

Who Do You Want to Work with?: How We Evaluate Names

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Abstract

NAMES FUNCTION AS A FIRST IMPRESSION. THEY ARE OFTEN THE FIRST BIT OF INFORMATION SOMEONE RECEIVES ABOUT YOU AND THEY HAVE THE POWER TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE'S JUDGMENTS ABOUT YOU BEFORE THEY EVEN KNOW YOU. RESEARCH SHOWS THAT THEY IMPACT HIRING DECISIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES (E.G., EATON, SAUNDERS, JACOBSON, & WEST, 2019). TO UNDERSTAND IN MORE DETAIL THE IMPACT OF NAMES, SUSAN FISKE'S STEREOTYPE CONTENT MODEL (E.G., 2018) WAS USED TO EXAMINE JUDGMENTS ABOUT NAMES BASED ON ETHNICITY. OVERALL, CAUCASIAN NAMES WERE RATED HIGHEST IN WARMTH AND ASIAN NAMES WERE RATED HIGHEST IN COMPETENCE, WITH AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND HISPANIC NAMES BEING RATED LOWER ON BOTH. NAME ETHNICITY DOES HAVE AN EFFECT ON HOW WE VIEW OTHERS AND CAN AFFECT OUR JUDGMENTS OF THEM.

Methodology

- **NAME GENERATION**
 - **FOUR FIRST AND FOUR LAST NAMES BASED ON GOOGLE SEARCHES FOR FOUR ETHNICITIES: AFRICAN-AMERICAN, ASIAN, CAUCASIAN, AND HISPANIC = 16 NAMES**
 - **ONLY MALES NAMES USED**
- **WARMTH AND COMPETENCE JUDGMENTS WERE MADE TO THREE CHARACTERISTICS EACH:**
 - **WARMTH: "WARM," "FRIENDLY," & "SINCERE"**
 - **COMPETENCE: "COMPETENT," "CAPABLE," & "INTELLIGENT"**
- **PROCEDURE**
 - **PARTICIPANTS READ A SCENARIO (SEE "SCENARIO" BOX) AND RATED WARMTH AND COMPETENCE FOR EACH OF 16 NAMES (E.G., "JOSHUA TAYLOR") ON A 1-5 SCALE RANGING FROM "EXTREMELY UNLIKELY" TO "EXTREMELY LIKELY".**

Discussion

- **NAMES DO HAVE AN EFFECT ON HOW WE PERCEIVE OTHERS**
 - **ASIAN NAMES WERE RATED SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN ALL OTHER NAMES IN WARMTH BUT SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN ALL OTHER NAMES IN COMPETENCE**
 - **CAUCASIAN NAMES WERE RATED SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN ALL OTHER NAMES IN WARMTH AND SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER THAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND HISPANIC NAMES IN COMPETENCE**
 - **AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND HISPANIC NAMES DID NOT DIFFER SIGNIFICANTLY, BUT GENERALLY DIFFERED FROM RATINGS OF CAUCASIAN AND ASIAN NAMES**
- **IMPLICATIONS OF NAME JUDGMENTS**
 - **EMPLOYERS MAY JUDGE APPLICANTS FOR JOBS**
 - **LANDLORDS MAY JUDGE APPLICANTS TO RENT AN APARTMENT**
 - **ADMISSIONS OFFICIALS FOR UNIVERSITIES MAY JUDGE APPLICANTS TO THEIR PROGRAMS**
- **NAMES SET THE STAGE FOR FURTHER INTERACTIONS**
 - **THE NAME CAN GENERATE A PERSON'S FIRST IMPRESSION**
 - **JUDGING SOMEONE BASED ON THEIR NAME MAY HAPPEN UNCONSCIOUSLY**

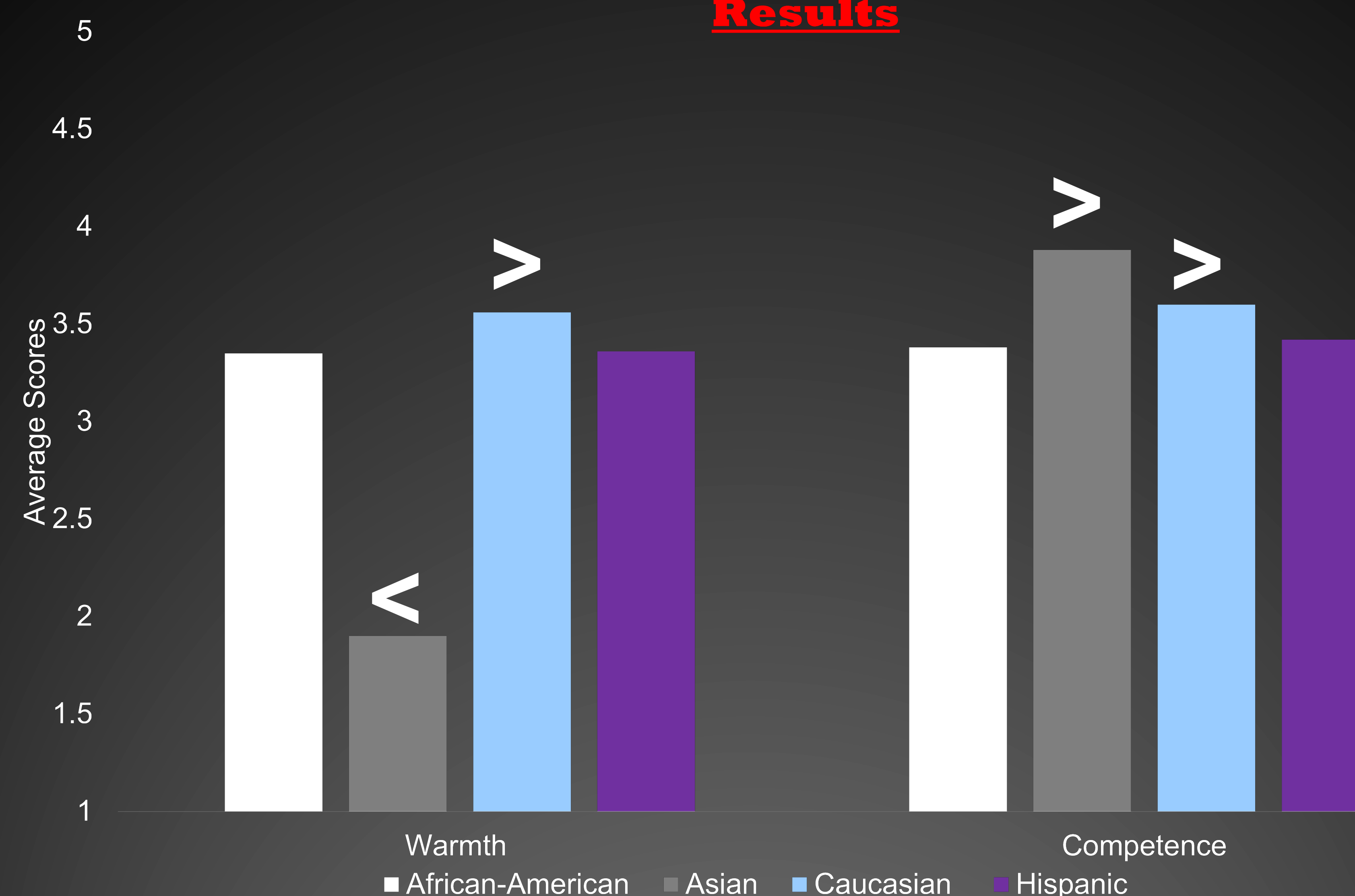
Theoretical Background

- **NAMES CAN INDICATE SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT A PERSON**
 - **GENDER (ERWIN, 2006)**
 - **AGE (NEWMAN, TAN, CALDWELL, DUFF, & WINER, 2018)**
 - **RACE/ETHNICITY (CARPUSOR & LOGES, 2006)**
- **ETHNIC NAMES CAN KEEP INDIVIDUALS FROM GETTING JOBS THEY APPLIED FOR (BERTRAND & MULLAINATHAN, 2004)**
- **RENTING APARTMENTS OR LOOKING AT APARTMENTS (CARPUSOR & LOGES, 2006)**
- **RECEIVING ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (EATON, SAUNDERS, JACOBSON, & WEST, 2019)**
- **OUR RESEARCH UTILIZES SUSAN FISKE'S STEREOTYPE CONTENT MODEL IN WHICH WE JUDGE PEOPLE ON TWO DIMENSIONS:**
 - **WARMTH**
 - **COMPETENCE**
- **EXPECTED RESULTS**
 - **NAMES ALONE SHOULD FOLLOW THE STEREOTYPE PATTERNS FOUND BY PAST RESEARCH**
 - **FOR EXAMPLE,**
 - **ASIAN NAMES SHOULD BE RATED HIGHEST IN COMPETENCE**
 - **AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND HISPANIC NAMES SHOULD BE LOWER THAN CAUCASIANS ON BOTH WARMTH AND COMPETENCE**

SCENARIO

"IMAGINE THAT YOU ARE ATTENDING A CLASS ON THE FIRST DAY. YOUR PROFESSOR IS GOING OVER THE SYLLABUS DETAILING COURSE POLICIES, THE READING SCHEDULE, AND ASSIGNMENTS. AS PART OF YOUR GRADE FOR THE COURSE, STUDENTS WILL NEED TO PAIR UP TO COMPLETE A SEMESTER PROJECT AND PRESENT IT TO THE CLASS. YOU NEED TO FIND A GOOD PARTNER. BECAUSE THE PROFESSOR CALLS NAMES FOR ATTENDANCE, YOU KNOW THE NAMES OF THE OTHER STUDENTS, BUT NOTHING ELSE. WHEN YOU HEAR THE NAMES, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THEM?"

Results



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