the essence of their referents, implying that names can accurately capture the nature of people and things. This means that there is a natural relationship between a name and what it refers to; therefore, this makes it possible to describe a person or a thing by its name. Hermogenes argued, on the other hand, that names are merely socially accepted conventions that have no inherent relationship to the things they represent. This contrasts with the naturalist view since it considers names as just labels which are agreed upon to be used in a certain way and have no natural relationship with their referents. By means of the character Socrates, Plato suggested in the dialogue a combination of these viewpoints, proposing that names can represent both natural and conventional components. According to him, names can be used as representations of deeper truths, but their appropriate application necessitates an awareness of how they relate to these ideal realities (Bagwell, 2010). In other words, Plato believed that names can represent important ideas or truths. Yet, a deep understanding of what these names really mean and how they connect to these deeper ideas is crucial for their accurate usage.

1.2. Aristotle

Blain (2022), in his examination of names in both Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy of language said:

Whereas the Cratylus considers both the naturalism and conventionalism argument equally, with the dialogue ultimately concluding with an inconclusive synthesis, Aristotle dismisses any supposed naturalism of words, instead adopting a strict conventionality (*κατὰ συνθήκην*). Moreover, unlike Plato, who perceives name as an embodiment of a form set forth originally by brilliant name-giver, Aristotle ascribes the origin of names in language to human agreement resulting from spoken utterances manifesting the inner states of the soul, thereby removing any abstract idea of forms from the origin of names. (Blain, 2022, pp. 12-13)

This means that Aristotle stressed that proper names are essentially linguistic signifiers that refer to people directly and do not carry any additional descriptive meaning. According to him, names are just common and accepted instruments of communication that have no natural relationship with their referents. From this perspective, it can be noted that Aristotle takes a

more empirical position, emphasizing the useful role of language in identifying particular entities, whereas Plato's viewpoint is grounded in idealism and metaphysics.

2. Names in Modern Philosophy (Philosophy of language)

The evolution of efforts seeking to define a “Name” continued to modern philosophy, leading up to the emergence of several theories about proper names, each attempting to address the complexities of reference and identity inherent in the concept. The following are the significant figures who sought to give sense to names from different perspectives:

2.1. John Stuart Mill

John Stuart Mill in his book entitled “A system of Logic” (1843), approached the concept of proper names through distinguishing between the connotative and the denotative meaning. According to him, proper names are only denotative; they do not convey any additional semantic information beyond identifying their referents. For Mill, proper name is a non-connotative word that serves to identify the object of our conversation without providing any information about it. He claimed that proper names like "Paul" or "Caesar" are essentially "unmeaning marks" that we mentally connect to the concept of the thing or the person they represent.

This viewpoint implies that proper names only serve as referential terms and have no additional meanings or characteristics. Mill (1843, p. 35) said, “The only names of objects which connote nothing are proper names, and these have, strictly speaking, no signification”. These principles constitute the Millian theory which marked a significant development in the philosophy of language, influencing later thinkers who engaged with Mill's ideas to further explore the nature of reference and meaning in language.

2.2. Gottlob Frege

Mill’s perspective was later challenged by Frege in his sense-based theory of names, where he introduced the distinction between sense (Sinn) and reference (Bedeutung). In his seminal essay “*On Sense and Reference*”, Frege (1948) argued that although proper names identify particular things and persons, they also convey a sense that adds to their overall meaning. He is best known for using the examples of "the morning star" and "the evening star", which both refer to the same thing (Venus) but have distinct meanings.

Frege posited that the sense of a name represents the mode of presentation of its referent, providing context and meaning beyond simple identification. He explained,

The referent of a proper name is the object itself which we designate by its means; the conception, which we thereby have, is wholly subjective; in between lies the sense, which is indeed no longer subjective like the conception, but is yet not the object itself. (Frege, 1948, p.213)

In simple words, Frege meant that a proper name is primarily used to designate the object or the person it refers to; on the other hand, conception is the mental image we have and personal understanding of what the name represents; between the referent and the conception lies the sense which is the shared understanding of the name in a broader context which helps us to communicate about it.

In a nutshell, the sense-based theory of Frege emphasises that names convey a sense beyond their main reference and carry additional information about their referents. This theory distinguishes Frege's approach from others who argue that names are merely labels without inherent meaning

2.3. Bertrand Russell

Sainsbury (2014), in his work "*Russell on names and communication*" noted that Bertrand Russell, the founder of the descriptive theory, stated that the meaning of a proper name is closely tied to a set of descriptions that identify its referent. According to him, Russell emphasised that proper names serve as abbreviations for these descriptions, which can change depending on the context. Therefore, for him, common proper names are basically "disguised definite descriptions", as terms like "Socrates" can be interpreted as a shorthand for more intricate terms like "the teacher of Plato" or "A great philosopher of ancient Greece". Russell interpreted the example as follows:

If somebody mentions Socrates and you have never previously heard of him, you can look him up in the encyclopaedia and you may take what you find there as the definition of the word "Socrates". In that case, "Socrates" is not, for you, strictly a name, but a substitute for a description . . . I do not suggest that in ordinary language or in grammar we should refuse to regard "Socrates" (say) as a name, but, from an epistemological point of view, our knowledge about him is very different from our knowledge of things with which we are acquainted. In fact,

every- thing that we know about Socrates can only be stated fully by substituting some description of him in place of his name, since, for us, it is only from the description that we understand what the word “Socrates” means. (Russell, 1959, as cited in Sainsbury, 2014, p. 90)

In his work *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*, Russell (1919) also defined a proper name as a simple symbol that directly designates an individual, which is its meaning and having this meaning in its own right independently of the meanings of all other words. From this perspective, it is appropriate to say that a name encompasses a collection of characteristics connected to the individual rather than directly referring to them in isolation.

To sum up, Russell's descriptive theory has significant implications for understanding identity statements and existential claims. He offers a framework for examining how language interacts with reality by framing proper names as abbreviations for descriptions.

2.4. Saul Kripke

Saul Kripke is another opponent figure who made a significant contribution to the philosophy of language through criticising earlier descriptivist theories and suggesting the causal theory of reference. In his groundbreaking work *Naming and Necessity*, Kripke (1980), argued that proper names are rigid designations, referring to the same person in every scenario regardless of any descriptive characteristics attached to them. He challenged the idea that names only get their meaning from descriptions by proposing that causes within linguistic communities connect names to their referents. Therefore, he asserted that the proper name refers to the object named in any possible world in which the object exists (Kripke, 1980).

According to Kripke's theory, a name's reference is created by an "initial baptism," following which the name turns into a rigid designator for that object. Because they are linked to that initial act through a causal chain, subsequent uses of the name refer to the same object. Even in situations where the referent is absent or when the reference evolves over time, this method enables meaningful conversation (Sfetcu, 2020). He demonstrated, for instance, how a speaker could mention Richard Feynman without being aware of the specifics of how or from whom they first heard the name, yet still refer to the same person due to the causal connection back to the initial naming event. According to this theory, names continue to be relevant over time and in various contexts, enabling meaningful communication even in cases where the details of how a name was learned are forgotten.

This perspective has reshaped discussions in philosophy regarding how names function and how they relate to meaning and identity in language, as it explains how names maintain their reference over time through a process Kripke termed "initial baptism" followed by a causal chain.

2.5. John Searle

John Searle made important and subtle contributions to the philosophy of language, especially with regard to proper names. In his pioneering work *Proper Names* (1958), Searle addressed the philosophical arguments started by the previously mentioned thinkers Frege and Russell, by first raising the question of whether proper names have senses. He challenged the traditional descriptivist perspective, which holds that a group of descriptions that identify their referents are synonymous with names. Instead, Searle (1958) suggested a presuppositional perspective on proper names, arguing that they are not just reducible to descriptions but can have a sense.

... though proper names do not normally assert or specify any characteristics, their referring uses nonetheless presuppose that the object to which they purport to refer has certain characteristics Now what I am arguing is that the descriptive force of 'This is Aristotle' is to assert that a sufficient but so far unspecified number of these statements are true of this object. Therefore, referring uses of 'Aristotle' presuppose the existence of an object of whom a sufficient but so far unspecified number of these statements are true. To use a proper name referringly is to presuppose the truth of certain uniquely referring descriptive statements, but it is not ordinarily to assert these statements or even to indicate which exactly are presupposed. (Searle, 1958, as cited in Zvolenszky, 2012, p. 121)

Searle argued that proper names serve as more than just abbreviations for descriptions; according to him, they are associated with a set of presuppositions that capture characteristics of the object or the person they refer to, which therefore guide their use in particular contexts. Besides, though these presuppositions are not stated directly when using the name, they remain essential to understand its reference, making sure the name is used correctly in various settings. He also highlighted the importance of intentionality in comprehending how names function by stating that linguistic reference is often dependent on or is a form of mental reference (Searle, 1958). Moreover, Searle in his theory of speech acts introduced the concept of illocutionary acts, which are central to understanding how proper names function within

communication (Searle, 1969). He stressed that in order to comprehend how names work in communication, context and intention are crucial.

Ultimately, this perspective aligns with Frege's concept of sense, however it is more flexible and presuppositional as it allows for a deeper understanding of how names convey meaning that goes beyond simple reference.

3. Names in Linguistics

By the early 20th century, the emergence of linguistics as a scientific inquiry has revolutionized the study of language including the study of names. This period marked a shift from historical and comparative linguistics to more empirical, systematic and structural approaches. With the development of linguistics, scholars were able to examine names as essential parts of the linguistic system rather than merely as simple labels. This change opened the way for a better comprehension of how names convey meaning and work within linguistic structures.

3.1. Ferdinand de Saussure on Names

Ferdinand de Saussure, credited with being the father of modern linguistics, did not specifically focus on proper names in his work. His theory of language, as outlined in his book *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), emphasises the structure of language and the relationships between signs in a linguistic system. Saussure's focus was on the sign's arbitrariness, which means that the signifier (the word itself) and the signified (the concept it refers to) are not inherently connected (Key & Noble, 2017). This principle applies to proper names as well, demonstrating that their meanings are determined through social conventions rather than innate relationships. Thus, while Saussure may not have explicitly addressed proper names in detail, his theoretical framework allows for a deeper understanding of their role in language.

In short, though his work does not exclusively address the study of proper names, Saussure's contributions to linguistics have laid the foundation for structuralism and semiotics (Key & Noble, 2017). This provides an interesting framework for the study of names in terms of analyzing them as integral meaningful parts of a linguistic system rather than just simple labels.

3.2. Names in Linguistic Grammar:

As cited in Long (1969), professor Utley (1963) said "a grammar which does not include proper names is no grammar at all". This quote emphasizes how important proper names are to linguistic structures. Because they adhere to specific syntactic behaviours and add meaning in communication, proper names—which designate particular people, locations, or organizations—are essential to the grammatical framework. This was further explained by Long (1969), who pointed out that even elementary school grammars acknowledge proper names by defining nouns as "the name of a person, place, or thing," guaranteeing that words like "Mary" and "Boston" are given consideration alongside common nouns.

Proper names are characterized by a set of grammatical features that distinguish them from other types of nouns. Firstly, proper names are characteristically individual in application. Long illustrated this by saying:

... Virginia is a word used as a name for individual people, pets, dolls, places, musical and literary compositions, perhaps even hurricanes: the applications given to the word are innumerable, and yet in each of its proper-name applications the central meaning it conveys is individual. (Long 1969, p.109)

Second, proper names indicate their status as unique identifiers by always being capitalized in almost the majority of languages. Long (1969) explained that, in general, the written language begins proper nouns with honorific capital letters.

Additionally, unlike pluralizers and quantifiabiles, proper names do not accept modifiers such as "many" or "few": it is not accurate to say "many Noras". Thus, this explains another feature of proper names in which they according to Long (1969), stay on one side of the line between singular and plural. This means that names are not freely used in both singular and plural forms,

Proper nouns are distinguished from pluralizers and quantifiabiles (1) by their usual rejection of modifiers of types pluralizers and quantifiabiles accept freely and (2) by the fact that they are not freely usable both in the singular and in the plural, as most pluralizers are, or with quantification of the type involved in modification by much, as quantifiabiles are. (Long, 1969, p.109)

Moreover, Long argued in the same page that the syntactically important characteristics of proper nouns are their usual rejection of determinative modifiers and tight relative clauses in which that functions as clause marker. This means that proper names typically do not accept the addition of articles or adjectives that would modify them; for instance, it is ungrammatical to say 'The Liza'. Besides, proper names do not fit to relative clauses that require determiners. This rejection highlights the independence of proper nouns in grammar as they serve as distinct identifiers.

Finally, Long (1969) highlighted the unique function of proper nouns applied to people, particularly in their role as nouns of direct address through saying:

Proper nouns applied to people are used in the essentially adverbial function of adjuncts of direct address - as in that's yours, Virginia - much more often than other nouns are. Virginia! can serve as a call or as an expression of emotion of some kind, whether pleasure, irritation, or simple surprise: in such uses proper names function as nonclausal sentences. (Long, 1969, p.112)

To sum up, the list of the grammatical features of proper names is not exhausted; yet individual application, capitalization, lack of modifiers, rejection of determiners, and address are the least we can mention about the syntactic, semantic and functional characteristics of proper names. This hence highlights the complexity and the importance of proper names in grammar and linguistic structures.

3.3. The Rise of Onomastics

Naming is a fundamental act that marks the existence of various aspects of human life including objects, concepts and most importantly, individuals. As explained by Algeo and Algeo (2000, p. 265) "The unnamed is the unnoticed, and the unnoticed is for cognitive and communicative purposes nonexistent". This highlights the significance of studying names which falls under the field of onomastics. Onomastics provides an interesting framework for understanding human practices and activities by examining how names reflect cultural, historical, and social contexts. Ultimately, though existed since antiquity and saw a great evolution through different eras, onomastics marked its groundbreaking development during the 20th century with the emergence of linguistics as a scientific discipline.

3.3.1. Definition and origins:

According to Ikromjonovna and Kizi (2023), Onomastics is a subfield of linguistics that studies proper names, their history, appearance, evolution, their formation and specific characteristics. As per them, the term onomastics is derived from the greek “onomastike” which means “the art of naming”. It is used to refer to the branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of names, but in some cases to refer to a collection of all the common nouns used in a certain language. According to Hajdú (2002), the origins of onomastics can be traced back to ancient civilizations around five or six thousand years ago, marking a significant evolution from then till now.

Today, the science of onomastics is concerned with a large list of types of names which as outlined by Ikromjonovna and Kizi (2023) encompasses:

anthroponymy - famous names of people (names, surnames, patronymics, nicknames, nicknames), toponymy - famous names of geographical objects, theonymy - gods and goddesses according to various religious concepts. , names of religiouslegendary persons and creatures, zoonymy - nicknames given to animals, cosmonymy - names of empty space regions, galaxies, constellations, etc. in scientific circulation and among the people, astroponymy - some celestial bodies (planets and stars) represents a set of names. (p. 25)

This diversity of nouns explains the split of onomastics into other subfields among which anthroponomastics, sometimes referred to as anthroponymy, is the area that studies human proper names, including both individual and collective names. This field looks at human names from a variety of angles and explores their origins, meanings, and the factors influencing their choice; highlighting their cultural significance and linguistic characteristics.

In a nutshell, the field of onomastics offers a deep and comprehensive understanding of names in relation to a variety of fields, revealing linguistic structures, historical settings, and cultural traditions that influence the naming process.

3.3.2. The Revival of Proper Names in Linguistics

The rise of onomastics as a distinct field in linguistics has led to a growing interest in the study of proper names, including personal names. In other words, anthroponomastic

investigation during the linguistic era increased significantly in a myriad of societies for distinct reasons. Azieb and Qudah (2019) explained that this is due to fact that naming has always been a central aspect of human life since the dawn of mankind. In addition to that, the diverse nature of the naming process across societies has also fed this interest, as several cultural, social and linguistic factors are taken into account when selecting a name for a child.

This focus reflects the recognition of the importance of understanding the complex role of personal names in the linguistic system besides to their function within cultural contexts. Notably, the field of onomastics has become increasingly interdisciplinary (Algeo & Algeo, 2000). It draws on other fields such as linguistics, anthropology, history and literature, to provide more comprehensible information about the origins of names and their significance in human communication. Furthermore, Hajdú (2002) explained that the scholarly studies in onomastics started to take shape in the 19th century. By the arrival of the 20th century and the emergence of the scientific methods, growing research in onomastics was noticed with a broader focus on linguistic, social and cultural aspects of names. This has marked the revival of investigation in onomastics with abundant research highlighting the cultural differences of naming conventions within different communities and the significance of names in human life and communication.

In short, thanks to the emergence of linguistics and empirical approaches, onomastics and its subfields, mainly anthroponomastics, have been recognized to be essential areas of investigation, as they lead to a better understanding of human cultures, ideologies and traditions regarding the process of naming and other human activities.

Section two: The sociolinguistics of the naming process

At any given place, as soon as a pregnancy announcement is made, parents and people from their entourage, including family members and friends, precipitate to suggest names that each individual believes would be best for the coming child. This explains to which extent a name is important in the human life as it is the first thing by which a person is identified right after birth. This implies that the act of naming a newborn child is a universal practice that carries a deep cultural and identical significance. However, the process of selecting a label varies across the world and does not occur in the same manner it does in different societies. Notably, naming customs are unique to a specific culture, speech community and even individual family. To this end, this section highlights the key concepts related to the naming process and the factors influencing it. In addition, it provides a deep clarification of how

cultural and social factors shape the naming practice across the globe, with a particular emphasis on naming conventions and system in Algeria, which is the central focus of this study. By looking at these elements, this section aims to provide a comprehensible understanding of how names are chosen in different contexts, especially within the Algerian one.

1. The Naming Process

In the simplest words, naming is the process of selecting and assigning labels to refer to individuals, serving as identity markers. Although a name primarily serves to distinguish one person from another, the process of choosing it remains complex. Indeed, a name is not just an identifier; it reflects personal, cultural, and familial characteristics, and its selection is influenced by various factors. As explained by Rosenhouse (2002), names reveal the preference and concerns of their owners as well as givers in terms of real-life objects, actions and beliefs. Thus, naming is a specific linguistic act which shows values, traditions, hopes, fears and everyday events in people's lives. This highlights the complex nature of the naming process which combines between linguistic and social phenomena. That is, despite names are universal and are part of human existence, their selection is not independent from outside influence that comes from the society. As Lieberman (1984) noted, the choices parents make in naming their children are linked to societal conditions, what makes naming a 'natural' topic of investigation for sociolinguistics.

In sociolinguistics, naming is regarded as an intriguing area of investigation due to its relatedness to various aspects of human life besides to the variation of naming practices across societies. The diversity of rules and customs surrounding name selection is explained by the influence of social factors, cultural norms and linguistic practices unique to each community. This complexity reflects the diversity of human lifestyles and traditions where even language manifests in various forms, including in naming systems.

Kileng'a (2020, p. 21) stated "language is not only used as a cultural resource and practice, but it is also envisioned as a powerful tool used to view and understand the worldview and philosophy of a particular society". This perspective highlights the strong interplay between language and cultural practices suggesting that names are not only simple labels but also reflect deeper facts about societal values and beliefs. Hence, it is worth noting that choosing a name -an integral part of language- is governed by a number of extralinguistic factors that according to Lieberman (1984) result from the interaction between the images

names hold for parents besides to the expectations, hopes, and visions they have for their children at birth.

In a nutshell, the study of naming practices offers the opportunity to gain insight about the complex interplay between language, culture and society. Through examining the naming practice of a given community and examining the factors influencing it; it becomes possible to identify the societal dynamics that shape human identity and culture.

2. The Factors Influencing the Naming Process

Azieb and Qudah (2018, p. 13) argued that “naming- a universal process- is linked to a number of factors which govern it in one way or another”. Noting that naming conventions can vary significantly across the world, this claim emphasizes how complex naming is, as it interacts with a variety of the social, cultural, and linguistic factors that influence name choice in diverse societies. Therefore, name selection process is governed by a range of sociocultural factors that according to Tarawneh and Hajjaj (2021) can be cultural, religious, political or familial, besides to the musicality of the name and media influence.

2.1. Culture

Culture is a multifaceted concept that encompasses all aspects that shapes people's lifestyles and reflects human practices, including naming systems. As Islam (2020) defined it:

Culture refers to the way we understand ourselves both as individuals and as member of society which includes stories, religion, media, rituals, and even language itself.

Culture also refers to a set of rules and procedures along with a supporting set of ideas and values. (p. 20)

This perspective indicates that culture influences how individuals think, live, interact, and identify themselves, with naming practices being a significant aspect of this cultural impact. Different communities have distinct customs regarding the selection of a name for a newborn child, which often reflect their cultural identity and values. Therefore, the uniqueness of these naming traditions can be considered as a way to convey deeper meanings related to the community's history, traditions, and societal norms.

For example, in the American English culture, the choice of children's names often serves to perpetuate the memory of ancestors or cultural heroes, or to honour family members (Blumenthal, 2009, as cited in Salih & Ahmed, 2022). This practice demonstrates how names

go beyond simple identification, carrying hidden meanings and connotations that reflect cultural significance and social practices. American naming choices are also heavily influenced by literature, television, and social media, as noted by Salih and Ahmed (2022). These influences contribute to the diversity and creativity seen in American naming traditions, where names are used to express cultural identity and personal style.

In the context of Algeria, Bennacer (2020) explained that for some people, choosing a name is seen as a way to express linguistic and cultural claims. In the case of the Kabyle Berber community, he highlighted that naming is a practice that can serve as an expression of identity, which allows parents to show their belonging to a social group defined by the unique linguistic and cultural features of the Berber language and heritage. For example, parents may use names of historical Berber warriors and kings like “*Massinissa*” and “*Jugurtha*” as a powerful expression of resistance, with the intention to restore and reclaim the Berber language and culture (Bennacer 2020).

On the other hand, some cultural practices within the Algerian Berber communities involve close family members, such as grandparents or elders, in the naming of a child. In this context, elders play a crucial role in the selection of labels, reflecting their significant position within the community. According to Bennacer (2020), besides to elders, even individuals with higher social status are given the privilege of choosing names for children. He explained this practice by the impact of the symbolic authority that comes with age and social status, which are recognized as key factors governing social practices and interactions. Notably, the involvement of elders and respected community members in the naming process reflects the cultural value placed on tradition, respect for authority, and the importance of maintaining social harmony.

In short, the cultural significance of naming customs is apparent in many societies since they convey deeper meanings referring to history, cultural identity, and societal values in addition to acting as marks of identification.

2.2. Religion

Another fundamental aspect of the naming customs is their connection to religious practices, making religion a common factor that directs parents' choice of names for their children. Güzelderen et al. (2023) argued that names not only highlight an individual's unique characteristics but also serve as emblematic representations of religious and cultural identity.

In many societies, people choose names with the intention to maintain and reinforce their religious identity through connecting their children to their communities by means of religiously significant names. In fact, the relationship between naming and religion is evident in almost all cultures (Güzelderen et al., 2023), where names are used to reflect spiritual beliefs and faith.

The significant impact of religious convictions on the cultural norms surrounding naming customs cannot be ignored. Parents frequently choose names that have religious connotations, such as virtues, faith, or divine protection. Because they reflect the deeply rooted religious values in society, these names serve to strengthen a sense of spiritual identity and community. They offer a strong link to the community's spiritual origins and customs, acting as a continuous testament to religious heritage.

For example in Judaism, some names are inspired from the Holy Scripture; because according to Şahin (2017), Jewish people believe that they will be called by their Hebrew names on the day of Judgement. Similarly, in the Christian tradition, names with religious meanings often reflect biblical origins or are chosen to honour religious figures. Likewise, in Muslim societies, parents may give their children names with Islamic connotations including Allah's attributes, names of the prophet, of his relatives or companions, and words or quotations from the holy Quran (Şahin 2017). As Sharma (1997) illustrated

the Prophet's name, Muhammad (praiseworthy, possessing fine qualities), with its estimated five-hundred variants, such as Mahmud, Ahmed, Hamid, Hamdi - derived from the same root, hamida, that is, to praise- are the most popular names that abound in virtually all Muslim countries. (p. 158)

In the context of Algeria, a predominantly Muslim country, religion plays a significant role in various social practices, including the naming process. A study conducted by Azieb and Qudah (2018) in the province of Jijel revealed that the religious factor was highly influential in name selection across three generations. The results of their study showed that while naming customs in the Algerian society have changed over time, religious influence is still very much present. For the older generation, names were heavily influenced by family, culture, and religion. In the middle-aged generation, the religious factor became even more influential for both genders. Interestingly, in the younger generation, while females' names have shifted toward more trendy options, males' names were still strongly influenced by religious beliefs.

Ultimately, many Algerian names are derived from Arabic and Islamic references, honouring Islamic figures and prophets. Indeed, this reflects the deep-rooted Islamic tradition in the Algerian society, where names are commonly selected to strengthen religious identity and to connect children to their religious heritage and beliefs.

2.3. Politics

The political situation is also considered as a significant and multifaceted factor that influences the process of naming. Names with political connotations often reflect the ideological beliefs, social structure and power dynamics within a society. Tarawneh and Hajjaj (2021) explained that in many countries, the names of current political leaders or the desire to select a name with a specific political connotation can significantly influence the choices parents make when naming their children. This means that in order to align their children's identities with particular ideologies, people, for example, choose names that honour prominent political figures or movements. This practice is a way to show support for specific political regimes or ideologies, as well as to strengthen family ties to political legacies.

To illustrate the influence of the political factor on naming individuals, we can refer to Pappas (2013, as cited in Azieb & Qudah, 2018) when he argued that the political ideology of the parents in the United States, whether liberal or conservative, is clearly apparent in the names they choose for their children. As explained by Azieb and Qudah (2018)

The sounds of liberal and conservative names vary. Parents in liberal neighborhoods are more likely to opt for softer, more feminine sounds, such as “L”, and soft-A endings for their babies’ names, such as Liam, Ely, Leila, Ella and Sophia. Conservative parents, however, tend to pick names with more masculine-sounding K’s, B’s, D’s and T’s, such as Kurt. (p. 13)

In the context of Arab world, Al-Quran and Al-Azzam (2014) asserted that the name of the late Egyptian leader, Jamal Abd Al-Naṣir, can be an outstanding example of the influence of the political background on the process of naming. The president Jamal Abd Al-Naṣir gained significant popularity and respect from all people due to his heroic deeds during the period of the Jewish conquest of other Arab lands after the occupation of the Palestinian territories of 1948. Al-Quran and Al-Azzam (2014) explained that because he called for unity and independence, the name of Jamal for Arabs stands for liberation, Arab nationalism, victory and the aspiration for a strong state. The Egyptian president’s leadership and ideology

left a profound impact on Arab identity, making his name synonymous with resistance and gives its bearers a sense of pride.

In Algeria, the political influence is not directly evident and not as common as cultural or religious influences. A study by Azieb and Qudah (2018), found that political considerations had the lowest frequency, with 0% for both genders across all generations except for the males' names of the old generation with only 6%. This suggests that names are rarely chosen based on political motivations. However, it is worth noting that the political factor can indirectly shape naming customs by influencing broader cultural and societal changes. For instance, political decisions can include supporting national identity, implementing new language policies or recognizing minority rights, all of which can impact naming practices.

Overall, naming is not just a matter of personal preference; it is influenced by larger political contexts that mirror and impact societal values and beliefs.

2.4. Naming after someone

Family plays a crucial role in the process of naming a newborn, as parents and their relatives often aim at selecting a name that ensures a sense of belonging to the familyhood. Generally, names chosen on such basis reflect the deep-rooted traditions and values of families, as well as their willingness to preserve family heritage and maintain connections throughout generations. In many cultures, parents choose to name their children after their foreparents and close relatives for different reasons.

For example in the Scottish Western Isles community, it is common for parents to name their children after fraternal or maternal grandfather or grandmother for various reasons, as explained by Bramwell (2012)

One motivation for calling somebody after a particular relative could be the preferential treatment that a child might receive from them. This implies that a name is felt to be special and that someone with the same name might feel an affinity with another. It also indicates that to name after someone else in this community is to bestow honour on the original bearer of that name. (p. 111)

Similarly, in the Jordanian society, Al-Qawasmi and Al-Haq (2016) noted that naming a child after one of his grandparents is a deeply rooted tradition. They considered this phenomenon as a practice that preserves the grandparent's name, ensuring it remains alive in the family; and which gives its bearer a sense of distinction.

This phenomenon exists in the Algerian society as well; thus, naming children after other family members especially grandparents, is a common practice that emphasizes the importance of family ties and heritage. Bennacer (2020) interpreted this tradition as a way to preserve the memory of the deceased, and to ensure a connection between the past and the present. He noted that this custom reflects a broader understanding that naming new generations after ancestors serves to protect the collective memory and to maintain the family's honour and legacy.

Ultimately, familial ties have profound impact on naming practices across different societies. The rationale behind this influence is the parents' aim to celebrate their heritage and to strengthen familial relationships.

2.5. Musicality of the Name

Musicality is also considered to be another influential factor on name selection for children among parents. As defined by Tarawneh and Hajjaj (2021, p. 40), "Musicality refers to the state in which the name sounds rhythmic or may even rhyme". In the same page, they further explained that "These names may share one or more similar sound and may have one different sound that distinguishes them from another name". This highlights the idea that parents find it easier to remember and feel positive about their children's names if they have a pleasing sound or rhythm. These phonetic characteristics, such as a name's syllable structure and general harmony, can be considered a component of musicality.

In this concern, Azieb and Qudah (2018) illustrated the influence of musicality on Algerian name choice through the names "*Lina*" and "*Dina*". These labels share almost the same rhyme and pronunciation differing only in their initial letters. Therefore, this phonetic similarity makes the names easy to remember and creates a sense of community and belonging among their bearers. Bennacer (2020) associated the influence of musicality on the naming process in the Algerian Berber community with aesthetics. He explained that the distinctive sound some parents look for when choosing a name can be understood as a way of

signalling social distinction. In other words, a unique name becomes a social marker that expresses individuality, originality and social categorization.

Overall, parents' decisions can be greatly influenced by a name's musicality because names that sound rhythmic or harmonious are frequently thought to be more desirable. This preference for melodic names highlights the significance of sound in the naming process and reflects broader cultural values regarding beauty and aesthetics in language.

2.6. Media influence

Media plays a significant role in shaping naming trends, influencing which names gain popularity and how parents choose them. Through television, movies, music, and social media, mass media offers a wide array of potential names, often linking them to specific social characteristics or desirability. For example, the practice of "naming after stars" illustrates how media can popularize certain names by associating them with celebrities, fictional characters, or trending public figures (Evans, 2023).

According to Vandebosch (1998), one way media shapes naming trends is by introducing unfamiliar or distinctive names to the public. In other words, parents frequently look for names that sound original as a way to highlight their child's uniqueness, and these names often gain visibility through media exposure, whether in fictional narratives or through well-known media figures (Vandebosch, 1998). Gerritzen (2006), added that the influence of media is not limited to the adoption of celebrity or media figures' names, but also serves as a major source of inspiration, as through regular exposure to modern media, parents become familiar with a wide variety of first names. In addition, media has accelerated the spread of naming trends across different cultures and regions, leading to the rapid rise in popularity of certain names and fostering the concept of internationalization. Gerritzen (2006), explained this phenomenon by noting that parents increasingly choose names that are used globally and are easily recognized across different cultures. She suggested that these parents, whether consciously or unconsciously, consider their children's future international connections when selecting a name. Consequently, media not only influences naming choices but also plays a key role in shaping more globally oriented naming practices in today's interconnected world.

In addition to television shows and movies, internet became an aspect of today's society's growing international outlook (Gerritzen, 2006). The Internet not only enables participation in global networks but also offers access to an immense wealth of information

including naming practices. Parents now may turn to websites and social media platforms for inspiration and ideas when choosing names for their children. More and more parents are looking for names that are special, and preferably unique (Gerritzen, 2006). In this context, Gerritzen (2006), suggested that the Internet supports the trend toward individualization in society. However, she stated that the trend of choosing internationally recognized names is even more significant, as globalization continues to shape the current world. In this way, Gerritzen (2006), noted that social changes like this strongly influence how naming practices evolve, and the Internet is the perfect tool to reflect and support these changes.

In a world dominated by mass media and global trends, national and regional identity is threatened. Gerritzen (2006), noted that there's no doubt that global trends influence people's name choices. She explained that it's likely that names chosen in different countries will become more similar over time, as parents increasingly choose names that are used in many other parts of the world. This shift reflects broader processes of globalization and mass media influence that impact cultural expressions such as naming practices.

In short, In conclusion, the influence of mass media and the Internet has profoundly transformed naming practices worldwide. While these forces have expanded the range of available names and encouraged individuality, they have also contributed to the rise of internationally recognized names, reflecting the growing interconnectedness of societies. This globalization of naming trends poses challenges to the preservation of national and regional identities, as traditional and culturally specific names risk being overshadowed.

3. The Algerian Naming System

Algeria's naming system reflects a wide range of influences that are firmly embedded in its rich cultural heritage, and places a strong emphasis on social identity and family ties. Undoubtedly names are chosen not randomly but with careful consideration of historical, religious, cultural, and familial factors, which collectively shape the identity of individuals and communities. While naming is perceived as personal or familial decision, it is worth noting that it is deeply rooted in communal values and influenced by broader societal contexts (Azieb & Qudah, 2018), no matter how free are parents in making this decision.

Historically, Algeria has implemented strict naming regulations through its Civil Code to preserve cultural identity. The 1970 Civil Code maintained that names are chosen by one of the parents, or, in their absence, by the declarant. According to Article 64, names must have

an Algerian origin, with exceptions for children born to parents of a non-Muslim faith. This regulation prohibited any names other than those established by custom or tradition. The purpose of this law was to strengthen cultural unity and national identity, especially after the Algerian independence from the French colonial rule. Afterwards, the 2007 Civil Code maintained this restriction for Algerian names, but removed the reference to "custom or tradition", stating instead that names must have an Algerian origin with exceptions for children of non-Muslim parents (Article 28). This revision of the law reflects a shift toward modernity while preserving the essence of Algerian heritage.

Following the same regulations, today the process of naming in Algeria remains affected by cultural, linguistic and social factors, besides to modern influences. According to Azieb and Qudah (2018), globalization and the concept of trendy names have introduced new labels that were previously unfamiliar to Algerian society, particularly among younger generations. This shift reflects the growing impact of international exchanges and exposure to global naming trends. On the other hand, Bennacer (2020) highlighted the revival of Berber Amazigh names symbolizing cultural pride and resistance as a significant phenomenon; especially after the recognition of Tamazight as a national and official language in 2016. In short, the naming practice in Algeria reflects a balance between tradition and culture alongside modernity.

In conclusion, Algeria's naming system is a dynamic representation of its religious beliefs, family customs, historical development, political shifts and contemporary modifications. In this context, names serve as symbols of cultural pride and identity in addition to being personal identifiers. This complex interaction between modernity and tradition emphasizes how crucial naming customs are to maintaining Algeria's distinctive social values.

Section three: Literature review

The study of names has been an intriguing topic of investigation since immemorial times. Numerous researchers have examined personal naming for a variety of reasons. While some of them have looked at them from semantic and lexicographic perspectives, others have investigated the factors influencing personal names across different communities. Given that our study focuses on the factors responsible of name selection, it is necessary to broach existing literature on this topic to advance knowledge about how names are chosen across

various societies. This section reviews relevant works addressing studies in a geographical order, starting with the ones conducted in the western world, followed by studies from the Arab world then finally those specific to Algeria.

In Scotland, the United Kingdom, Bramwell (2012) conducted a cross-cultural investigation into the naming customs of a number of diverse communities. Her primary goal was to compare and contrast the personal naming systems of several immigrant and indigenous communities with different social and linguistic backgrounds. Through her qualitative approach, she specifically looked into the connections between linguistic systems, social change, cultural contact, and personal names. In this study, Bramwell (2012) highlighted the potential motivations for giving names to children that all can be stated as social categorisation, social bonding and identification.

In the context of the Arab world, Al Zumor (2009) is a prominent author who analyzed the various aspects affecting the reasons behind people's choice of names in Yemen, focusing typically on female names. In his socio-cultural and linguistic study, the researcher collected nearly 300 female names that he categorized based on their sources and meanings. Through the qualitative analysis, Al Zumor (2009) concluded that the social and cultural aspects influence the naming practices and highlighted that names often reflect local cultural elements, as well as social attitudes and familial connections.

In Jordan, Al-Quran and Al-Azzam (2014) investigated the various cultural and social allusions that affect Jordanian names as well as the translational view surrounding them. They examined the participants' social backgrounds, including those related to psychology, history, culture, religion, politics, romance, and geography aiming at shedding light on some reasons behind naming. The analysis showed that conservative families tended to name their sons after their grandparents, while young parents tended to have contrary view on naming their children after borrowed characters or even socially undesirable individuals. Additionally, the study revealed that these factors influence the translation process of Jordanian proper names, making it a complex one due to the absence of equivalent names in the target language culture.

In the same context, Al-Qawasmi and Al-Abed Al-Haq (2016) conducted a sociolinguistic study on newborn names in Jordan, in which they examined the changes in naming practices from the 1970s to 2015. Their research aimed to identify the factors

(historical, religious, and social) that influenced these changes in Jordanian society. The data were collected from the Civil Status Department and the Department of Statistics, including names of both genders over the specified time era. The quantitative analysis revealed significant shifts in the choice of names, in terms of both sounds and morphemes. In particular, names from the 1970s were closely linked to cultural values and beliefs, while those from the 1980s and 1990s began to reflect certain social values influenced by urbanization and modernization. Finally, by the early 2000s to 2015, people's attitudes towards naming children have evolved as a result of globalization, which is linked to urbanization and development, as well as the impact of various cultures on the community.

Similarly, Tarawneh and Hajjaj (2021) studied personal naming process in Jordan with the aim to understand the sociolinguistic factors that affect the name selection in the Jordanian society. They addressed five specific factors including religion, culture, politics, naming after someone, and musicality; examining their impact on name choice in respect to gender, generation, and geographical distribution in Jordan. To achieve the research aims, the researchers collected Jordanian names of three generations from three geographical areas by means of a questionnaire. While the qualitative analysis of the data revealed that the previously mentioned factors affect gender, generation, and geographical distribution in different ways, the quantitative analysis on the other hand showed that the religious factor is the most frequent, whereas, the political factor is the least influential one.

Following almost similar lines of inquiry, Azieb and Qudah (2018) analyzed the naming practice in the Algerian context across different generations. They investigated the factors that affect the choice of names for males and females namely among the young, the middle-aged, and the old generations in the Algerian province of Jijel. The data were collected through the administration of a questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of 150 males and 150 females. The data analyses revealed that the naming practice focused on religious, cultural, and family factors in the older generation for both genders, whereas in the middle-aged generation it focused on the religious factor for both genders. Additionally, the religious factor affected the males' names in the younger generation as well; however, for young females it was the desire to sound fashionable that influenced the choice of their names.

In a nutshell, the study of names or onomastics has been tackled by various researchers; however, the factors influencing the choice of labels remain not abundantly

explored (Azieb and Qudah, 2018). This remains a gap in literature that the present research is going to fill through exploring the factors influencing the naming practices among the Algerian Berber community in the village of Bouhamza. This study aims to shed light on the factors and the ways in which local cultural identity and modern influences interact with regard to personal naming process.

Chapter II: The Practical Part

Research provides the means to address various issues encountered in human everyday life, what makes it a crucial step in any study. The present dissertation aims to explore the factors influencing the naming process in the region of Bouhamza, Algeria. Having addressed the theoretical considerations of this topic in the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on the practical aspects, including the research methods, data collection tools and procedures, data analysis, and discussion of the results. The chapter is divided into four main sections. The first one describes the research design and methodology, detailing the tools and procedures employed in data collection and analysis. The second section presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the interviews. The third section is dedicated to the discussion of the results. Finally, the chapter concludes with a fourth section that acknowledges the limitations of the current study and offers recommendations then suggestions for future research.

Section one: Research design and methodology

This section provides a comprehensive overview of how the research was conducted, ensuring transparency and reliability. It covers the research design adopted and discusses the rationale behind the methodological choices made in this investigation. This part specifically describes the scope of the study, the research methods, the participants involved, the data collection tools and procedures, and finally the data analysis methods followed to achieve the aim of the research.

1. Scope of the study

The present study has investigated the factors influencing the naming process in the Bouhamza region of Algeria, with a particular emphasis on the naming customs of parents with children aged between one day and twelve years old. By analyzing the linguistic, social and cultural dimensions of the naming process, this research sought to provide a comprehensible understanding of the basis on which personal names of young generation children are selected. This study was centred on the region of Bouhamza to allow for detailed analyses of the impact of local customs on the naming practices of the little-known village. Ultimately, by situating the research within the broader cultural landscape of Algeria, this study contributes to an in-depth comprehension of how naming conventions serve as markers of social and cultural dimensions.

2. Methods

This study followed the patterns of an exploratory research design seeking to investigate the factors influencing the naming practice in the Algerian village of Bouhamza. To fulfil the research aim, a qualitative method was adopted in the process of data collection and analysis with interviews being the primary research instrument for this investigation.

The rationale behind the use of the qualitative method for this study is its suitability for advancing knowledge about the parents' experiences in selecting names for their children, focusing particularly on the concepts they take into account when making this decision. This aligns with Gelling's (2015) definition of qualitative research as, "an approach to scientific inquiry that allows researchers to explore human experiences in personal and social contexts, and gain greater understanding of the factors influencing these experiences" (p. 43). In fact, this approach allows for a comprehensible understanding of the factors that shape the naming practices in Bouhamza.

Interviews were the main data collection tool through which in-depth information were gathered about the naming practices in Bouhamza. As a qualitative research method, the interviews allowed for the investigation of the cultural, religious, political, familial and personal motivations behind name selection. As cited in Bramwell (2012), Hakim (2000) noted that the primary strength of qualitative research lies in the validity of the data collected; i.e. participants are interviewed thoroughly, allowing the results to be taken as accurate, reliable, comprehensive, and authentic representations of their perspectives and experiences.

Thematic analysis was employed to systematically analyse the data obtained from the interviews. This method was suitable for this research as it allows for an in-depth exploration of both explicit and implicit meanings within the participants' narratives leading to rich and credible interpretations (Dawadi, 2020).

Ultimately, by employing the qualitative approach and methods, this study aimed to highlight how diverse influences shape naming practices in Algeria, particularly in the context of Bouhamza village.

3. Population and sample

In the world of scientific research, population and sample play an essential role in the generation of valid and meaningful conclusions. Understanding these concepts helps the

researcher to precisely define his/her problem, establish detailed results, and draw reliable conclusions.

3.1. Population

Population includes all the people who are affected by the research problem. According to Gorard (2013, as cited in Kadri, 2019), population refers to all the cases, units or persons involved in a study. In other words, it refers to the entire group of individuals, items, cases, or observation units that are of interest and serve as the primary focus of a given investigation (Garg, 2016). In the context of this study, the targeted population includes all the parents belonging to the Algerian Berber community of Bouhamza and have children aged between one (1) day and twelve (12) years old. This study sought to provide information about the factors influencing the naming process among these parents, specifically exploring the reasons behind their selection of those names for their children.

The geographic focus of this study on the village of Bouhamza is done in order to advance knowledge about the naming customs of this little-known and relatively understudied region. In the selection of this population, it was taken into account that the factors influencing name choices may vary depending on the generation being considered (Azieb & Qudah, 2018). By concentrating on this specific area, the study aimed to shed light on how cultural, religious, familial, musical and modern influences impact the naming practices, particularly among parents of young generation children. As noted by Azieb and Qudah (2018), the naming process has evolved significantly, with parents of younger generations increasingly adopting a brand new trend characterized by “fashionable names”. For this reason, the study at hand sought to identify the factors governing the choice of labels, particularly among parents of children aged between one day and twelve years old in the context of Bouhamza.

3.2. Sample

It should be noted that in this study, the focus was put on a limited representative sample of thirty-four (34) parents from Bouhamza having children aged between one day and twelve years old. As with most qualitative fieldworks, the sample is not entirely random. We specifically targeted individuals for whom the naming process was most likely to occur, making our sample purposive in nature. Participants were thus deliberately selected to align

with the research objectives, as recommended by Kothari (2004). On an individual basis, the participants were selected through convenience sampling method, as they were people to whom we were easily able to gain access, allowing for practical and cost effective data (Rahi, 2017). This approach allowed for a familiar and relaxed atmosphere during the interviews, which likely facilitated more spontaneous and sincere responses from the informants.

The participants involved were selected to answer questions about the factors influencing the naming process, providing insights about the cultural, religious, familial, aesthetic, and modern factors shaping naming practices in the region. They showed significant demographic diversity, likely including variations in age, level of education and number of children.

In terms of age distribution, parents aged between 36 and 40 years represented the largest group, accounting for 32,35% of the sample, followed by those aged between 41 and 45 years with 29,41%. Participants aged from 46 to 50 comprised 23,52%, while those aged between 30 and 35 years constituted the smallest group with 14,71%. This shows that our sample is not homogeneous in terms of age.

The educational level also varied among the participants. Well educated parents with university level constituted the largest group with 41.18 % of the sample. This was followed by 23.52% of the participants with a primary school education, 20.59% with a middle school education, and 14.71% with secondary school education. This distribution highlights a well-educated sample, with a significant number of participants holding higher education background.

Family size among participants ranged from one to four children. Parents with two children represented the highest percentage (35.30%), followed by those with only one child (29.41%), parents with three children (26.47%), and finally, those with four children (8.82%). This diversity contributed to the depth of the study's findings.

Overall, the diverse demographic profile of the participants provided a comprehensive perspective on the various factors influencing naming practices in Bouhamza.

4. Instruments for data collection

Qualitative research employs a variety of instruments to collect non-numerical data, focusing on understanding concepts, opinions, and experiences. According to Denzin and

Lincoln (1998, p. 3), “Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials –case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts– that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives”. This definition emphasises the multifaceted nature of qualitative research that makes use of diverse methods to explore social complex phenomena. In the context of this study, interviews were the primary tool for data collection, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the factors influencing the choice of names for young generation children in Bouhamza.

4.1. The interviews

The only data-collection method used in this research was that of interviewing, which, according to Kothari (2004), involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and the elicitation of oral-verbal responses. In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with parents of children aged between one day and twelve years old to gain insight into the factors influencing the choice of personal names for children in Bouhamza. The use of interviews was particularly suited to this research due to their flexible nature that allows the collection of rich and detailed data. In other words, this method allows researchers to adapt and restructure questions during the interview process, enabling a deeper exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences (Kothari, 2004).

Primarily, this study made use of semi-structured interviews instead of being fully open in the data collection process. According to Huber (2024), semi-structured interviews involve asking the same questions in the same order of all the interactions with the possibility to probe for clarity or depth on questions. In the context of this study, a predefined list of specific questions and topics to cover was administered to guide the interviews (see Appendice A), but allowed the informants freedom in answering them and in determining the course of the interview. The semi-structured format offered the benefit of ensuring consistency throughout the interviews while allowing flexibility to adjust the questions based on each individual's responses. Through this method, we ensured obtaining the same amount of information from each informant, facilitating a deeper exploration of the factors influencing naming practices in Bouhamza.

4.2. The questions

As already mentioned, the interviews were semi-structured and qualitative in nature where a prompt sheet was used in each interview to make sure that a wide range of topics were covered. The questions on this sheet were inspired by Bramwell's (2017) interview questions for her cross-cultural study about naming. They were carefully designed to gain an overview about the naming practices in Bouhamza, with a particular focus on the factors influencing the choice of names for young generation children. The questions primarily revolved around understanding "why" those names were chosen and exploring the reasons as well as the intentions of parents behind the selection of such names for their children. For each identified factor influencing the naming decision, a list of prompts (see Appendix A) was included to encourage participants to share deeper insights into their experiences and motivations. The interviews' questions focused on gathering participants' demographic information and details about their children's names, including the selection process. They focused on parents' motivations for name choices, exploring influences such as culture, religion, family, aesthetic preferences, and modern trends. This method allowed for a comprehensible exploration of the diverse factors and dimensions shaping the naming customs in the region of Bouhamza.

4.3. Recording

During the interview process, the participants were asked for permission to have their responses recorded electronically using a smart phone voice recorder. In the cases where the informants refused, their answers were manually noted on a paper. This method aimed to balance the need for detailed data collection with respect for informants' comfort and privacy. While electronic recording allowed for the retention of the full conversation; manual note-taking proved more successful in the majority of cases, as many informants felt more comfortable and authentic when not being electronically recorded. This flexibility made it possible for the informants to express themselves freely, creating a more relaxed environment favourable to gathering rich qualitative data.

5. Procedures for data collection

As already highlighted, this research was carried out using a qualitative method with semi-structured interviews serving as the only data collection tool. The data collection process took place in the village of Bouhamza where members of the sample were interviewed about

the factors influencing the naming process in this region. The interviews were conducted face-to-face allowing for flexibility in questioning and the opportunity to probe deeper when necessary. Each interview typically lasted between five (5) to ten (10) minutes, which was sufficient to gather meaningful insights while keeping participants engaged without getting bored. In a period of one month, starting from March the 15th until 15th of April, the data collection process progressed simultaneously with the transcription of the interview recordings and notes, as well as the initial stages of the thematic analysis. This approach ensured that rich and authentic data were collected and analyzed efficiently.

6. Data analysis method

This study employed a thematic analysis approach to examine and interpret the data collected from the interviews. According to Clarke and Braun (2016), thematic analysis is a systematic method used to identify, analyze and interpret themes within qualitative data. They noted that this approach is effective for identifying patterns within and across data sets, providing insights into participants' lived experiences, views, perspectives, behaviour and practices. Thematic analysis is also well-suited for experiential research, which aims to understand what participants think, feel, and do (Clarke & Braun, 2016). By applying this method, the study sought to uncover comprehensive insights into the factors influencing naming practices among parents of the young generation children in Bouhamza.

The thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke's (2006) step-by-step guide. First the interview recordings and written notes were thoroughly reviewed and transcribed in order to fully understand them and familiarize with the data. After that, an initial list of the most important codes was generated by identifying ideas related to the factors influencing the naming process in Bouhamza. These codes were further organized in broader themes that included cultural, religious, family, musical and aesthetic, and modern influences. The themes were then reviewed and refined to form clear patterns that explain why parents choose certain names. After fully working-out the themes, the findings were reported in a way to provide sufficient evidence through enough data extracts, to finally demonstrate the prevalence of the themes and ensure the coherence of the results with the research objectives.

Section Two: Analysis of the Research Findings

As afore mentioned, the present study attempts to explore and analyze the major sociolinguistic factors directing the naming practices in Bouhamza, seeking to explain how

and why children are given the names they currently bear. In this section, the data collected from the interviews conducted with parents of young generation children in Bouhamza were thoroughly analysed to address the research objectives and achieve the aims of the study. It presents a detailed report of the findings obtained from the in-depth discussions with the interviewees, focusing on the factors influencing the process of selecting names for their children. Following the patterns of thematic analysis method, five (5) themes emerged from the interview answers, and are: cultural, religious, familial, musical and aesthetic, and finally modern influences.

Theme one: Cultural Influence

Cultural influences play a significant role in shaping parents' decisions when naming their children, as names often serve as markers of identity, heritage, and societal values. This theme is constructed of a set of questions that sought to gain in-depth information about the rationale behind the selection of culturally significant names for young generation children in Bouhamza. The parents interviewed provided different explanations of why and how culture is an important aspect to take into account while choosing a name for a child.

For some participants, selecting a name is regarded as an opportunity to show cultural identity. This reflects how naming goes beyond simple identification of individuals, acting as a powerful expression of belonging to a particular social group. In the context of this research, the choice of a name is deeply connected to the cultural traits specific to the Berber community, as one participant explained *“As a Kabyle Berber family, I see no reason why we should opt for a non-Berber name... it is our duty to preserve and revive Amazigh names”*. In this regard, many interviewees highlighted that the choice of Berber names for their children is a way of expressing their pride of their origins, ensuring the transmission of the Kabyle Berber heritage to the next generations. One participant shared

“My wife is Arab from Tipaza, but I made sure our son AYLAN carries a Berber name that will remind him of his Kabyle roots, even as he interacts with Arabic culture... His mother had no objections because she understands how precious the Berber heritage is to me.”

The interviews revealed a varied list of Berber names with different meanings used by parents in Bouhamza. Examples included names of ancient Berber warriors and kings such as *“KOCEILA, TAKFARINAS, SYFAX”*, and names inspired from animals like *“AMAYAS:*

cheetah” and *“GHILES: tiger”*. When inquired about, the participants explained that these types of names often symbolize power and strength, as one parent said, *“KOCEILA and GHILES are names that I associate with strength and masculine energy”*.

Despite carrying different meanings, the purpose behind the use of these names proved to be consistent among the participants. For instance, one informant expressed, *“AMAYAS my son will always remember his Kabyle origins whenever he is called”*, while another stated, *“I loved these names because they represent my culture”*. These responses highlight how Berber names serve as markers of identity and cultural heritage, allowing parents to preserve and promote their Kabyle roots through meaningful naming practices.

Overall, these participants showed a thoughtful interest in Berber names which they considerate as a means to preserve and promote their Berber culture. By giving their children such names, these parents aimed to ensure that their cultural roots will not disappear even if their children grow up in a world shaped by diverse cultural influences. For these participants, giving a child a Berber name is a conscious act of cultural preservation and pride.

In other cases, the interviews revealed that cultural influences on the naming process in Bouhamza were reflected in the cultural practices and norms specific to the Algerian society, particularly the Kabyle community. One notable cultural practice highlighted by the participants was the tradition of giving the privilege of naming a newborn to a family member other than the child’s parents. One interviewee has explained,

“For my younger daughters HANA and NOUHA, it was my mother who named them... I wanted her to participate in this decision because I owe her too much respect, and I wanted her to know that I care for her opinion”

Similarly another participant said, *“My son MOHAND-CHERIF was named by his grandfather”*, adding *“I can not contradict my father in law... accepting his suggestion is the least I can do in return to all the great things he does for us... you know how much elders are respected in our society”*. This practice reflects the deep respect for elders and collective decision-making within the Kabyle society.

On the other hand, some participants emphasized involving relatives with higher social status in naming their children as an act of respect and privilege. In this context, one participant shared, *“It was my husband’s cousin who named my daughter ASSIA”* noting, *“She is a doctor, a well educated and respectful woman... we had the honour to have our child*

named by her". Another interviewee mentioned, "*NESRINE, it was my sister who lives in France who suggested this name*". Ultimately, this illustrates the influence of cultural values such as respect and valorisation of others on the naming process.

Another cultural behaviour highlighted by the participants was the practice of naming a child after someone they know, with the hope that the child would embody the qualities or achieve the success of that individual. For instance, one participant noted, "*I had a friend whose name was MERIEM... she was a medical student... the kindest, smartest and cutest person I have ever met... I gave my daughter this name with the hope that she will become like her*". Similarly, another participant explained that their child was named NASSIM after a cousin's son who was academically successful. She expressed, "*I have always been amazed by the degrees of my cousin's son NASSIM... he is excellent at school,*" adding, "*I hope my son will achieve the same success*". This practice expresses the desire to ingrain admirable qualities in a child through his name.

In a nutshell, the interviewees identified several cultural practices and beliefs that influence the process of choosing a name for a child. Some participants underlined the significance of preserving Berber cultural heritage by using names that reflect their identity. Others emphasized the importance of old people and collective decision-making in Kabyle society, where naming a child may require privileges offered to particular individuals, including the ones with powerful social positions. Furthermore, the traditional concept that naming a child after someone admired or successful will motivate the child to achieve similar success was also emphasized. These diverse perspectives illustrate how culture shapes the naming decisions in Bouhamza.

Theme two: Religious influence

During the data collection process, the interviews revealed a significant consideration of the religious aspect from the parents in the process of selecting names for children. This theme involved a set of questions designed to explore how religion impacts the choice of names among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza. The discussions focused on understanding the role of religious beliefs particularly the Islamic tradition and practices in shaping the naming decisions.

In the course of the interviews, some parents expressed a strong sense of duty to name their children on religious basis. For them, religious identity is first and foremost expressed

through names rooted in the Islamic tradition reflecting faith and beliefs. As explained by one participant, *“My children KHADIDJA, ROKAIA, ZAKARIA, and MARIAM all carry names of Muslim figures”*, then he added *“Because in Islam giving an appropriate name is the first duty of parents towards their children, and for me, there are no better names than the ones inspired from Quran or Muslim personalities”*. This perspective was emphasized by many other participants who used names of pious Muslim figures including names of prophets, names of prophet’s Muhammad family members and companions, and others inspired from the holly Quran. Examples included, *“AMINA: the prophet’s Muhammad’s mother”*, *“FATIMA: the prophet’s daughter”*, *“BILAL: a close companion of the prophet Muhammad”*, *“YOUSOUF: a major prophet in Islam”* and *“BOUCHRA: Quranic term meaning good news”*.

Additionally, parents who chose religious names for their children believed that Islamic names, in addition to their beauty and meaningfulness, serve as a source of positive inspiration drawn from the stories of their original bearers. According to them, these names often carry spiritual and moral significance. As illustrated by one of the interviewees,

“I gave my son the name of the prophet AYOUB... his story about patience during terrible hardships and strong faith in God are things that I believe my son needs to know about and get inspired by in the future”

Similarly, another informant whose child’s name was “YOUSOUF” explained, *“Allah himself calls his story the best of the stories... I hope my son will be proud of carrying the name of such a brave man and lead by his example”*. These examples highlight that parents use religion based names to connect their children to Islamic teachings, ensuring that such names serve as lifetime reminder of their religious identity and heritage.

To sum up, the adoption of religious names by parents in Bouhamza reflects a deep connection to Islamic teachings and values. This practice highlighted the parents' willingness to instil a strong sense of faith and spiritual identity in their children. By choosing names that hold religious significance, parents aimed to fulfil their religious duty and ensure that their children grow up with a deep connection to the Islamic faith and heritage.

Theme three: Family influence

Familial influence plays a central role in shaping various aspects of human life, including the process of naming children. In the context of this research, this theme

encompasses a set of prompts which aimed at understanding how family bonds and heritage influence naming practices in Bouhamza. The interviews revealed diverse perspectives on this theme, highlighting the significance of family in naming decisions.

Throughout the interviews, many participants mentioned the practice of bringing back the memory of deceased family members, particularly grandparents, into the present through the process of naming their children after them. This tradition is seen as an act of honour and a way to preserve family history. Examples included the reuse of names of paternal grandfathers such as “BELKACEM, HAFID, LAKHDAR, MOHAND, SMAIL, ZAHIR”, and grandmothers like “FATIMA, MARBOUHA, ROKAIA, CHERIFA”.

The reasons behind naming children after ancestors varied among parents interviewed in Bouhamza, reflecting different attitudes toward this practice. Some participants viewed it as a way to honour deceased family members and preserve family history. For example, one parent responded, *“I gave my children the names of ROKAIA and BACHIR in honour for my departed grandparents”* then explained, *“I can never thank them enough for the care and the love they filled me with since the divorce of my parents”*. This perspective underscores the emotional significance of maintaining connections to past generations. Likewise, another participant whose daughter’s name was “MARBOUHA” expressed, *“My mother is very precious to me... today, even though she is no more among us, I still feel her presence whenever I hear my daughter’s name”*. This viewpoint was further reinforced by other participants who believed that in addition to keeping the memory of the loved ones alive, naming children after their ancestors ensures that the child will be well-received and appreciated within the family context. As illustrated by an interviewee, *“My son HAFID is a much loved boy in the family, mainly because he bears our father’s name”*. Similarly, another participant stated, *“SMAIL bears the name of my husband’s grandfather... you cannot imagine how deeply he is cherished in our family... his uncles would die for him... this name brought him great luck”*. Notably, this means that this practice fosters a sense of belonging and appreciation for the child among family members.

On the other hand, some participants expressed a negative attitude towards the tradition of naming their children after their ancestors, stating that they felt pressured and imposed upon to follow this practice. These individuals often reported a feeling that the decision was not entirely their own, but rather a familial expectation and sometimes an obligation. For instance, one interviewee confessed, *“I did not like it, but MOHAND is my*

father's in law name", and further explained, *"When our relatives knew I was pregnant with a boy, everyone repeated that they looked forward to see the little MOHAND... I was pressured and could not opt for another name"*. This case highlights the tension between personal preferences and familial expectations in naming practices. It illustrates how family dynamics can restrict parents' freedom in selecting names for their children. In another example, a participant said, *"My husband imposed the name of his mother FATIMA for our daughter"* then continued, *"I did not like it to the point that I call her MELINA though it is not her real name"*. This situation shows that when the practice of naming children after ancestors becomes a familial obligation, it leads to a parental dissatisfaction and disappointment.

Ultimately, naming children after deceased family members is a common practice among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, reflecting a deep rooted familial tradition. While some people view it as a way to strengthen family bonds and preserve family heritage by honouring their loved ancestors, others experience it as a constraint. When not done voluntarily, this practice can lead to feelings of frustration among parents who feel pressured by familial expectations.

Theme four: Musical and aesthetic influences

An additional factor influencing the choice of names among parents in Bouhamza is the consideration of the musical and aesthetic charm of names. This theme emerged from a set of questions about the importance of how a name sounds and the beauty standards parents apply when selecting names for their children.

The interviews revealed that some parents pay careful attention to the phonetic qualities of names, favouring those that are smoother to pronounce, harmonious to hear, easy to remember and sound beautiful. Therefore, the desire for beauty is reflected in how the name is formed, with a particular attention to how it sounds. To illustrate this, one participant insisted that he wanted short and elegant names that share almost the same sounds for his children; he said, *"the thing I like the most about my children names YANIS and ARIS is the fact that they have the same rhyme... they are short, very beautiful and sound poetic"*. In another situation, one parent explained that the name of her daughter was inspired from another one with the same phonetic characteristics; she clarified, *"My brother's in law daughter's name is ALIA, I liked how cute, short and memorable it is... based on this name I*

opted for the name ANIA for my daughter". This shows that parents when choosing names tend to select the ones with particular sounds that they judge attractive and memorable.

Through considering the musicality and aesthetic appeal of names, some parents in Bouhamza deliberately look for original and uncommon names for their children. This preference is often explained by a desire for uniqueness and individuality. For example, one participant shared their intention to choose a name that was both short and distinctive, stating, *"I wanted a name with no more than four letters... We opted for ENZO, a very unique, short and aesthetic name that sounds very nice"*. Through this practice, parents avoid names that are widely used to ensure the distinctiveness of their children. Likewise, a participant mentioned that she and her spouse wanted their daughter to bear a name that no one else from her generation does. Therefore, they opted for a traditional name explaining that, *"ZAKIA (pure) is no more used nowadays; we opted for it because it is a beautiful, unique and meaningful name that I appreciate a lot"*. This illustrates the interplay between sound, beauty and the desire for originality that affect the naming process.

All in all, these findings reflect that the selection of names for children in Bouhamza is significantly influenced by parents' musical and aesthetic preferences. While some prioritize names that are pleasing in terms of length, melody and beauty, others seek originality and uniqueness through these same criteria. In both cases, the sound and aesthetic appeal of a name play a crucial role in shaping naming choices.

Theme five: Modern influences

In this research, the theme of modern influences captures how contemporary culture, global trends, and societal shifts shape naming practices among parents of the younger generation in Bouhamza. The interviews showed that many parents adopt foreign names that they borrow from other languages and cultures with the aim to sound trendy. This was often explained by the participants' desire to align with modernity and global diversity while also expressing individuality.

In the course of the interviews, many parents in Bouhamza reported choosing foreign names for their children, reflecting the influence of globalization and intercultural exchange on the naming practices. Examples included, *"LEA and DANIEL are French names, I liked them because they are stylish and internationally used," "ENZO is an Italian name which*

means master of the house,” and *“MAYLIS, it is a French name”*. These choices illustrate how parents adopt globally recognizable names perceived as modern and fashionable.

In this regard, the participants revealed that the names they chose for their children were on the basis of internationally fashionable names, often borrowed from various mass media sources and cross cultural interaction. This practice reflects the growing influence of media exposure and globalization on the naming process in Bouhamza, where parents are inspired by names they hear in television, movies, music, social media and online platforms. For example, one participant shared, *“My daughters’ names’ are YOLA and ADISON”* then further highlighted, *“I heard these names in American movies... I liked how modern and prestigious they are, especially because they reflect my passion about the western culture as an English teacher”*. Through these names, the interviewee expressed a strong sense of openness to the western culture with the desire to align it with the children’s cultural background. In another situation, an interviewee whose daughters’ names are NAYLA and SIRINE declared, *“I am a big fan of Turkish series... that’s where I got the names for my girls”*. This illustrates how popular international media influence naming choices among parents with different preferences.

In other cases, participants expressed that through such names they aimed to convey modernity and align with current trends. Names like ELENA, ROMAISSA, CELINE, DJASSIM, KAYLINE, ELINE, and MAXENE were cited, with parents often providing reasons such as *“it is a modern name,” “it is beautiful and stylish,” “it is a trendy name,”* or simply *“I don’t know, I just like it”*. This indicates that modernity and trendiness often guide naming decisions, even when specific meanings or cultural significances are not emphasized.

Overall, the findings from the interviews in Bouhamza highlighted that modern influences resulting from globalization and media exposure are increasingly shaping the naming process. Parents are adopting foreign, trendy names as a way to express modernity and cultural openness, reflecting a sense of prestige and fashionableness.

Section Three: Discussion of the findings

As aforementioned, this study explores the factors influencing the naming process among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza. The preceding section provided a

comprehensive thematic analysis of the data gathered through in-depth interviews conducted with parents of children aged between one day and twelve years old in Bouhamza. Building on that, the current section presents a discussion of the key findings derived from the participants' answers with the aim to explain the significance of what has been found so far. This section offers a comprehensible interpretation to the results in a way to answer the research question, and provide a clear picture of the factors influencing the naming process in the Algerian context, particularly in the region of Bouhamza. Through the in-depth interviews, this research revealed that the naming practice in Bouhamza is influenced by a set of factors that we categorized in five themes: cultural, religious, familial, musical and aesthetic, and modern influences.

1. Cultural influence

The results that emerged from in-depth interviews with parents of children aged between one day and twelve years old in Bouhamza give a clear insight into the importance of culture in the naming process. As highlighted in the data analysis section, cultural influence is notably significant, with participants having identified three distinct cultural frameworks that guided their naming decisions, each reflecting unique cultural values and behaviours.

1.1. Cultural identity

One of the key findings of this research is that personal names in Bouhamza may serve as a powerful means of expressing cultural identity. Many participants highlighted the significance of choosing Amazigh names for their children as a way to honour the Kabyle Berber heritage and affirm a sense of communal belonging. From their perspectives, this practice not only preserves but also promotes the Kabyle Berber culture within a broader societal context. A possible explanation of this is that parents often opt for these names as an expression of cultural pride and resilience, reflecting a conscious effort of asserting and celebrating their identity. This finding aligns with the view that names function as social tags that indicate personal and group identity (Agyekum, 2006). In this way, names in Bouhamza represent not only individual characteristics but also the collective cultural heritage and values of the Kabyle Berber community. Agyekum (2006), in his study of Akan names in Ghana, noticed the same practice, as many people remain strongly attached to the Akan names, perceiving them as markers of cultural identity. He noted that despite influences from other cultures many individuals continue to name their children according to Akan traditions, viewing these names as a means of preserving and expressing their cultural heritage.

These results are consistent with what has been found in the city of Bejaia where Bennacer (2020) explained that the use of Berber names can be interpreted as a powerful form of cultural assertion, reflecting a collective desire to reclaim and restore the Berber identity and language long marginalized at one point of Algeria's history. In accordance with our findings, this suggests that this practice is perceived as an opportunity for cultural identity expression, through which parents preserve the Berber heritage, and affirm their sense of belonging to a particular social group, namely, the Kabyle Berber community. Such naming choices serve not only as acts of cultural promotion, but also as a means of transmitting cultural roots and values across generations, expressing pride and respect for cultural origins. Likewise, Aouchiche and Tidjet (2024), in their study of the choice of children's names in Timezrit region of the Soummam vally, noted that in Berber-speaking regions of Algeria, particularly in Kabylia, the adoption of names inspired from historical Amazigh figures, such as ancient kings and warriors, serves as a conscious affirmation of both cultural heritage and historical continuity.

Ultimately, these findings confirm that the selection of Amazigh names for young generation children in Bouhamza, is not only tied to parents' personal preferences, but is deeply embedded in a broader socio-cultural context, and operates as a deliberate strategy to preserve and promote Berber identity, serving as a potent expression of communal belonging.

1.2. Offered privileges

This research also identified another cultural practice that influences the naming process in Bouhamza, which consists of offering the privilege of selecting the child's name to an older or a socially respected individual within the parents' social circle. Typically, this privilege is often granted to the elders of the family, mainly grandparents, and sometimes to other well esteemed family members or relatives. This practice is a reflection of the significance of collective decision making in the Kabyle society, where cultural values such as respect, honour and valorisation of others govern social interaction.

A possible explanation of this practice is that in the Kabyle culture, elders hold a potential position in the society as they are involved in important family decisions, including the naming of a child. This is viewed as a form of respect and acknowledgement of the elders' wisdom and sense of authority within the community. In fact, this respect is deeply rooted in traditional Kabyle social structures, where elders are seen as symbol of moral and cultural continuity. Their opinions are accorded considerable attention in the family and even in

broader communal matters. These results corroborate the findings of Sengani (2015) who stressed that African tradition accords the elders the right to name children. According to him, the responsibility of naming children has long been held by elders because they are regarded as cultural custodians who possess the knowledge and skill to preserve history and project future through their choice of names. In the context of Algeria, Bennacer (2020), described this cultural practice as a reflection of symbolic power of elders, which is often justified by the symbolic capital attributed to this age group, whose authority is rooted in culturally constructed definitions of age and moral. Notably, the ability of elders to participate in the naming process of the younger generation highlights the significant role they play in maintaining cultural values within the Kabyle Berber society.

The findings also revealed that the privilege of selecting a child's name is not exclusively reserved for senior family members. Individuals with higher social status such as respected community members and esteemed figures within the parents' social and familial circle are also entrusted this responsibility. As noted by Aouchiche and Tidjet (2024), with the evolution social relationships and mindsets, this practice reflects the expansion of the circle of potential name-givers, which now often includes not only elders but also older siblings, cousins, extended relatives, and even friends. This inclusivity highlights that in the Kabyle Berber culture, respect and honour are accorded not only based on age, but also in recognition of individuals' status, knowledge, education and achievements. By involving such individuals in the naming process, parents unconsciously reinforce the community's collective values, while expressing a sense of honour to have their children named by highly esteemed figures. Similarly, in the context of the Venda community in South Africa, Sengani (2015) reported that names can also be chosen by specific individuals such as medicine men or women, believing that they have the social authority and influence to shape the behaviour and thinking of younger generations.

In short, the practice of offering the privilege of choosing a name for a child to an older or a socially appreciated individual is a cultural behaviour that strengthens the collective nature of important decisions and maintains core cultural values such as respect, honour and valorisation of people.

1.3. Aspirational naming

The results of this study highlighted a distinct cultural practice governing naming decisions among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, which is the tradition of

naming a child after someone the parents know, with the hope that the child would embody the qualities or achieve the success of that individual. This practice reflects the parents' willingness to instil admirable values and aspirations in their children by symbolically naming them after role model individuals.

This suggests that the choice of a name inspired from accomplished individuals reflects the aspiration of parents to ensure a successful future for their child, often supported by the belief that the child will mirror the qualities and achievements of that individual. This tradition is embedded in broader African naming customs, as in many cultures names are chosen for their symbolic and aspirational significance. As evidenced by Possa-Mogoera (2020), the practice of naming children after admired community members is common across diverse African societies, where it is believed that the child will take after the person he or she is named after. Reflectively, this act serves both as homage to the admired individual, and as means of expressing positive hopes for child's future and accomplishments. This practice is deeply rooted in the Kabyle Berber culture, as a similar conclusion was reached by Bennacer (2020) in the city of Bejaia, where social reproduction is expressed through the act of naming children after others. He interpreted this practice by a desire to associate children with the symbolic value and social prestige that others have acquired

Ultimately, in the Kabyle Berber context of Bouhamza, as in many other cultures, the tradition of naming children after role model individuals is a meaningful practice that goes beyond personal or family preferences, as it is a cultural strategy for transmitting admirable qualities and values within the community.

2. Religious influence

As highlighted in the data analysis section, religion, solely Islamic tradition, is a prominent factor that influences the choice of names for young generation children in Bouhamza. The religious context of the Algerian society in general, and the Kabyle Berber community of Bouhamza in particular, profoundly shapes cultural and social practices, including the naming conventions.

Many parents in Bouhamza opt for names that carry religious significance, often derived from the holy Quran, the prophet Muhammad, his family members and companions, and other revered Islamic figures. This practice is deeply rooted in the Algerian society in large, where Islam is the dominant religion of the state. Families in this context, express a

strong religious devotion to the Islamic teachings and values, reflecting a desire both to fulfil religious duty and to instil spiritual identity in their children. This can thus be interpreted by the fact that practicing one's faith goes beyond following basic religious rules to influence social and cultural practices including the naming of a child. As emphasized by Al-Qawasmi and Al-Haq (2016), a name is considered as a sacred part of Muslim identity, and selecting an appropriate name is viewed as the first duty parents owe to their children. Similarly, Sharma (1998) explained that Islamic teachings stress the importance of giving children good names, as on the Day of Resurrection, individuals will be called by their names and those of their fathers. Consequently, naming in this context becomes more than just a matter of personal preferences, but is also perceived as an opportunity to honour the religious duty of giving a child an appropriate name that identifies him as a Muslim individual. As a matter of fact, this practice is also a way to instil religious values and beliefs in children, connecting them to the Islamic tradition and teachings from an early age. This ensures that an Islamic name acts as a lifelong reminder of the religious identity and the spiritual heritage for the child. Notably, this practice is very common among Arab Muslim communities as Aljbouir and Fawwaz (2024) noted that in Jordan, as in many other Arab countries, parents are expected to give their children good and meaningful names, avoiding those conflicting with Islamic principles.

Another point worth mentioning is that, in addition to reinforcing religious identity and faith, parents emphasize the aspect of beauty and meaningfulness of Islam-based names, as they carry deep meanings and represent a source of positive inspiration drawn from the stories of their original pious bearers. This illustrates the belief that a name can influence a child's character and spiritual or moral virtues. Research on naming practices in Algeria confirms this religious influence, as our findings go directly in line with what have been observed by various researchers including Azieb and Qudah (2018) in the province of Jijel, Bennacer (2020) in the city of Bejaia, and Benmahammed (2020) in eastern Algeria. This demonstrates that the choice of meaningful, Islam-based names is a widespread practice motivated by the desire to ingrain moral values, religious teachings and positive traits in children.

In a nutshell, the preference of Islamic names among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, as in the broader Algerian context, is a conscious act that connects children to the values, beliefs and teachings of the Islamic tradition, ensuring that their religious identity is both recognized and strengthened through their lives. This practice is not only a reflection of religious identity transmission, but also fulfils a sacred duty, since parents

view the selection of good names as an essential responsibility in accordance with Islamic teachings.

3. Family influence

The findings of this research demonstrate that family has a significant influence on the naming patterns in Bouhamza, particularly through the practice of naming children after deceased ancestors. This tradition reflects the deeply rooted family values and communal customs within the Kabyle Berber society, where ancestral names serve as vital links to family lineage and heritage.

Naming children after late family members, particularly grandparents, is a common practice in Bouhamza, towards which parents express two contrasting attitudes. For supporters of this tradition, it is perceived as an act of honour and an opportunity to bring back the memory of their ancestors into the present life. In this context, children's names function as a means for maintaining connection with the past generations, preserving family heritage and collective memory. This practice holds a deep emotional significance for the parents, as it allows them to keep the spirit of their deceased loved ones alive within the family. This can thus be interpreted as a form of familial continuity, where the act of naming serves as a bridge between generations, enabling parents to honour and preserve family bonds. Through this practice, parents often express a sense of profound respect and appreciation towards their forefathers, while the continuing presence of ancestral names in their daily life fosters a feeling of emotional comfort and reinforces a sense of familial belonging. This finding aligns with Aouchiche and Tidjet (2024) description of the process of naming a child after someone dead as a symbolic reincarnation and a way of granting ancestors a form of immortality. In the same way, this practice is also common among the Basotho in South Africa, where Olatunji et al. (2015) explained that names in this community are used to immortalize ancestors, believing that naming children after their grandfathers would insure the inheritance the admirable qualities and social values of their forebears.

Another observed point worth noting, is that in addition to honouring ancestors, the practice of naming children after forebears, especially grandparents, often results in the child being more appreciated and valued by other family members. This suggests that the child's name in this case can foster special attention from his family members and relatives who associate his name with precious memories of its original bearer. This therefore reflects the social function of naming as a way to strengthen familial bonds and reinforce a sense of

belonging within the familial context. In accordance with this result, Mutunda (2017) revealed that in African Sotho culture, Mohome (1972) noted that naming a grandchild after his ancestor strengthens familial bonds and makes the relationship between the two generations even closer. Likewise, in Zambian Luvale culture, parents may name children after their late parents because of the love they had for them, creating a feeling as if they were still alive, thereby fostering the child's sense of belonging in the family (Mutunda, 2017).

Nevertheless, the research results confirm that when the practice of reusing the names of forefathers for younger generation children is not undertaken voluntarily; it can lead to parental dissatisfaction and disappointment. In many cases, this tradition creates a problematic tension arising from familial expectations and, at times, a sense of imposition. Parents in this context often express a lack of autonomy, as the naming decision becomes less a personal choice and more a response to the pressures and expectations of their family. As result, such pressure may cause parents to feel restricted in the choice of their child's name, leading to a sense of disconnection from the naming process and resulting in a diminished emotional attachment to the name. This dynamic illustrates the tension between parents' personal preferences and familial expectations that limit the freedom of selecting the name of one's own child. Haddadi (2015) affirmed that the assignment of names is first and foremost the responsibility of the parents, while the role of the extended family remains secondary. This highlights the importance of respecting parental autonomy in the naming process, a consideration that family members sometimes ignore. Ultimately, a practice that is meant to honour one's ancestors may, when not freely chosen, become a source of emotional tension and profound dissatisfaction for the parents.

In conclusion, naming children after deceased family members is a valued tradition that honours ancestors and strengthens family bonds. However, its significance depends largely on the parents' voluntary participation. When imposed or pressured by family expectations, the practice may result in parents' dissatisfaction. This highlights the importance of balancing respect for family heritage and tradition with parental autonomy in the naming process.

4. Musicality and aesthetic influence

The musical and aesthetic characteristics of names revealed in this research, points to an additional factor that influences the naming process among parents of young generation

children in Bouhamza. In this regard, some parents appear to be guided by the phonetic and aesthetic qualities of names, favouring those with particular appeal for various reasons.

During the selection process, parents pay careful attention to the phonological structure of names, prioritizing certain qualities such as harmony, brevity and beauty. This practice is significantly common, as parents generally favour names that are smooth to pronounce, pleasant to hear, easy to remember and aesthetically appealing. This reflects an increasing emphasis on musical and aesthetic aspects of names, demonstrating how parents' personal tastes shape the naming decision. It highlights a shift toward valuing not only the social, cultural or familial significance of a name but also its sound, rhythm, and overall appeal, what makes the naming process a more personalized practice. Linguistically speaking, Matzinger and Kotic (2025) demonstrated that there is a strong link between the aesthetic appeal and word memory, showing that phonetically appealing words, including names, may be easier to learn and remember. This finding can thus have implications for understanding why certain phonetic characteristics of names are preferred over others, thereby why some names are perceived more beautiful than the others. Building on that, Ukaegbu and Okon (2024) noted that across various culture some parents tend to focus more on the physical qualities and the social impression of the name rather than its meaning or contextual significance. This upholds the fact that the musicality and aesthetic qualities of names play a significant role in parental choice, reflecting a desire for pleasing and socially attractive names.

Through considering the musicality patterns of names, some parents aim to create certain compatibility in their children names, often in the form of shared rhyme or initial letters between the chosen name and the ones already existing in the family. This reflects a desire for cohesion and unity within the family's naming system, reinforcing a sense of familial belonging through carefully harmonized names. This finding was similarly observed by Haddadi (2015) in the region of Batna, saying that this naming strategy can, at times, become almost obsessive, as parents seek increasingly to express forms of aesthetic alignment among their children's names. Notably, such practice reveals how naming choices can be shaped by sensory and aesthetic norms that reflect parent's personal preferences and tastes.

At the same time, the desire for individuality and distinctiveness is another key objective behind parents' consideration of the musical and aesthetic appeal of names. Under the concept of originality, many parents look for uncommon names with particular sound and

beauty patterns to ensure a strong sense of uniqueness in the child's name. Indeed, naming in this context carry significant social and personal significance, as names with new phonological structures can make a strong impression when introduced into the society, influencing both the bearers' self-perception and how others perceive him. Therefore such names can play a significant role in either facilitating the bearer's social advancement or reinforcing social exclusion (Bennacer, 2020). This practice was similarly observed in Japan, where Ogihara (2021) noticed a significant rise in the use of unique names for children, reflecting an increase in uniqueness-seeking behaviour and individualism within the Japanese society. Sini (2015) described this as a form of singularization and individuation, where selecting a rare or seldom-used name allows parents to symbolically mark their child's unique identity within the social environment, fostering a strong sense of personal and social uniqueness.

To sum up, the musical and aesthetic qualities of names play a significant role in naming practices, reflecting parents' desires for either familial cohesion or individual distinctiveness. This naming practice highlights how sound, rhythm, and beauty are deeply interrelated with social perception and personal identity, making the act of naming a process that balances personal tastes and originality.

5. Modern influences

Our findings revealed that the modern dynamics characterizing contemporary societies, particularly the rapid development in communication technologies and the globalization of culture, play a central role in shaping naming practices in the Algerian society, particularly among parents of younger generation children in the region of Bouhamza.

The influence of modernity is clearly evident in the growing adoption of foreign trendy names for children, as parents increasingly choose names for their fashionable or international appeal. This practice results from the impact of globalization, mass media exposure, internet connectivity and inter-cultural exchanges, all of which are transforming the naming process by extending the list of names considered as trendy and desirable. In this regard, personal names in Bouhamza serve as a reflection of parents' desire to align with global cultural trends and to project a modern image. This shift in the process of name selection can be explained by the expansion of cultural information and ideas across the world, mainly due to the technological advancement and the international exchanges. Parents

now are exposed to a wide range of new cultural references, values, traditions and lifestyles spread through different channels including television, social media, movies, music and cross-cultural interaction. The adoption of foreign names can thus be seen as a way for parents to connect their children with broader cultural backgrounds, signalling a significant openness and awareness to the global culture. Likewise, the adoption of foreign names was observed in the Luvale society, where Mutunda (2017) attributed this trend to the profound influence of Western culture on African lives. This goes in line with what Ukaegbu and Okon (2024) revealed about the Nigerian Igbo naming practices, where some parents prefer foreign over indigenous names, thinking that they are more superior or more fanciful.

Moreover, the introduction of foreign modern names in Bouhamza, as in many other cultures, reflects a generational shift in the naming process. Alzamil (2020) in Saudi Arabia described this practice as a manner of shifting away from one's traditional values to reflect modernism, prestige and vanity. Recent studies on the Algerian naming systems including the ones done by Azieb and Qudah (2018) in the province of Jijel, and Bennacer (2020) in Bejaia city, revealed a generational transformation from older generations prioritizing the religious, cultural, and familial aspects of names, to the adoption of fashionable trendy names for younger generation children reflecting global trends and modernity. This transition is explained by the impact of globalization and the openness to the worldwide culture. Notably, naming practices have shifted from traditional, heritage-based choices toward selections that express, modernity, and alignment with global cultural currents.

In a nutshell, the shift in name choice practices toward trendy and foreign names in regions like Bouhamza, reflects the significant influence of globalization and modern communication technologies on the community's social and cultural practices including the act of naming. Ultimately, this demonstrates how cultural identity and social values evolve in response to worldwide influences, with parents seeking to align their children with the modern global culture.

In conclusion, this section has addressed the research question by exploring the factors influencing the choice of names for younger generation children in Bouhamza. The findings reveal that the naming process is directed by five main factors: cultural, religious, familial, musical and aesthetic, and modern influences. Together, these factors illustrate how naming in Bouhamza, and in the broader Algerian context, is a complex and multifaceted process that balances tradition with contemporary social and cultural shifts.

Section Four: Limitations, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

In the previous section of this practical chapter, we discussed the findings obtained from the in-depth interviews conducted with parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, focusing on the key factors that influence the naming process in this region. In the current section, we address the limitations of this study, list certain recommendations and propose suggestions for future research to build upon and expand these insights.

1. Limitations:

Although we were able to answer the research question and achieve the aims outlined at the very beginning, several limitations of the present study should be acknowledged.

First, the lack of studies addressing the factors influencing the naming process in Algeria in general and Bejaia in particular have limited our ability to develop a broader theoretical consideration of naming in these contexts. This gap restricted the understanding of how local sociolinguistic patterns shape naming decisions in the broader Kabyle and Algerian contexts.

Second, the study's qualitative design, relying primarily on in-depth interviews with a limited number (34) of parents from Bouhamza, may limit the generalization of the results to other regions of Bejaia and broader Algeria. Additionally, despite that qualitative research allows for data saturation within smaller samples, the restricted size can imply that some influencing factors such as cultural and familial practices beyond those revealed in this study, might not have been fully captured.

Third, the study's particular emphasis on parents' perspectives, which are though valuable, may not fully encompass all the influential factors that shape the process of naming. By focusing only on the parents' viewpoints, this research may ignore other factors such as historical, political and socioeconomic influences that may play an important role in the naming practices.

Finally, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce the possibility of biased responses, as participants could explain their naming decisions in a more subjective and

favourable manner to align with what they perceive as socially desirable or to please the researcher .

Ultimately, recognizing these limitations helps to identify areas for refinement and guides future research toward achieving a deeper and comprehensive understanding of naming practices within the Algerian society.

2. Recommendations

This study focused on exploring the factors influencing the naming process among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza. The results revealed that culture, religion, family, musicality and aesthetics, and modern influences are the major patterns guiding parents' decisions when selecting names. This research highlighted the importance of a name as a label that goes beyond mere identification, reflecting deeper socio-cultural values of a community. Based on these findings, it is recommended that parents choose names with careful consideration of the potential social and psychological impact they could have on both the bearers and the society as a whole. By balancing cultural, familial, religious, aesthetic and modern influences, parents can choose meaningful and socially acceptable names that ensure the child's sense of belonging within the community. This method allows for respecting cultural traditions while adapting to contemporary trends in a measured and socially acceptable manner.

The findings of this research have also made it clear that modern naming patterns, consisting of selecting fashionable trendy names inspired from foreign cultures, is a very common practice among parents of the young generation children. This situation requires the implementation of strategic actions to prevent the disappearance of the local cultural aspects of names. It is therefore recommended to organize programs and initiatives aiming to raise people's awareness about the importance of their culture and values, encouraging them to prioritize indigenous naming practices over foreign ones. In addition, increased efforts to preserve the Algerian naming systems and other cultural aspects of the community through documentation and scholarly studies are also recommended to maintain the cultural identity and heritage for future generations.

3. Suggestions for further studies

The current study is anticipated to open the door for further investigations about the factors influencing the naming practices in other regions of Algeria, paving the way for comparative approaches that can gain insights into the extent of difference in the naming process from one region to another. In addition, research may also expand the scope of this study by exploring the relationship between the naming process and other social factors like age, social status and educational background. Investigating how these variables influence naming preferences would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics at play. Moreover, as parents' motivations behind their children names become clearer, further research about the attitudes of people towards their own names will serve as a unique and innovative perspective. Such ideas will contribute to a deep understanding of the naming practices and their significance within the Algerian society.

General conclusion

The act of naming is an essential and universal process that goes beyond mere identification. Names are carefully selected based on a variety of factors, serving not only to distinguish individuals but also to reflect the complexity of anthroponomic systems unique to given communities. Throughout names, people may express cultural values, religious beliefs, family traditions, aesthetic standards and modern influences, making the process of naming a meaningful practice deeply embedded within the structure of the society.

Arising from a sociolinguistic interest, the present study sought to identify the factors influencing the naming practices among parents of young generation children in Bouhamza, a commune in Bejaia region of Algeria. This research provides an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind name choices in this specific location, contributing to a broader knowledge of the Algerian naming customs. Motivated by the central research question of uncovering the main factors directing parents' naming decisions, this study aligns with findings from similar research in other Algerian regions, such as Bejaia city, Timezrit, Jijel and Batna, where naming practices reflect a dynamic interplay of cultural, religious, familial, musical and modern influences.

As a first step in conducting this study, we provided an overview of the existing available literature relevant to the theme of this research. In the first chapter, dedicated to the theoretical considerations, the initial section presented a comprehensive overview about the history, function and significance of proper names. This included a presentation of important theories, from early philosophical ideas about names to more recent linguistic approaches, placing the study within a wide scholarly context. In reference to the second section, it dealt with the sociolinguistics of the naming process, addressing key concepts like naming itself and the common factors influencing it. This part highlighted the broader aspects that impact the choice of names, and provided a framework for understanding the Algerian naming system. Finally, concerning the third and last section of this chapter, it provided a review of similar studies about the factors influencing the naming process conducted in different settings.

Moving to the practical part, the second chapter comprised four sections, each addressing a key aspect of the research process. The first section detailed the methodological choices, outlining the research design, participant selection, and data collection methods. The second section focused on data analysis by reporting, describing and organizing the collected

information. The third section covered the discussion of the findings, relating them to the research question and existing literature. Finally, the fourth section highlighted the limitations of the study and offered suggestions for further research, paving the way for future investigations into naming practices.

This study was conducted in the village of Bouhamza, located in the heights of Bejaia province of northern Algeria. The targeted population consisted of parents of children aged between one day and twelve years old. Following the patterns of a qualitative research design, a convenience sample of thirty-four (34) parents was selected and thoroughly interviewed to explore the reasons behind their choice of children's names. Through these interviews, this study aimed to identify the major factors influencing parental naming decisions in this specific local context.

Drawing on the results of the thematic analysis of the data obtained from the in-depth interviews, along with the discussion of findings, this study revealed that the naming process in Bouhamza is guided by five main factors: cultural, religious, familial, musical and aesthetic, and modern influences. First, the findings showed that culture continues to play a foundational role in the naming process, as culture-based names are reflection of practices like identity expression, offered privileges and aspirational naming, all of which are cultural behaviours that reflect the community's heritage and values. Second, religious influence is significantly reflected in the adoption of Muslim names, through which parents aim to fulfil a religious duty and to ingrain Muslim identity and teachings in their children from an early age. Third, the influence of family is evident in the practice of naming children after ancestors. While this tradition holds a significant value for many parents, serving as a way to honour family heritage, some parents perceive it as a constraint that limits their freedom to choose names that reflect their personal preferences. Fourth, the factor of musicality and aesthetics also plays an important role in the naming decisions, reflecting parents' desires for either familial cohesion or individual distinctiveness. In this context, many parents choose names based on how pleasing they sound, their rhythm, and overall beauty, aiming to give their children names that ensure uniqueness or cohesion within the naming system of the family. Finally, modern influences driven by globalization, media exposure, and technological connectivity introduce new naming trends and broaden the list of desirable names marking a generational shift in the naming process. Notably, each of these factors plays a key role in shaping parents' choices, reflecting the complex interplay between tradition, identity, religion and contemporary trends within the community of Bouhamza.

The significance of these findings relies in that they highlight the complex interplay between cultural, religious, familial, aesthetic, and modern influences and naming practices in the region of Bouhamza. This study contributed to a better comprehension of how names function as markers of cultural identity, heritage and social values, reflecting a broader generational shift in the naming process. Such insights are particularly valuable for understanding the evolution of the anthroponymic systems in the Kabyle Berber society and Algeria as a whole, where naming practices are deeply embedded in socio-cultural contexts rather than being fully random choices. Moreover, since everyone is both a bearer and a consumer of names, understanding how and why people are given the names they currently bear is crucial for grasping the role of names in shaping personal and communal identity. Ultimately, such findings provide a solid foundation for comparative studies across other regions and generations, offering a comprehensive perspective on the diversity of Algerian naming conventions.

In conclusion, the most important of all the messages emerging from this study is that naming children is more than distinguishing them from others; it is a profound act that connects them to their family history, situating them within a broader social and cultural context. A name constitutes a fundamental part of personal identity that accompanies individuals throughout life and even after. As Haddadi (2015) stressed, a name should carry a positive sense, avoid excessive symbolic or emotional weight, and not be overly unusual or strange. This underscores the importance of choosing names with care and balance, given that they often reflect cultural, religious, familial, aesthetic, and modern influences.

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Appendix A

Interview prompt sheet

Objective of the interview: Explore the factors influencing the naming practice among parents of young generation children aged between one day and twelve years old in Bouhamza village.

- 1) Ask for the demographic information of the parent: Name, age, educational level, number of children.
- 2) Ask about the children's name:
Prompts:
 - What is the name of your son/daughter?
 - Who selected this name for your child?
 - What/Who inspired you in selecting your child's name?
 - How is your child's name decided upon? Can you tell me more about the circumstances under which you made this choice?
 - Were you free in deciding about your child's name, or there have been a certain external imposition?
- 3) Ask about the factors and strategies adopted in the selection of the child's name:
Prompts:
 - Did you name your child after a family member? If so, why and what significance does that hold?
 - Have you felt a certain familial imposition in the selection of your child's name?
 - What cultural tradition influenced your choice of a name for your child?
 - What is your intention behind bestowing your child such a name? Is it to mark your identity, to preserve your cultural heritage, to show your cultural preference... or other?
 - Is your child's name inspired from any religious figure or concept? Who/What is it?
 - Why did you choose to give your child a name on religious basis?
 - Have you named your child after a certain political figure that inspires you? Why?
 - Does your child's name carry any symbolic meaning related to political beliefs or national identity? How?
 - How important is the sound and rhythm of the name to you in the selection of your children names? Do you think that some names sound more beautiful than others?

- Do you prefer names that are easier to pronounce and have a more melodic quality? Why?
- Did you select this name because it is popular and trendy in your society? Why?
- Do you think that some names -including your child's name- are more prestigious than others? Why? What makes them so?
- Have globalization or exposure to other cultures influenced your choice of name for your child? If so, how?

Note: always ask for deeper details, seek the “why” those choice are made and what are the intentions of parents behind those names.

Resumé

Cette étude présente les résultats d'une étude ayant pour objectif principal de comprendre les facteurs qui influencent le choix des prénoms chez les parents d'enfants de la jeune génération à Bouhamza, une commune située dans la wilaya de Béjaïa en Algérie. En adoptant une approche qualitative, les données ont été recueillies à travers des entretiens semi-directifs menés auprès de trente-quatre (34) parents d'enfants âgés de un jour à douze ans. L'analyse thématique des données a permis de révéler une dynamique complexe dans les choix de prénoms, influencée par cinq facteurs : la culture, la religion, la tradition familiale, la musicalité et l'esthétique des prénoms, et la modernité. Les résultats ont montré que l'attachement à l'héritage et à l'identité culturelle reste très fort : de nombreux prénoms traduisent les valeurs de la communauté, les aspirations personnelles ou encore des formes de reconnaissance sociale. La dimension religieuse occupe également une place importante, avec une forte préférence pour les prénoms d'origine musulmane, les parents évoquant un devoir moral et spirituel d'ancrer leurs enfants dans une identité religieuse. Les traditions familiales, comme le fait de reprendre les prénoms des ancêtres, demeurent présentes, bien que certains parents expriment le désir de s'en échapper pour affirmer une plus grande liberté dans leurs choix. Les considérations esthétiques sont également concernés: la sonorité, l'harmonie entre les prénoms des membres d'une même famille ou encore la recherche d'originalité influencent aussi les décisions. Enfin, les influences modernes, liées notamment à la mondialisation et aux médias, prennent de plus en plus de place, avec une adoption croissante de prénoms étrangers jugés « à la mode ». Cette recherche apporte un savoir sur les pratiques de dénomination dans la société kabyle et, plus largement, en Algérie. Elle montre que les prénoms ne sont pas de simples appellations, mais de véritables marqueurs d'identité, de valeurs sociales et culturelles, d'appartenances multiples, et de sensibilités personnelles face aux évolutions du monde contemporain.

Mots clés : Pratiques de dénomination, Facteurs sociolinguistiques, Bouhamza, Prénoms d'enfants

ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة نتائج بحث يهدف أساسًا إلى فهم العوامل التي تؤثر على اختيار الأسماء من طرف الأولياء لأطفال الجيل الجديد في "بوحمة"، وهي بلدية تقع في ولاية بجاية، الجزائر. تم جمع المعطيات من خلال مقابلات أجريت مع أربعة وثلاثين (34) من الآباء والأمهات لأطفال تتراوح أعمارهم بين يوم واحد واثنين عشر سنة. وقد كشفت التحليلات الموضوعات للبيانات عن وجود خمسة عوامل رئيسية تتأثر بها الأسماء، وهي: الثقافة، الدين، التقاليد العائلية، الجوانب الجمالية والموسيقية للاسم، والحداثة. أظهرت النتائج أن التعلق بالإرث والهوية الثقافية لا يزال قويًا، حيث تعكس العديد من الأسماء القيم المجتمعية، والطموحات الشخصية، وأشكالاً من الاعتراف أو المكانة الاجتماعية. كما تبرز البعد الديني بشكل واضح، إذ يفضل الكثير من الأولياء اختيار أسماء ذات أصول إسلامية، معبرين عن الشعور بالواجب الأخلاقي والروحي لغرس هوية دينية لدى أبنائهم. وتستمر التقاليد العائلية، مثل تسمية الأطفال على أسماء الأجداد، في التأثير على الاختيارات، رغم أن بعض الأولياء يبدون رغبة في التحرر منها من أجل مزيد من الحرية في اتخاذ القرار. أما الاعتبارات الجمالية، مثل موسيقية الاسم وتناسقه داخل العائلة أو التفرّد والتميّز، فهي تلعب أيضًا دورًا مهمًا في عملية التسمية. وأخيرًا، أظهرت النتائج أن التأثيرات الحديثة، المرتبطة بالعولمة ووسائل الإعلام، أصبحت حاضرة بقوة من خلال تزايد الإقبال على أسماء أجنبية تُعتبر "عصرية". تُسهم هذه الدراسة في تعزيز المعرفة حول ممارسات التسمية في المجتمع القبائلي، وفي الجزائر بشكل عام. كما تُبين أن الأسماء ليست مجرد تسميات، بل هي مؤشرات حقيقية على الهوية، والقيم الاجتماعية والثقافية، والانتماءات المتعددة، والحساسيات الشخصية تجاه تحولات العالم المعاصر.