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Naming patterns among Generation Z children in the Chinese community of Medan city

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the naming patterns of Generation Z children within the Chinese community in Medan City through a socio-onomastic perspective. This research employs a qualitative descriptive method with a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, documentation, and field notes from 52 Generation Z informants of Chinese descent in Medan. The findings reveal that naming patterns among Generation Z in the Chinese community are no longer dominated by traditional naming systems, but have shifted due to the influence of globalization, popular culture, religion, and cultural assimilation. Six major naming patterns were identified: allonymy, patronymy, theonymy, necronymy, demonymy, and numeronymy. Among these, allonymy emerged as the most dominant pattern, indicating the strong influence of public figures, historical figures, fictional characters, and popular media in the naming process. This study shows that names function not only as identity markers but also as representations of identity negotiation among Chinese, Indonesian, and global cultural influences in Generation Z.

KEYWORDS: naming patterns, Generation Z, Chinese community, socio-onomastics, cultural identity

1. Introduction

Research Background

In contemporary linguistic studies, language is no longer understood merely as a system of signs used to convey information, but also as a social practice that represents human experiences, cultural values, and social identities. The relationship between language, human beings, and culture forms a symbolic system through which individuals both understand and construct the social realities surrounding them. Consequently, every linguistic practice, including naming, cannot be separated from the social, historical, and cultural contexts in which it is embedded. This view aligns with Edward Sapir's (1921) perspective, which positions language as an integral part of culture and as a medium that shapes how humans categorize their lived experiences. This perspective is further reinforced by Ronald Wardhaugh (2010), who explains that language performs complex social functions, serving not only as a means of communication but also as a marker of both individual and group identity. Therefore, linguistic practices fundamentally reflect social relations, value systems, and cultural dynamics within a society.

One manifestation of the relationship between language and culture can be observed through naming practices. From a linguistic perspective, names are not merely administrative identity markers but also symbols carrying social, cultural, and even ideological meanings. Deborah Cameron (1998) explains that the naming process functions as a linguistic mechanism for organizing social reality by assigning meaning to individuals and groups. Meanwhile, John M. Anderson (2007) emphasizes that personal names possess a direct referential function, enabling individuals to be uniquely recognized within specific social contexts. These perspectives indicate that the function of names extends beyond identification, becoming representations of identity that are continuously negotiated within society. In other words, names constitute a point of intersection between linguistic structures, cultural constructions, and social practices, all of which influence one another.

Within onomastic studies, naming practices are understood as phenomena strongly influenced by the social and cultural structures of a society. Richard D. Alford (1988) demonstrates that each community possesses distinct naming systems shaped by kinship structures, social norms, belief systems, and historical experiences. Naming is not conducted randomly; rather, it follows specific conventions regarding who has the authority to assign a name, when the name is given, and which values are intended to be transmitted through that name. Thus, names can be understood as cultural products that represent social organization while simultaneously serving as a medium for intergenerational value transmission. The synthesis of these perspectives suggests that naming is a meaningful linguistic practice inseparable from the social dynamics of the communities in which it emerges.

This phenomenon is clearly observable within the Chinese community. Traditionally, Chinese names function not only as personal identifiers but also as reflections of patrilineal kinship systems, philosophical values, cosmological beliefs, and familial aspirations for a child's future. Each character in a Chinese name carries carefully selected meanings, taking into consideration the balance of natural elements, the child's birth timing, and prayers for the child's future life (Suharyo, 2013). Therefore, names in Chinese culture possess symbolic dimensions far beyond administrative functions. However, in the Indonesian context, naming practices among the Chinese community underwent significant transformation as a consequence of assimilation policies during the New Order era, particularly through Presidential Cabinet Circular Letter No. 06/Preskab/6/1967, which encouraged Chinese Indonesians to adopt Indonesian-sounding names. This policy not only altered the linguistic forms of names but also affected ethnic identity construction, genealogical relationships, and cultural representation among Chinese Indonesians. As argued by Permana (2018), such name changes constituted a form of forced identity reconstruction, resulting in hybrid identities emerging from negotiations between political demands and efforts to preserve cultural identity.

These transformations have become increasingly complex in the era of globalization. The development of information technology, increased social mobility, and intensified cross-cultural interactions have shifted societal orientations in selecting names for children. Studies by Sari et al. (2025) and Safitri

(2021) indicate that Generation Z tends to adopt names that are more modern, multilingual, and globally oriented compared to previous generations, which more strongly emphasized ethnic or religious identity. Contemporary names are no longer easily identifiable in terms of cultural origin, as they often combine elements from Indonesian, Mandarin, English, and even other languages within a single name construction. This phenomenon suggests that naming practices have shifted from representing local identity toward representing more flexible global identities. In the researcher's view, this transformation is not merely a reflection of linguistic trends but also represents increasingly complex identity negotiations within multicultural societies. Names no longer function solely as symbols of family tradition but also as social strategies for adapting to increasingly open and competitive social spaces.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that naming practices are closely related to identity construction, cultural dynamics, and social change. Sinaga, Kusumaningtyas, and Rozi (2024) found that preferences for the terms *Tionghoa*, *Cina*, and *Chinese* reflect identity negotiations among Chinese Indonesians in the post-reform era, influenced by historical experiences and generational differences. Subanti (2021) found that the naming system among Chinese Indonesians has undergone transformation due to political, religious, modernization, and educational influences, making names a form of adaptation to social change. In a different context, Aribowo and Herawati (2016) showed that the use of Arabic names among Javanese Muslims serves as an identity management strategy, indicating a shift from ethnic identity toward religious identity. Meanwhile, Paramasuta and Kabul (2021) emphasized that Chinese names continue to maintain their symbolic functions as representations of prayers, aspirations, and family cultural values.

These findings are further supported by various international studies. Muhammad (2023) explains that naming practices among the Hausa community have transformed due to cultural coloniality, making names a contested arena between local traditions and global influences. Uwen and Ekpang (2022) demonstrate that names represent social experiences, historical trajectories, and cultural conditions within the societies that produce them. Furthermore, Adrian Pablé (2023) emphasizes that names should be understood as social practices whose meanings are constructed through interaction and contexts of use, rather than merely as referential markers. These findings are consistent with the socio-onomastic perspective of Terhi Ainiala and Jan-Ola Östman (2017), who view names as linguistic constructions influenced by social variation, ideology, culture, and communicative situations. Thus, naming is a dynamic and adaptive social practice that continuously evolves alongside societal changes.

Despite the significant contributions of these studies, most have focused primarily on name meanings, naming structures, ethnic identity, or policy influences on name changes. To date, studies specifically examining the naming patterns of Generation Z children within the Chinese community in Medan from a socio-onomastic perspective remain limited. This is noteworthy because Medan is one of the regions with the largest Chinese communities in Indonesia and has a long history of cultural interaction, social mobility, and ethnic diversity. Such conditions create the possibility of naming patterns that differ from those found in Chinese communities in other regions. Based on the researcher's preliminary observations, the names used by Generation Z Chinese families in Medan no longer fully follow traditional naming patterns but increasingly combine elements from Mandarin, Indonesian, English, and other languages within a single personal identity. This phenomenon indicates that naming practices have developed into spaces of negotiation between cultural identity preservation, adaptation to multicultural society, and the influence of globalization.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the naming patterns of Generation Z children within the Chinese community in Medan from a socio-onomastic perspective. This study is expected not only to enrich linguistic research on naming practices in multicultural societies but also to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural identity, historical experiences, and social transformations are represented through naming choices among younger generations of Chinese Indonesians.

2. Theoretical

Theoretical Framework of Socio-Onomastics

Socio-onomastics is a branch of onomastic studies that views names as linguistic phenomena shaped through the interaction between language, society, and culture. Unlike traditional onomastic approaches, which primarily focus on the origin, etymology, or structural aspects of names, socio-onomastics positions names as social practices that reflect identity dynamics, social relations, and cultural changes within a community. This perspective is rooted in the sociolinguistic tradition, which considers language use to be consistently influenced by social factors such as identity, social status, ideology, religion, history, and power relations. Therefore, names are not understood as neutral labels; rather, they are regarded as social constructions that carry symbolic meanings while simultaneously representing the values embedded within society.

From a socio-onomastic perspective, the use of names is always closely related to the communicative context and the social environment in which the names are used. Terhi Ainiala and Jan-Ola Östman (2017) explain that names form part of pragmatic practices whose meanings are constructed through social interaction, while Carole Hough (2016) emphasizes that the variation and distribution of names are influenced by social structures, religion, politics, and the historical experiences of a society. Thus, changes in naming patterns should not be viewed merely as linguistic changes, but also as indicators of social transformation that reflect broader societal dynamics, including globalization, urbanization, migration, and shifts in cultural orientation. The synthesis of these perspectives demonstrates that naming systems evolve dynamically alongside changes in social contexts, allowing names to be positioned as indicators of collective identity transformation within society.

Furthermore, socio-onomastics views names as linguistic signs possessing both referential and symbolic dimensions. Names not only function to identify individuals but also convey information regarding ethnic membership, cultural background, family values, and even social status. In this context, Adrian Pablé (2021) emphasizes that name usage forms part of social practices shaped by community norms, while Uwen and Ekpang (2022) demonstrate that personal names represent historical experiences, social conditions, and value systems developing within society. Therefore, the meaning of a name is shaped not only by its lexical structure but also by the social experiences underlying its selection. This perspective highlights that names are representations of identity continuously negotiated in response to changes in social and cultural environments.

As an analytical framework, socio-onomastics offers an approach that enables naming practices to be understood more comprehensively through the relationship between linguistic aspects and the social factors influencing them. Pérez-Hernández (2024), Terhi Ainiala and Jan-Ola Östman (2017), Erikha et al. (2021), Bušs (2016), as well as Carole Hough and Izdebska (2014), assert that naming systems are shaped by multiple dimensions, including history, culture, ideology, religion, social conditions, and political dynamics within society. Therefore, naming patterns do not emerge arbitrarily but instead follow a social logic that reflects the value orientation of a particular group.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to understand the experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by individuals regarding naming practices within the Generation Z Chinese community in Medan. A phenomenological approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to explore the lived experiences of informants in interpreting a social phenomenon in depth. In phenomenological research, the primary focus is not on measuring variables but on understanding how reality is constructed based on individuals' subjective experiences (Qutoshi, 2018). Therefore, this approach is considered appropriate for the objectives of this study, which seeks to uncover the meanings behind naming practices as well as the social, cultural, and historical factors underlying them.

This research was conducted in Medan, North Sumatra. The selection of this location was based on Medan's characteristics as a multiethnic metropolitan city with one of the largest Chinese communities outside Java. Ethnic diversity, the use of multiple languages in everyday life, and a long history of cultural interaction make Medan a relevant social setting for observing the development of naming practices among the Chinese community. In the researcher's view, these social conditions allow for the emergence of more dynamic naming patterns resulting from negotiations between Chinese traditions, Indonesian national identity, and global cultural influences.

The primary data source of this study consists of members of the Indonesian Chinese Generation Z community residing in Medan. The selection of Generation Z is based on the consideration that this generation was born and raised in the post-Reformasi era, when the space for expressing ethnic identity became relatively more open compared to previous generations. In addition, Generation Z lives in a digital environment characterized by intensive cross-cultural interactions, which may lead to naming preferences different from those of earlier generations. In the context of this study, their experiences are considered capable of representing changes in naming practices within contemporary Chinese society. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, which involves intentionally choosing participants based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). This technique is commonly used in phenomenological research because it emphasizes the quality of information rather than the number of participants. The criteria for informants were as follows: (1) belonging to an Indonesian Chinese family, (2) categorized as Generation Z, (3) residing in Medan, (4) possessing knowledge of the background of their name assignment, and (5) being willing to participate voluntarily in the interview process. These criteria were established to ensure that each informant had experiences relevant to the research focus, allowing the collected data to comprehensively represent the phenomenon.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, documentation, and field notes. Semi-structured interviews were selected because they provide flexibility for the researcher to explore informants' experiences in greater depth without losing focus on the research objectives. The interview questions focused on the naming process, reasons for name selection, meanings embedded in the names, and the influence of family, culture, religion, and global factors on naming decisions. In addition to interviews, documentation was conducted by collecting data such as informants' full names, name structures, Hanzi characters (when available), and other supporting documents related to the naming process. During the research process, the researcher also compiled field notes to record interview situations, informants' expressions, and social contexts that could not be fully captured through audio recordings. The combination of these three techniques provides a more comprehensive understanding of naming practices than relying on a single data source alone.

Data analysis was conducted in stages by adapting the phenomenological analysis procedures proposed by Qutoshi (2018). The first stage was data organization, which involved transcribing all interview results and organizing the collected documents. The second stage involved coding to identify initial themes emerging from the informants' experiences. This was followed by categorization, in which related codes were grouped into broader themes such as cultural identity, family influence, globalization, religion, language, and the values underlying naming practices. The final stage was interpretation, which involved linking empirical findings with the socio-onomastic perspective to explain how naming practices represent identity, social change, and cultural dynamics within the Generation Z Chinese community in Medan.

To ensure the credibility of the research findings, this study applied the principles of trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as proposed by Yvonna S. Lincoln and Egon G. Guba (1985). Data credibility was established through member checking, in which informants were asked to reconfirm the researcher's interpretations to ensure alignment with their intended experiences. In addition, source triangulation was conducted by comparing information from different informants and available documentation. Dependability was maintained through the de-

velopment of an audit trail, involving systematic documentation of the entire research process from data collection to analysis. Meanwhile, confirmability was ensured by transparently documenting the analytical process so that interpretations remained grounded in empirical data. Through these procedures, the researcher seeks to ensure that the findings possess not only academic validity but also provide an authentic representation of naming practices within the Generation Z Chinese community in Medan.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

Naming Patterns of Generation Z Children within the Chinese Community in Medan

No	Name		Year of Birth	Name-Giver / Decision-Maker	Description
	Indonesian Name	Mandarin Name			
1	Keishia Tanalys	陈佳境 Chén jiā jìng	2007	Grandparents	The name Keishia signifies a woman who is kind, valuable, and possesses a gentle personality that earns the respect of others. Meanwhile, Tanalys is derived from the family surname Tan.
2	Kelly Angelia	洪晨花 Hóng chén huā	2005	Grandfather and Mother	The name Kelly signifies elegance, beauty, affection, gentleness, and abundant prosperity. Meanwhile, Angelia carries the meaning of an angel or a messenger.
3	Yulie	烈欣荣 Liè xīn róng	2004	Grandparents	The name Yulie signifies strength and integrity, reflects joyfulness, and symbolizes the attainment of honor and glory.
4	Shelvina	张玉婷 Zhāng yù tíng	2005	Parents	The name Shelvina signifies someone who is precious and possesses remarkable grace and beauty.
5	Patricia Aurel Ghozali	吴叶莉 Wú yè lì	2001	Parents	The name Patricia signifies nobility or aristocratic heritage. Aurel represents gold or something coated in gold. Meanwhile, Ghozali is derived from the family surname Go.
6	Sheline Tanalys	陈夏妘 Chén xià yún	2008	Grandparents	The name Sheline signifies a woman who radiates light, serves as a source of peace, and shines with gentle brilliance. Meanwhile, Tanalys is derived from the family surname Tan.

7	Williams Wijaya	张福良 Zhāng fú liáng	2001	Parents	The name Williams was inspired by the user's idol, Prince William, and symbolizes the hope that, as the second child, he will become a successful individual. Meanwhile, Wijaya serves both as a form of prayer and as a family surname. It originates from the surname Zhang, which was transformed into Wijaya due to assimilation.
8	Ryo Kusanagi	郭有德 Guō yǒu dé	2006	Parents	The name Ryo Kusanagi represents an adaptation or wordplay derived from the character Kyo Kusanagi in the video game The King of Fighters. It was chosen because of the father's strong interest in fighting games at that time.
9	Kelly	陈巧巧 Chén qiǎo qiǎo	2005	Grandparents	The name Kelly was chosen because the grandmother was inspired after watching <i>Kelly Chen</i> perform the song 记事本 (Jì shì běn), which influenced her naming decision.
10	Shella	戴美玲 Dài měi líng	2003	Parents	The name Shella signifies a person who is beautiful, graceful, and possesses refined beauty.
11	Diandra Jingga	李妮容 Lǐ nī róng	2006	Parents	The name <i>Diandra</i> was inspired by the parents' idol, <i>Dian Sastrwardoyo</i> . Meanwhile, <i>Jingga</i> represents warmth, energy, and creativity, reflecting the symbolic characteristics commonly associated with the color orange.
12	Celine Falcia	故恩平 Gù ēn píng	2006	Parents	The name <i>Celine</i> was inspired by the mother's idol, <i>Celine Dion</i> . Meanwhile, <i>Falcia</i> symbolizes good fortune.
13	Patricya Fernandes	吴佩霞 Wú pèi xiá	2006	Parents	The name <i>Patricya</i> was chosen after the mother was inspired by a character named <i>Patricya</i> featured in a television program she was watching at that time. Meanwhile, <i>Fernandes</i> symbolizes adventurousness and bravery.
14	Michael Ivan	邓人选 Dèng rén xuǎn	2005	Parents	The name <i>Michael</i> was inspired by the parents' idol, <i>Michael Jackson</i> . Meanwhile, Michael carries the meaning of "angel," while <i>Ivan</i> signifies "God is Most Merciful."
15	Valerie	谭丽星 Tán lì xīng	2004	Parents	The name <i>Valerie</i> signifies a woman characterized by strength and resilience.

16	Alberto Pramana	黄耀伟 Huáng yào wěi	2005	Parents	The name <i>Alberto</i> signifies nobility and brilliance. Meanwhile, <i>Pramana</i> symbolizes power and sovereignty.
17	Stevany	斯冠荣 Sī guān róng	2007	Parents	The name <i>Stevany</i> symbolizes a crown and represents honor as well as victory.
18	Jesselyn Kaonedey	高惠镁 Gāo huì měi	2004	Grandparents	The name <i>Jesselyn</i> signifies a gift from God. Meanwhile, <i>Kaonedey</i> is a blended name formed from the family surname <i>Kao</i> and <i>Kennedy</i> , inspired by <i>John F. Kennedy</i> .
19	Alfredo Fanko	陈伟权 Chén wěi quán	2005	Parents	The name <i>Alfredo</i> was inspired by an adventurous character in a film. Meanwhile, <i>Fanko</i> symbolizes freedom and represents a free-spirited individual.
20	Vony Aprilia Kasim	沈玉月 Shěn yù yuè	2005	Parents	The name <i>Vony</i> symbolizes a bearer of victory. <i>Aprilia</i> was chosen to reflect the informant's birth month, namely <i>April</i> . Meanwhile, <i>Kasim</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Sim</i> .
21	Dennis Christopher	施榮恩 Shī róng'ēn	2007	Parents	The name <i>Dennis</i> is derived from the ancient Greek deity <i>Dionysus</i> , who is associated with wine, celebration, and pleasure. Meanwhile, <i>Christopher</i> symbolizes the bearer of Christ.
22	Olivia Putri	张壮香 Zhāng zhuàng xiāng	2005	Parents	The name <i>Olivia</i> was chosen to reflect the informant's birth month, namely October. Meanwhile, <i>Putri</i> was selected to signify the child's female gender.
23	Aditya Desani Setiawan	温明辉 Wēn míng huī	2004	Parents	The name <i>Aditya</i> signifies the Sun God. Meanwhile, <i>Desani</i> is a blended name formed from the parents' names, while <i>Setiawan</i> symbolizes loyalty and represents a faithful individual.
24	Alexander Utama	吴星贤 Wú xīng xián	1999	Aunt	The name <i>Alexander</i> was derived from the name of the ancient Greek historical figure <i>Alexander the Great</i> . Meanwhile, <i>Utama</i> is connected to the surname 吴 (Wú), which was adapted into the Sanskrit form Uttama based on the consideration of preserving a Chinese-sounding identity while presenting it in an Indonesianized form.

25	Julius Wijaya	黄望如 Huáng wàng rú	2000	Parents	The name <i>Julius</i> was inspired by the name of a prominent Roman emperor. Meanwhile, <i>Wijaya</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Huang</i> , which was adapted into <i>Wijaya</i> due to assimilation.
26	Marcella Ivonnelya	莊佳清 Zhuāng jiā qīng	2005	Grandfather	The name <i>Marcella</i> symbolizes strength, courage, and a warrior spirit. Meanwhile, <i>Ivonnelya</i> signifies the yew tree or represents an archer.
27	Marcello	胡锦龙 Hú jǐn lóng	2005	Parents	The name <i>Marcello</i> symbolizes a young warrior and represents strength, courage, and determination.
28	Prananda Komala	许积隆 Xǔ jī lóng	2005	Religious Figure	The name <i>Prananda</i> symbolizes an individual who accumulates and builds prosperity in pursuit of glory. Meanwhile, <i>Komala</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Kho</i> .
29	Stiven Tan	书福 Shū fú	2002	Religious Figure	The name <i>Stiven</i> symbolizes a crown. Meanwhile, the surname <i>Tan</i> is derived from the Mandarin surname 陈 (Chén), whose pronunciation was adapted into <i>Tan</i> through the phonological variation found in Hokkien.
30	David Christianto	温大卫 Wēn dà wèi	2003	Parents	The name <i>David</i> was inspired by the biblical story of David, known as the slayer of Goliath. Meanwhile, <i>Christianto</i> symbolizes the bearer of Christ.
31	Micha Florencia	月花 Yuè huā	2007	Parents	In Catholic tradition, the name <i>Micha</i> derives from Hebrew and means “Who is like God?” It symbolizes humility and reverence, and is also occasionally interpreted as “a gift from God.” Meanwhile, <i>Florencia</i> represents a flower in bloom, symbolizing growth and flourishing.
32	Joyce Nathanael	谭慧恩 Tán huì'ēn	2006	Grandparents	The name <i>Joyce</i> symbolizes happiness and a blessing filled with joy. Meanwhile, <i>Nathanael</i> signifies a gift from God.
33	Jessicca Maria	施潔心 Shī jié xīn	2004	Parents	The name <i>Jessicca</i> signifies a gift from God. Meanwhile, <i>Maria</i> is derived from the name of Mary, who is revered as the mother of Jesus in Christian tradition.
34	Clara Anggun Limiawan	林芳思 Lín fāng sī	2005	Parents	The name <i>Clara</i> signifies clarity, brightness, or prominence. Meanwhile, <i>Anggun</i> symbolizes dignity, elegance, beauty, and charm. <i>Limiawan</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Lim</i> .

35	Jeffrey Nobel Martin	洪政经 Hóng zhèng jīng	2004	Grandparents	The name <i>Jeffrey</i> symbolizes a pledge of peace or divine peace. Meanwhile, <i>Nobel</i> signifies honor and prestige, while <i>Martin</i> is derived from Mars, the Roman god of war, and represents a warlike character.
36	Felicia	林佩萱 Lín pèi xuān	2002	Religious Figure	The name <i>Felicia</i> symbolizes an individual worthy of respect and represents happiness as well as inner peace.
37	Phebe Vevila	尤佩贝 Yóu pèi bèi	2006	Parents	The name <i>Phebe</i> symbolizes brightness, radiance, and illumination. Meanwhile, <i>Vevila</i> signifies something distinctive and special.
38	Sherly	何树梅 Hé shù méi	2005	Parents	The name <i>Sherly</i> symbolizes a bright open space or a meadow within a shire, representing openness, serenity, and natural beauty.
39	Felicia Kwadran	柯琦瑕 Kē qí xiá	2004	Grandparents	The name <i>Felicia</i> symbolizes beauty. Meanwhile, <i>Kwadran</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Kwa</i> .
40	Satrio	杨明成 Yáng míng chéng	2005	Parents	The name <i>Satrio</i> signifies a knight or warrior, derived from Javanese or Sanskrit, and symbolizes courage, honor, and strength.
41	Fanny Vevila	尤佩妮 Yóu pèi nī	2009	Parents	The name <i>Fanny</i> symbolizes beauty, attractiveness, and freedom. Meanwhile, <i>Vevila</i> signifies something distinctive and special.
42	Oswyth Owen	郑智豪 Zhèng zhì háo	2003	Parents	The name <i>Oswyth</i> symbolizes a warrior endowed with strength from God. Meanwhile, <i>Owen</i> signifies a young warrior, representing courage and resilience.
43	Jesslyn Nauli	梁琰芳 Liáng róu fāng	2005	Parents	The name <i>Jesslyn</i> symbolizes a blessing from God. Meanwhile, <i>Nauli</i> signifies beauty, kindness, and goodness.
44	Jolline Evans Tanri	陳世嘉 Chén shì jiā	2005	Relative	The name <i>Jolline</i> symbolizes the meaning “God will increase” and represents light. Meanwhile, <i>Evans</i> signifies that God is most merciful. <i>Tanri</i> is derived from the Mandarin surname 陈 (Chén), whose pronunciation was adapted into Tan through the phonological variation found in the Hokkien dialect.
45	Catherine Doreen	葉佩君 Yè pèi jūn	2007	Parents	The name <i>Catherine</i> symbolizes purity. Meanwhile, <i>Doreen</i> signifies a gift from God.

46	Cynthia Ma	馬叔華 Mǎ shū huá	2004	Grandparents	The name <i>Cynthia</i> symbolizes the Moon Goddess. Meanwhile, <i>Ma</i> is derived from the Mandarin surname 馬 (Mǎ), whose pronunciation remains unchanged in its adapted form.
47	Jesselyn Wijaya	黄柔慧 Huáng róu huì	2006	Parents	The name <i>Jesselyn</i> symbolizes wisdom and gentleness. Meanwhile, <i>Wijaya</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Huang</i> , which was adapted into <i>Wijaya</i> due to assimilation.
48	Francesca Govandy	吴娘佳 Wú niáng jiā	2007	Parents	The name <i>Francesca</i> symbolizes a free woman and represents freedom. Meanwhile, <i>Govandy</i> is derived from the family surname <i>Go</i> .
49	Vennysia	林如佩 Lín rú pèi	2006	Parents	The name <i>Vennysia</i> symbolizes an individual who is respected, admired, and held in high esteem.
50	Robert Ong	王俊茗 Wáng jùn míng	2006	Grandparents	The name <i>Robert</i> symbolizes bright fame. Meanwhile, <i>Ong</i> is derived from the Mandarin surname 王 (Wáng), whose pronunciation was adapted into <i>Ong</i> through the phonological variation found in Hokkien.
51	Celine Xie	谢文芳 Xiè wén fāng	2004	Parents	The name <i>Celine</i> symbolizes something heavenly, divine, or originating from heaven. Meanwhile, <i>Xie</i> is derived from the Mandarin surname 谢 (Xiè), whose pronunciation remains unchanged in its adapted form.
52	Caroline	杜宇哲 Dù yǔ zhé	2004	Parents	The name <i>Caroline</i> symbolizes a woman who is free and independent.

Discussion

1. Allonymy

- 1) **Williams Wijaya**, the name *Williams* was derived from an admired public figure, Prince William. It represents the adoption of a well-known figure's name as a form of aspiration.
- 2) **Ryo Kusanagi**, the name *Ryo Kusanagi* is an adapted form (a modified variation) of the fictional character Kyo Kusanagi from the video game *The King of Fighters*.
- 3) **Kelly**, the name *Kelly* was adopted from the real public figure Kelly Chen.
- 4) **Diandra Jingga**, the name *Diandra* was adopted from the real public figure Dian Sastrowardoyo.
- 5) **Celine Falicia**, the name *Celine* was adopted from the real public figure Celine Dion.
- 6) **Patricya Fernandes**, the name *Patricya* was adopted from a fictional character appearing in a television program.
- 7) **Michael Ivan**, the name *Michael* was adopted from the real public figure Michael Jackson.
- 8) **Jesselyn Kaoneddy**, the name *Kaoneddy* was adopted from the real public figure John F. Kennedy.
- 9) **Alfredo Fanko**, the name *Alfredo* was adopted from the fictional character Alfredo Martini in the adventure anime *Romeo no Aoi Sora*.

- 10) **Alexander Utama**, the name *Alexander* was derived from the renowned historical figure Alexander the Great.
- 11) **Julius Wijaya**, the name *Julius* was derived from the renowned historical figure Julius Caesar.
- 12) **David Christianto**, the name *David* carries a religious reference to David in the Judeo-Christian tradition, while *Christianto* means “bearer of Christ,” referring to Jesus.
- 13) **Shelvina**, the name *Shelvina* contains a reference to a public figure in its Mandarin form, 张玉婷 (*Zhāng Yùtíng*). However, this Chinese element is no longer preserved in the Indonesian name.
- 14) **Shella**, the name *Shella* was adopted from the real public figure Sheila E..
- 15) **Valerie**, the name *Valerie* was adopted from the real public figure Valerie Bertinelli.
- 16) **Alberto Pramana**, the name *Alberto* was adopted from the real public figure Alberto Gilardino.
- 17) **Stevany**, the name *Stevany* was adopted from the real public figure Stefanie Sun.
- 18) **Felicia**, the name *Felicia* was adopted from the real public figure Felicia Chin.
- 19) **Phebe Vevila**, the name *Phebe* was adopted from an existing personal name within the social environment, although not from a widely known public figure.
- 20) **Fanny Vevila**, the name *Fanny* was adopted from the real public figure Fanny Fabriana.
- 21) **Caroline**, the name *Caroline* was adopted from the religious figure Caroline Gerhardinger.
- 22) **Marcella Ivonelya**, the name *Marcella* was adopted from the real public figure Marcella Detroit.

2. Donymymy

- 1) **Sherly**, the meaning of the name *Sherly* refers to a place name, namely a shire meadow.
- 2) **Satrio**, the name *Satrio* was chosen due to the dominant Javanese socio-cultural environment surrounding the individual.
- 3) **Vennysia**, the name *Vennysia* was derived from the name of the city of Venice.

3. Necronymy

- 1) **Ryo Kusanagi**, the name *Kusanagi* is derived from a mythological entity of the past, reflecting the adoption of historically rooted mythical references in personal naming.
- 2) **Dennis Christopher**, the name *Dennis* originates from an ancient mythological deity, while *Christopher* is associated with a significant religious figure in Christian history.
- 3) **Alexander Utama**, the name *Alexander* refers to the historical figure Alexander the Great, reflecting the influence of prominent figures from the past on naming practices.
- 4) **Julius Wijaya**, the name *Julius* refers to the historical figure Julius Caesar, indicating the adoption of names associated with historical prominence.
- 5) **Jesselyn Kaoneddy**, the name *Kaoneddy* refers to John F. Kennedy, demonstrating the influence of historical political figures on personal naming.
- 6) **Jessicca Maria**, the name *Maria* is derived from Mary, a significant religious figure in Christian history.

4. Numeronymy

- 1) **Vony Aprilia Kasim**, the name *Aprilia* was selected based on the month of birth, as the individual was born in April.
- 2) **Olivia Putri**, the name *Olivia* was selected based on the month of birth, as the individual was born in October.

5. Patronymy

- 1) **Keishia Tanalys**, the name *Tanalys* contains the element *Tan*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 2) **Yulie**, the name *Yulie* contains the element *Lie*, which represents the family identity of the Chi-

nese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.

- 3) **Patricia Aurel Ghozali**, the name *Ghozali* contains the element *Go*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 4) **Sheline Tanalys**, the name *Tanalys* contains the element *Tan*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 5) **Williams Wijaya**, the name *Wijaya* contains the element *Zhang*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 6) **Vony Aprilia Kasim**, the name *Kasim* contains the element *Sim*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 7) **Alexander Utama**, the name *Utama* contains the element *Wu*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 8) **Julius Wijaya**, the name *Wijaya* contains the element *Wi*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 9) **Prananda Komala**, the name *Komala* contains the element *Ko/Kho*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 10) **Stiven Tan**, the name *Tan* contains the element *Tan*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 11) **Clara Anggun Limiawan**, the name *Limiawan* contains the element *Lim*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 12) **Felicia Kwadran**, the name *Kwadran* contains the element *Kwa*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 13) **Jolline Evans Tanri**, the name *Tanri* contains the element *Tan*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 14) **Cynthia Ma**, the name *Ma* contains the element *Ma*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 15) **Jesselyn Wijaya**, the name *Wijaya* contains the element *Huang*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 16) **Francesca Govandy**, the name *Govandy* contains the element *Go*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 17) **Robert Ong**, the name *Ong* contains the element *Ong*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.
- 18) **Celine Xie**, the name *Xie* contains the element *Xie*, which represents the family identity of the Chinese ethnic community and functions as a marker of lineage.

6. Theonymy

- 1) **Kelly Angelia**, although *Angelia* is not directly the name of a deity, the concept of “angel” carries religious associations.
- 2) **Ryo Kusanagi**, the name *Kusanagi* is a sacred symbol in Japanese mythology and is associated with divine entities such as Amaterasu.
- 3) **Diandra Jingga**, the name *Diandra* contains symbolic elements associated with divine entities.
- 4) **Celine Falicia**, the name *Celine* originates from a Latin root associated with the meaning “heavenly.”
- 5) **Michael Ivan**, the name *Michael* contains clear religious elements related to angels, while *Ivan* means “God is gracious.”
- 6) **Jesselyn Kaoneddy**, the name *Jesselyn* means “gift from God,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.
- 7) **Dennis Christopher**, the name *Dennis* contains divine references through Dionysus, while *Christopher* means “bearer of Christ.”

- 8) **Aditya Desani Setiawan**, the name *Aditya* contains a direct reference to a divine entity, namely a god.
- 9) **Julius Wijaya**, the name *Julius* contains religio-mythological references through the meaning “dedicated to Jupiter.”
- 10) **Vony Aprilia Kasim**, the name *Vony* is associated with the mythological creature Phoenix.
- 11) **Marcello**, the name *Marcello* contains religio-mythological references through its association with Mars.
- 12) **David Christianto**, the name *David* refers to the biblical story of David as the slayer of Goliath, while *Christianto*, meaning “bearer of Christ,” is associated with Jesus.
- 13) **Micha Florencia**, the name *Micha* means “gift from God,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.
- 14) **Joyce Nathanael**, the name *Nathanael* means “gift from God,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.
- 15) **Jessicca Maria**, the name *Jessicca* means “gift from God,” containing a direct reference to divinity, while *Maria* directly refers to Mary.
- 16) **Jeffrey Nobel Martin**, the name *Jeffrey* means “divine peace,” containing a direct reference to divinity, while *Martin* contains religio-mythological references through Mars.
- 17) **Jesslyn Nauli**, the name *Jesslyn* means “God’s blessing,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.
- 18) **Jolline Evans Tanri**, the name *Jolline* means “God will increase,” while *Evans* means “God is gracious”; both contain direct references to divinity.
- 19) **Catherine Doreen**, the name *Doreen* means “gift of God,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.
- 20) **Cynthia Ma**, the name *Cynthia* contains a direct reference to a divine entity, namely the Moon Goddess.
- 21) **Celine Xie**, the name *Celine* means “heavenly,” “divine,” or “from heaven,” containing a direct reference to divinity.
- 22) **Oswyth Owen**, the name *Oswyth* means “a warrior empowered by God,” containing a direct reference to the concept of divinity.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the naming patterns of Generation Z children within the Chinese community in Medan are no longer predominantly governed by traditional naming systems oriented toward preserving ethnic identity. Instead, they have evolved into linguistic practices that reflect identity negotiation within a multicultural society. Through a socio-onomastic perspective, this study finds that names are not merely markers of personal identity, but also social constructions that record the interaction between Chinese cultural values, Indonesian national identity, religion, family history, as well as the influences of globalization and popular culture. These findings indicate that naming practices among Generation Z are dynamic and continuously adapt in response to evolving social environments.

The analysis of the data reveals that naming patterns are primarily categorized into six major types: allonymy, patronymy, theonymy, necronymy, demonymy, and numeronymy. Among these categories, allonymy emerges as the most dominant pattern. Many names were chosen based on public figures, historical figures, fictional characters, religious figures, and popular media idols, such as Michael Jackson, Celine Dion, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, as well as characters from video games and anime. The dominance of this pattern indicates that global popular culture has become one of the primary references in the naming process. In other words, names are no longer solely inherited through family traditions but are also shaped by the cultural experiences of parents who interact with mass media, the entertainment industry, and advancements in information technology.

On the other hand, the presence of patronymy demonstrates that the genealogical identity of the Chinese community continues to be preserved through various adaptations of family surnames, such as Tan, Lim, Ong, Huang, Wu, Go, and Kho, which have been Indonesianized into forms such as Tanalys, Wijaya, Limiawan, Govandy, Komala, and others. This phenomenon shows that although the assimilation process has altered the linguistic forms of family names, their symbolic function as markers of lineage remains preserved. These findings suggest that Generation Z within the Chinese community has not entirely abandoned its ethnic identity; rather, it has adopted adaptive strategies that allow cultural identity to remain present in more flexible forms that are socially acceptable within Indonesia's pluralistic society.

This study also finds that religious elements still occupy a significant position in naming practices, as reflected in the relatively dominant category of theonymy. Many names contain meanings associated with God, angels, religious figures, or mythological entities from various religious traditions. These findings indicate that spiritual values remain an important consideration in the naming process, even in an era of globalization characterized by the increasing influence of popular culture. At the same time, the emergence of necronymy, demonymy, and numeronymy shows that naming practices are also influenced by history, geographical space, birth timing, and the collective memory shared by families.

From the researcher's perspective, these findings demonstrate that naming practices within the Generation Z Chinese community in Medan cannot be understood through a single cultural perspective. Instead, names have developed into a space of identity negotiation where Chinese traditions, Indonesian culture, religion, globalization, and personal family experiences converge within the same linguistic construction. Therefore, names no longer function merely as tools of identification but also serve as representations of social change, illustrating how a community preserves its cultural heritage while simultaneously adapting to changing times.

Theoretically, this study reinforces the socio-onomastic perspective, which views names as products of interaction between language and society. The findings show that the variations in names are not arbitrary; rather, they are shaped by social experiences, cultural values, power relations, historical backgrounds, and continuously evolving individual preferences. Practically, this study contributes to the development of onomastic studies in Indonesia, particularly concerning naming practices within the Chinese community, a field that remains relatively underexplored. Future studies are expected to expand the scope of research to Chinese communities in other regions or conduct intergenerational comparisons so that the dynamics of identity transformation through naming practices can be understood more comprehensively.

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