



ONOMASTIC ANALYSIS OF ARAB PROPER NAMES: IDENTITY CATEGORY, ORIGIN, AND QURANIC PRESENCE

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ABSTRACT

Accurate identification of the gender of Arab personal names is crucial for proper grammatical and cultural usage. Observing first-semester Arabic Education students using *al-'Arabiyyah Bayna Yadayk* (Vol. 1, *dars* 56, *wahdah* 7), the name 'Ilham' was treated as male. However, the textbook lists it as female, affecting feminine markers. The study aimed to analyze Arab personal names to determine their gender classification, origin, and Quranic linkage. Three approaches were applied to 30 Arab proper names, selected on the assumption that 15 were male and 15 were female, using dictionary consultation, computational tools (namsor.app and genderize.io), and social media searches. Each name was examined to verify gender, determine its linguistic or geographical origin (Arabic or non-Arabic), and identify its occurrences in the Quran. Based on the three approaches, the overall gender distribution of the names was 40.83% male, 48.33% female, and 10.83% gender-neutral. Most names (93%) were Arabic, with 7% non-Arabic. The origins were predominantly Middle Eastern, with limited representation from other regions. Approximately one-third (33.33%) were mentioned in the Quran. Among the 30 names analyzed, 23 were clearly gendered (10 male, 13 female), 1 was neutral or mutual, and six showed variation across sources. The study showed that naming practices among Arabs reflect identity, social belonging, and cultural continuity. The findings may benefit educators, translators, students, and researchers, although the small dataset and preliminary classification criteria limit them.



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INTRODUCTION

Naming practices in Arab societies combine root-based linguistic structure with profound social and cultural functions (Al-Jallad, 2024; Gažáková, 2023; Macdonald, 2021). Arabic names, such as Mohammed and Fatimah, have spread across Muslim communities worldwide, frequently undergoing phonological adaptations to fit the sound patterns of the borrowing language (e.g., Mehmet, Maxamed, Fatma). However, Arabic names are frequently mistransliterated into English, resulting in variable spellings and errors due to dialect variation, script transfer, and a lack of standardisation (Al-Jarf, 2025a). Names further reflect religious, ethnic, and national identity; in non-Muslim-majority countries, some are altered to avoid discrimination (Qureshi, 2025). Historical evidence shows that in late antique Syria, theophoric names persisted alongside biblical ones (Andrade, 2024). In Indonesia, Arabic names carry Islamic references linked to events, the *Hijri* calendar, and Islamic figures (Safitri & Zuhriyah, 2025), while names of Arabic origin, such as *Halim* or *Salim*, are widely used across cultural groups. Given that Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia—87.2% of the population, or over 207 million Muslims (Portal Informasi Indonesia, 2024)—and that Islamic names are commonly associated with Arabic, one possible explanation is that this may, in specific contexts, obscure or neutralize perceived religious or ethnic identity.

Conservative Arab names combine elements, such as *ism*, *kunya*, *nasab*, *nisba*, *laqab*, *shubra*, etc., to express identity, lineage, affiliation, and status (Rosenhouse, 2002). These structures are enriched with diminutives and hypocoristics (Mashaqba et al., 2024; Shockley, 2024), signaling familiarity and regional variation, particularly between urban and Bedouin groups. In the Arabian Peninsula, diminutives (*tasgbeer*) carry nuanced meanings tied to Bedouin linguistic practices (Shockley, 2024). Contemporary patterns increasingly reflect socio-political and cultural dynamics. In Yemen, conflict-related naming adapts inherited norms to express identity and solidarity (Al-Hamzi, 2025), whereas in Palestine, male names tend to remain traditional, and female names display Western influences shaped by social and aesthetic considerations (Hamamra et al., 2022). In modern contexts, non-Arabic names have become part of Arab usage (Al-Jarf, 2023b), reflecting the evolution of Arab naming practices while preserving core cultural structures.

Some names are associated with particular regions, such as *Meshaal* and *Fahd* in Saudi Arabia (Al Tamimi & Smith, 2023). Moreover, compound names such as *Fatima Zabra*, common in Morocco, demonstrate variations in spelling (e.g., *Fatima Zabrae*), and carry cultural significance, as in the name "Haddhom", derived from *ḥadd* (limit) and *hom* (they), traditionally given to the last daughter, signaling lineage closure and moral reflection consistent with the Quranic concept of *ḥudūd Allāh* (*al-Baqarah* 2:187; *al-Baqarah* 2:229; *al-Baqarah* 2:230; *an-Nisā* 4:13; *at-Tawbah* 9:112; *al-Mujādilah/al-Mujādalah* 58:4; *aṭ-Ṭalāq* 65:1). Field interviews by the second author in Zemmour confirm that such names carry social and emotional meaning, marking family expectation and continuity (El Assali, 2025).

Names function as social markers that guide interaction and convey identity (Carvalhinhos, 2022). They encode gender norms, religious traditions, historical forces, social change, and parental aspirations (Abu Hatab, 2021; Aldrin, 2025; Cassar, 2025; Macdonald, 2021). Arabic and non-Arabic forms are collectively treated as Arab proper names within Arab onomastic practice (Ali, 2025). These are recognised more easily in Spanish than common nouns, while geographical names exhibit a language-specific effect, highlighting the

semantic heterogeneity of proper names (Muñoz et al., 2025). Historical anthroponyms in ancient Aramaic texts reflect early Arabic case endings and multilingual contact (Cohen & Karni, 2025).

Personal names encompass monolithic forms and those distinguished by linguistic origin, such as Arabic, Arabized, or foreign, assigned to an individual for identification (Ma'izi, 2021). Digital resources, such as online databases and naming websites, increasingly influence contemporary choices (Al Tamimi & Smith, 2023). Observations in Indonesia show gender mismatches: names such as *Jamahir* or *Saberin*, which are culturally feminine in Arabic, are frequently assigned to males, whereas *Hany* and *Safy*, which are masculine in Arabic, are commonly used for females. The AI translation of Arabic female names into English has a roughly 50% success rate, frequently misrendering names such as *Jilaan* and *Samraa* (Elimam, 2025).

Preliminary observations reveal that some Arabic names (e.g., Badr, Ghaidaa, Ghassan, Ilham, Khawla, Shadia, Shaimaa, Thamer), appearing in *al-'Arabiyyah Bayna Yadayk* (Vol. 1, Units 1-8; Vol. 2, Units 9-16), were unfamiliar to first-semester students at the first author's university in 2024/2025. The female name 'Ilham', which is exemplified in sentences such as *ana su'udiyyah*, *ana tālibah*, *tadrusīna*, was frequently misidentified as male. This indicates a gap in students' sociocultural and linguistic awareness, as names are adopted outside their original contexts without understanding their gender, meanings, or regional distributions. To address this, the present study proposes approaches for identifying the gender or origin of personal names in Arab societies, aiming to enhance students' sociolinguistic competence and cultural awareness (Al-Wer et al., 2022; El Zahraa, 2024; Holmes & Wilson, 2022; Shodieva, 2024).

Within the relevant prior studies, some publications in *Ta'lim al-'Arabiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab dan Kebahasaaraban* have addressed teacher identity (Hamidah et al., 2023), euphemism and dysphemism (Ghufron et al., 2023), code-switching and code-mixing (Muna et al., 2024), and gender agreement in L2 Arabic (Maulani et al., 2025). Beyond this journal, research has explored feminine marking through the suffix *-ah* in Islamic-Indonesian personal names (Aribowo et al., 2019). Nevertheless, studies of proper names used by Arabs, particularly with respect to gender patterns, origins, and Quranic presence, remain limited. This gap establishes the significance of the present study.

Accordingly, the present study is directed toward answering 'How can proper names among Arabs be systematically identified in terms of gender (male, female, or neutral/mutual), linguistic and geographical origin (Arabic or non-Arabic; associated with specific Arab countries), and their presence or relation in the Qur'an?

METHOD

Design and Rationale

This study examined 30 proper names, including *Alanoud*, *Areej*, *Ayham*, *Baraa*, *Buthaina*, *Dalal*, *Dhuba*, *Ghassan*, *Ghufran*, *Haytham*, *Heyam*, *Ilham*, *Jumaa*, *Khalefa*, *Khouloud*, *Layth*, *Mawabeh*, *Mesh'al*, *Nermeen*, *Noor*, *Rahaf*, *Ramy*, *Saberin*, *Safy*, *Shady*, *Sherihan*, *Tasnim*, *Thunayyan*, *Wesam*, and *Yazan*, used by Arab individuals, initially assumed by the first author to include 15 masculine and 15 feminine names. The initial assumption focused on the perceived gender of the names; however, as the study progressed, its scope broadened to encompass additional aspects. Names were purposively selected to represent a broad range of initial letters from A

to Z, without covering the entire alphabet. They included names perceived as both familiar and unfamiliar to Indonesian learners of the Arabic language.

To assess familiarity with perceived gender, an initial survey was conducted among first-semester students of Arabic Education at UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia. Students indicated whether each name corresponded to a male or female. Key observations included consistent recognition of specific names. For example, among male participants, 73 correctly identified 'Basim' as a male name, while only two provided an incorrect response. Other names showed high variability; for example, *Alanoud* and *Areej* were frequently misidentified, reflecting students' unfamiliarity with these female names. Approximately half of the names demonstrated gender ambiguity or mixed recognition, highlighting the limits of learners' prior knowledge and the need for systematic verification. These results underscored that initial assumptions were tentative and subject to empirical validation.

The analysis employed three approaches to ensure a balanced understanding of the topic. A dictionary consultation using 'al-Hatty' (2003), 'al-Arnaout' (2007), and 'al-Maany' (2025) was conducted to establish a reliable linguistic foundation, as these sources clarify the lexical meanings and morphological features of the names. Name-checking tools such as namsor.app and genderize.io were used to capture patterns not identified by the first approach. This study considered only Arab-related origins from Namsor.app, while genderize.io was used for gender prediction. Social media searches on Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) offered insight into contemporary usage, helping to assess how names are represented in practice. By combining linguistic, computational, and social evidence, the study aimed to strengthen the overall analysis without over-relying on any single approach.

Data was collected between October 2024 and January 2025. Analysis involved systematic verification across multiple sources. Each name was classified by form (masculine, feminine, or neutral), language or region of use, and presence in the Quran. The procedure followed a structured sequence: compile a preliminary name list based on perception survey and alphabetical coverage; verify traditional usage and form via dictionaries; validate algorithmic predictions from name-checking tools; examine contemporary usage via social media; and integrate findings to assign each name a final classification.

The analysis was limited to 30 names, which may not adequately represent the full range of names used by Arabic speakers. The initial perception survey reflected the knowledge of a specific cohort of students and may not be generalizable to other populations. Quranic associations were identified solely through explicit mention, without consideration of deeper semantic or historical contexts. As the dataset excluded *kunya* (*abu-/the father of* or *umm-/the mother of* (Al-Jarf, 2025b)), compound names (e.g., ending with *-din* (Al-Jarf, 2023a), with attributes of Allāh (Soyipov, 2025), etc), patronymics (e.g., *ibn* father, *ibn* grandfather), family names, or tribal names, the proper names analyzed in this study do not differentiate between names commonly used by Arab Muslims and those used by Arab non-Muslims, nor do they encompass all Arab countries in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region. Limitations included fake accounts and spelling inconsistencies between Arabic and Latin scripts, such as هيام, *Hayam*, *Heyam*, *Hiyam*, *Huyam*, or *Houyam*, which can hinder searches.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The analysis of 30 proper names using three approaches revealed consistent patterns and notable discrepancies. Using the first approach, the gender distribution was 10 male names (33.33%), 13 female names (43.33%), and seven gender-neutral names (23.33%): *Areej*, *Baraa*, *Ilham*, *Khalefa*, *Noor*, *Safy*, and *Wesam*. Regarding linguistic origin, 28 out of 30 (93.33%) names were Arabic, whereas only 2 (6.67%) were non-Arabic. Regarding the Quranic versus non-Quranic reference, 10 names (33.33%) were of Quranic reference, including *Baraa* (*az-Zukhruf*: 26), *Dhuba* (*adh-Dhubā*:1), *Ghufran* (*al-Baqarah*: 285), *Jumaa* (*al-Jumaa*: 9), *Khalefa* (*al-Baqarah*: 30), *Khouloud* (*Qāf*: 34), *Noor* (*an-Nūr*: 40), *Ramy* (*al-Anfāl*: 17), *Saberin* (*al-Baqarah*: 155), and *Tasnim* (*al-Mutaffifin*: 27). In comparison, the remaining 20 names (66.67%) were non-Quranic.

Based on those three dictionaries, it is evident that male names are associated with strength, leadership, and nature, such as animals, mountains, or other powerful elements, reflecting bravery or skill, while female names tend to emphasize gentleness, elegance, and purity, with references to natural phenomena or spiritual qualities. For instance, *Haytham* means young eagle or falcon, while *Tasnim* means spring in paradise. In contrast, names used for both males and females tend to emphasize universally positive attributes, such as purity, moral virtue, spiritual significance, or abstract concepts, making them suitable for either gender while maintaining broadly appealing meanings, such as *Noor*, which defines light or radiance. These patterns align with Abu Hatab's findings that Arab names reflect layered meanings (Abu Hatab, 2021).

Using the second approach, based on the combined results from both gender-prediction sources, 14 names were consistently categorized as male, and 14 as female. An additional two names, *Ilham* and *Noor*, fell into the mutual category. In terms of name origins (using namsor.app), Saudi Arabia appeared most frequently (12 times), followed by Jordan (10 times), and the UAE (6 times). Syria (5 times), Lebanon (4 times), and Iraq (3 times) showed moderate representation, while Morocco, Tunisia, and Kuwait each appeared twice; Oman, Algeria, and Egypt seemed once. Non-Arabic origins (e.g., Afghanistan, Malaysia, Uzbekistan, etc) were also identified through a subsequent verification process, indicating the diffusion of Arabic names beyond the Arab world. Diaspora/ethnicity and country data were included as contextual information; however, they were not incorporated into the frequency counts.

In the third approach, which compared datasets from two social media platforms, the Instagram dataset included 13 male names, 16 female names, and one gender-neutral name (*Safy*). In contrast, the X data showed 12 male names, 15 female names, and three neutral-gender names (*Noor*, *Safy*, *Wesam*). In terms of geographic distribution, according to Instagram, Saudi Arabia appeared most frequently with 21 occurrences. Egypt followed with five mentions, while Jordan appeared four times. Syria and the UAE each appeared 3 times, and Iraq, Palestine, Morocco, and Kuwait each appeared twice. Lebanon and Yemen appeared only once. While based on X, Saudi Arabia appeared most frequently (26 occurrences), followed by Egypt (13), Kuwait (12), and the UAE (9). Other countries with notable appearances included Jordan (8), Oman and Palestine (each with 6), and Iraq, Qatar, Syria, and Yemen (each with 5). More minor associations came from Morocco, Bahrain, and Lebanon, while Sudan, Algeria, and Tunisia appeared only once.

Overall, the dictionary approach identified a name's meaning, gender classification, origin, and Quranic references (including the relevant verses and chapters). The name-checking approach revealed patterns of usage, including origin (e.g., diaspora/ethnicity or country) and gender. The social media approach verified user profiles by inferring gender from profile images, pronoun use in comments, and information on origin or residence. Therefore, no single approach is sufficient; the three approaches are complementary.

In addition, the convergence of gender categorization across approaches suggests a relatively high level of stability in gender attribution for most names. At the same time, the recurring use of the name 'Noor' as a gender-neutral or mutual name highlights the fluidity of gender associations in naming practices among Arabs. The dominant presence of Saudi Arabia in name-checking tools and social media platforms illustrates its central role in shaping the digital circulation of personal names among Arabs. At the same time, differences between Instagram and X reflect platform-specific dynamics that shape gender representation and geographic prominence. These findings underscore the value of multiple data sources in capturing the transnational complexity of naming practices among Arabs.

To systematically compare the outcomes, the following table summarizes the analysis of proper names across the three approaches:

Table 1. Comparative Percentage Distribution of Proper Names

Aspect	Approach 1: Dictionaries	Approach 2: Name-Checking Tools	Approach 3: Social media
Gender Distribution	Male: 10 (33.33%) Female: 13 (43.33%) Mutual: 7 (23.33%)	Male: 14 (46.67%) Female: 14 (46.67%) Mutual (via namsor.app): 2 (6.67%)	Instagram: Male 13 (43.33%), Female 16 (53.33%), Mutual 1 (3.33%) X: Male 12 (40%), Female 15 (50%), Mutual: 3 (10%)
Origins	Arabic: 28 (93.33%) Non-Arabic: 2 (6.67%)	Mainly Middle Eastern, fewer in the Gulf and North Africa	Mostly in Saudi Arabia, some in Egypt, Kuwait, the UAE, and a few elsewhere in the Arab World
Quranic Presence	Quranic: 10 (33.33%) Non-Quranic: 20 (66.67%)	-	-

Source: Authors' Data Analysis, 2025

Meanwhile, the following table highlights which names remain consistently categorized as male, female, or mutual across all three approaches:

Table 2. Gender Classification Similarity Across Three Approaches

Approach	Male	Female	Mutual
All three approaches		Alanoud, Buthaina,	
	Ayham, Ghassan,	Dalal, Dhuha,	
	Haytham, Jumaa,	Ghufran, Heyam,	
	Layth, Mesh'al,	Khouloud, Mawaheb,	Noor
	Ramy, Shady,	Nermeen, Rahaf,	
	Thunayyan, Yazan	Saberin, Sherihan,	
		Tasnim	

Source: Authors' Data Analysis, 2025

In contrast, some other names (*Areej*, *Baraa*, *Ilham*, *Khalefa*, *Safy*, *Wesam*) reveal discrepancies across the sources examined through the three approaches. On the other hand, the origins of these names differ across approaches. Namsor.App (Approach 2) identified an initial set of 12 names, which was expanded by Instagram and X (Approach 3). In total, the combined approaches yielded 26 Saudi-associated names with overlaps across approaches, indicating consistent identification—most notably *Alanoud*, *Areej*, *Dalal*, *Heyam*, *Mesh'al*, *Rahaf*, *Thunayyan*, *Wesam*, and *Yazan*, which appeared in both approaches. A comparison of the three approaches shows that only the first approach identified associations between names and their mention in the Quran. This limited occurrence of Quranic names indicates that such associations are not predominant and are highly dependent on the analytical approach employed.

Discussion

Patterns in Selected Arab Proper Names

Names such as *Ramy*, *Shady*, and *Safy* are active participles (*asmā' fā'il*) with a weak final root letter, derived from *ramā*, *shadā*, and *ṣafā*. According to grammatical rules, these names should be written without the final *yā'*, such as *rāmin* when indefinite (*nakira*). 'Noor' is considered common, despite the feminine 'Noura', and 'Saberin', a masculine plural, is used as a feminine name, despite the feminine 'Sabira'. Female names in the verbal-noun form (*maṣdar*), such as *Ilham*, *Alanoud*, *Tasnim*, *Khouloud*, *Dalal*, *Ghufran*, and *Heyam*, raise the question: why are they derived from forms other than feminine active participles, such as *Khalida* or *Ghafira* (instead of *Khouloud* or *Ghufran*)?

Female names tend to be diminutive, such as *Buthaina*, while male names, such as *Khuzayma* (formerly mentioned in the survey as the basis assumption), exhibit the same pattern. In addition, broken plural nouns (*asmā' jam' al-taksīr*), such as *Mawaheb*—which in other examples, such as *Awatef*, *Jawahir*, and *Tabani*—expose female names, which raises the question: why is it the plural form that is used as a female name? One possible reason is that the plural form denotes femininity. Furthermore, specific names with aesthetic connotations, such as *Areej*, are used for females despite being morphologically derived from a masculine form.

These phenomena confirm that the choice of names is influenced by linguistic grammar and by social and cultural factors that reflect the evolution of society across time and space. By knowing the gender associated with a particular name in Arab societies, non-Arabic speakers can avoid misusing appropriate pronouns when speaking or writing in Arabic. For instance, if the name 'Alanoud' is predominantly used for females, non-Arabic speakers can avoid using the masculine pronoun *huwa* and instead use the feminine pronoun *hiya*. They can, in addition, construct correct sentences, such as *Alanoud ṭālibah mutamayyizāb* (referring to a female student) or *tuḥākīr Alanoud durūsahā* (referring to 'she reviews her lessons'), rather than *Alanoud ṭālib mutamayyiz* (referring to a male student) or *yuḥākīr Alanoud durūsahu* (referring to 'he reviews his lessons').

Two of the thirty names were identified as non-Arabic or non-singular names, namely 'Sherihan' of Turkish origin (Ezzat, 2022) and 'Nermeen' (or Nariman) of Persian origin (Al-Jarf, 2023b). Both are composed of the words "shir+han" and "narm+in" and are commonly used among Egyptian women, reflecting cultural influences from interactions with Turkey and Persia (Abu Hatab, 2021). Another study found that Western culture influences naming practices in Palestine, where girls are given modern, foreign names, while boys prefer traditional names (Hamamra et al., 2022). In addition, the name 'Ghassan' is ethnically associated with a Yemeni tribe.

The common names shown by namsor.app were *Ilham* and *Noor*, while the genderize.io classified *Noor* as a female name. Gender-neutral names such as *Noor*, *Nihad*, *Nidal*, *Jibad*, *Ihsan*, and *Jamal* (Al-Jarf, 2023b) are used for males and females. However, as noted by Brylla (2009), they are prohibited in countries such as Denmark and Finland due to their conflict with traditional naming standards and the confusion they cause in the identification of official documents.

On social media, names such as *Noor*, *Safy*, and *Wesam* were used in combination and appeared on personal accounts as real names. Screen names on social media represent users' identities (Alqarni, 2023). Saudi female students prefer real names, such as full names or surnames, while male students tend to use nicknames that reflect humour, intelligence, or looks. These differences reflect the influence of social norms in the selection of names by gender (Alqarni, 2023).

In terms of the political dimension of the names, 'Ghassan' has a symbolic connotation associated with the Palestinian writer and activist Ghassan Kanafani (1936-1972), the symbol of the Palestinian resistance, as well as 'Dalal', which is associated with the Palestinian activist, Dalal al-Mughrabi (1959-1978). 'Khalefa' evokes historical connotations of leadership, from *al-khulafā al-rāshideen* to the contemporary political figure, Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan (1948-2002), the second president of the United Arab Emirates. 'Haytham' refers to the Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tariq Al Said (1995-present). These names reflect political identity and appreciation for influential historical and political figures who shape social life and national identity.

As for the Quranic links, names in Arab-Islamic societies are closely linked to religious values derived from the Holy Qur'an, such as *Dhuha* (verse 1 of *Sūrah adh-Dhuḥā*), *Ghufran* (verse 285 of *Sūrah al-Baqarah*), *Khouloud* (verse 34 of *Sūrah Qāf*), *Noor* (verse 40 of *Sūrah an-Nūr*), *Ramy* (verse 17 of *Sūrah al-Anfāl*), *Saberin* (verse 155 of *Sūrah al-Baqarah*), or *Tasnim* (verse 27 of *Sūrah al-Mutaffifin*). The choice of Quranic names reflects religious awareness

and Islamic connotations (Abu Hatab, 2021). However, it appears that names adopted from the Qur'an, when used as proper names, do not function as verbs; rather, they function as nouns.

Interpretation by Gender as an Identity Category, Origin, and Qur'anic Presence

Why are some names used for males and females? Neutral names express universal positive qualities, such as moral, spiritual, or abstract meanings, which can apply to anyone. In Arab contexts, such names have long been used for both genders. Data from multiple approaches confirm that the name 'Noor' was commonly shared between males and females. In naming practices in languages such as Mandarin, boys' names are more varied, gender-neutral names use fewer gendered characters, and traditional gender conventions are gradually decreasing (Li & Allasonnière-Tang, 2025). In Pakistan, proper names have evolved across generations from overtly religious and compound forms to simpler, media-inspired, and hybrid names, reflecting both global influences and ongoing gendered conventions (Noor et al., 2025). In other words, the use of names for both genders results from a combination of neutral meanings, cultural flexibility, and social changes that shape naming norms.

Why do some non-Arabic-origin names appear among Arab proper names? Although most Arab names originate in Arabic, some non-Arabic names enter Arab naming systems through globalization, migration, and phonetic similarities. Examples include *Nermeen* (also appeared as *Neermeen/Nareman* on X) and *Sherihan*, which sound compatible with Arabic despite their non-Arabic origins. The Arabized names themselves adapt to Arabic grammatical rules, including gender, case, and plural forms, while retaining their original pronunciation (Al-Zubaidi & Al-Jubouri, 2025).

Why do some Indonesian learners of Arabic misperceive some names? Learners may rely on sound-based assumptions (e.g., names ending in *-ah* seem feminine (Aribowo et al., 2019)) or meanings that feel intuitive in Indonesian. Arabic names adapted into other languages or cultures undergo phonological or orthographic changes, which can diminish their cultural or religious nuances. Yet, they still serve as markers of social and cultural identity. Some masculine names may be perceived as feminine, and vice versa, and many learners are unfamiliar with gender-neutral Arabic names, underscoring the need for further research.

Accordingly, what are the benefits of knowing the gender, origin, and Quranic linkage of Arab proper names? Gender prevents miscommunication in pronoun use across cultures and languages, particularly when referring to *huma*/he/him/his or *hiya*/she/her/her, while improvements could be made by incorporating pronouns (*dhamāir*) (Van Buskirk et al., 2023). Origin reveals historical, cultural, and migratory influences in Arab societies. Quranic linkage provides a religious and cultural context that is valuable to sociolinguistics and education. As part of the Arab community, many Sudanese female names are deeply rooted in Islamic heritage, reflecting moral and spiritual values; for example, the name *Asmaa* appears in the Quran (*Al-Baqarah*: 36), highlighting the religious significance of naming (Hazaymeh, 2025).

Besides, what do the three approaches indicate? Traditional and electronic dictionaries provide stable, long-term references. Still, they may lag behind current usage or update unpredictably, while computerized dictionaries combine classical methods with digital processing to meet modern needs (Jaskot & Ganoshenko, 2015). Namsor.app and

genderize.io provide rapid, accessible results; Genderize focuses on gender, whereas namsor provides origin, ethnicity, and regional data. Downsides include ‘Captcha’, unclear algorithms, and potential inconsistency over time. Verified social media accounts help confirm gender, location, and name usage through profile data and interactions.

Hence, Arab names convey identity alongside cultural, moral, and spiritual values (Abu Hatab, 2021). For instance, names such as *Mesb’al* (for males) and *Masha’el* (for females), according to the first author’s observations, are typically associated with individuals from Saudi Arabia or the broader Gulf region. In contrast, names such as *Nermeen* and *Sherihan* are relatively familiar in Egypt. Additionally, family names following the proper name can provide further cues about geographic origin, allowing distinctions such as Arab or Arab-American within diasporas (Awad et al., 2021). These findings indicate that naming practices among Arab communities reflect identity, cultural values, and religious considerations, thereby providing an evidence-based answer to the research question.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed 30 common Arab proper names to identify their gender assignment, language or regional background, and potential Quranic references. The results showed that the dataset's names fell into distinct categories. Some displayed stable gender associations across references, others presented mixed classifications, and a small number indicated non-Arabic linguistic. The Quranic review indicated that not all Arabic-form names could be traced to the Quran, as the analysis was limited to names identifiable through the initial approach. At the same time, the regional findings focused on specific cases within the dataset rather than broader naming patterns.

The contribution of this work is necessarily modest, offering a structured way to identify gender and background information for selected names. While such information is obvious to native speakers, it can assist non-Arab learners who depend on name cues when choosing basic pronominal forms, such as *humu* and *hiya*.

The scope of the present work is limited by its reliance on proper names for gender classification, excluding surnames, compound names as in Al-Jarf (2023, 2025) and Abu Hatab (2021), nicknames (or *dala’*, such as Fatima becoming Fatouma or Baṭṭah/Baṭout), diminutives, most Quranic-derived names, common names across Arab countries, or highly unique proper names from specific Arab nationalities. Additionally, name-checking tools may lack cultural context, yield results that vary over time due to platform updates, differ by script choice (Arabic with or without diacritics/*ḥarakāt*/*tashkeel* versus Latinized forms), and be sensitive to whether names are entered as given names or full names, while social media data are restricted to publicly accessible accounts, limiting representativeness.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

[FEZ] led the study from conception to completion, coordinating all administrative tasks and overseeing the overall publication process. [FEA] contributed by reviewing and validating the data and the manuscript.

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