



## The Development of Personal Naming in Sasak: An Onomastic Study

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**Abstract:** Personal names are a fundamental aspect of human identity and culture, reflecting societal values, traditions, and influences. This study presents a comprehensive onomastic study on the evolution of personal naming conventions within the Sasak ethnic group in Labuapi, focusing on the influence of sociocultural and linguistic factors, as well as generational changes. The main aim of this qualitative research is to examine the influence of sociocultural and linguistic factors on the evolution of naming practices across five generational shifts, from the Baby Boom Generation to the Alpha Generation. To achieve this, we analyzed a list of names of Labuapi residents, representing various generational periods in Sasak society. The findings illustrate a notable shift from traditional to modern naming practices, which can be attributed to various factors, including media and globalization. While religious and cultural influences continue to shape the choice of names, the emergence of more contemporary and diverse naming styles among younger generations reflects the evolving sociocultural landscape.

**Keywords:** *Personal Naming, Sasak Ethnic Group, Sociolinguistics.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Names serve as a globally recognized linguistic tool for identifying individuals and places, and the field of onomastics delves into the study of names. When examined from a sociolinguistic perspective, this study is termed socio-onomastics, focusing on the social, cultural, and situational influences on naming practices (Ainiala, 2016). The choice and evolution of personal names offer unique insights into organizational structures, cultural dynamics, and the potential for broader cultural transformations. Personal names are not mere labels; they encapsulate individual preferences, actions, characteristics, and beliefs, deeply intertwined with values, traditions, and life events (Rosenhouse, 2002). This diversity in naming practices has given rise to various name variations and evolutionary changes across the globe.

In the context of personal naming, the Sasak ethnic group in Lombok, Indonesia presents a captivating case study. Sasak names typically have origins in their language or are influenced by the surrounding culture and languages. Lombok is home to a diverse array of ethnic groups, including Balinese, Javanese, and more, coexisting with the Sasak people, contributing to the dynamic landscape of personal names (Hamid, et al., 2021).

Understanding the evolution of Sasak personal names requires a deep exploration of socio-cultural factors. Naming practices often change in response to shifts in culture and religion. For instance, the adoption of Arabic names among the Javanese exemplifies the profound influence of religious and cultural changes on personal identities. Similar shifts in naming practices can be observed in various regions, including Labuapi in West Lombok, where personal names are influenced by socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds.

The Sasak people, who are predominantly Muslim, have naming practices intricately woven into their religious and spiritual values. Names with Arabic origins, such as Muhammad and Fatimah, are popular, reflecting the pervasive influence of Islam. Traditional ceremonies, like "Peraq Api" or "Pedaq Api," are still commonly observed, underscoring the spiritual significance of names. This ritual, typically conducted when a baby reaches the age of seven to nine days, symbolizes gratitude to Allah SWT and resonates with Sufi traditions, embodying Islamic values.

Furthermore, Sasak names also mirror local cultural influences and their natural environment, establishing a deep connection with their surroundings. Over time, there has been a noticeable shift towards more imaginative and unique names, potentially influenced by changing societal values, globalization, and a desire for distinctiveness.

In our contemporary media landscape, names are not immune to external influences. Beloved characters or influencers can shape naming practices, contributing to the evolving cultural zeitgeist (Krause, 2019). The study of the evolution of personal names within the Sasak ethnic group provides a fascinating window into the broader cultural and linguistic shifts that have occurred over time.

Based on phenomena changes and development of the naming system in Labuapi, this research entitled "The Development of Personal Naming in Sasak: An Onomastic Study" is proposed. This study is significant in illuminating the intricate interplay of cultural, religious, and linguistic influences on the transformative changes in the Sasak personal naming in Labuapi, West Lombok.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive methodology to investigate the development and evolution of personal naming practices within the Sasak ethnic group. Qualitative research is inherently descriptive, emphasizing the collection of textual and visual data to narrate specific phenomena (Sugiyono, 2010). This study focuses on providing a detailed account of how personal naming in the Sasak culture has transformed over time and the factors influencing these changes.

The main data source for this study is the names of individuals born in the Labuapi sub-district, which serves for understanding the broader trends in personal naming among the Sasak people. Data were collected in the form of interview transcripts and lists of names categorized by birth period, with additional data obtained from the Civil Registry Service Office to ensure authenticity and relevance.

To facilitate data collection, this research employed a combination of qualitative techniques, including interviews and document analysis. Interviews, drawing from Esterberg (Sugiyono, 2008), served as a means to engage with Hj. Fauzan, an elder from Labuapi, who offered valuable insights into the history and background of his family members' names. Semi-structured interviews, as outlined by Nunan (Safitri, 2014), were used for their flexibility and ability to provide a deeper understanding of the topic. These interviews took place at the elder's residence, with detailed notes being taken.

The documentation method, in line with Sugiyono (2015), involved gathering data from various sources, such as birth records from different generational periods (Baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, and Generation Alpha), obtained from the West Lombok Civil Registry Service Office. These documents were essential for establishing an authentic dataset for subsequent analysis.

To ensure a comprehensive data collection process, a combination of data collection techniques was employed, including note-taking, audio recording, and document review. Note-taking allowed for the capture of essential details during interviews. Audio recording was used to preserve the entirety of interviews, ensuring that no nuances or critical insights were overlooked. Document review, involving the examination of existing documents, was carried out to gather data from various sources.

In conclusion, this research employs a qualitative descriptive approach to uncover the development of personal naming practices within the Sasak ethnic group and the factors influencing these changes. It focuses on the names of individuals born in Labuapi and combines interview transcripts, document analysis, and authentic birth records from different generational periods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1 Typical names based on a particular time period.**

#### **1.1 Baby Boomers (1946-1964)**

During this period, short names with one word were common. This generation represent an era characterized by simplicity in naming practices. Many names were found with the feminine morpheme “-ah” such as “Mujnah”, “Sakmah”, “Saniah”, “Jumlah”, and “Jurminah” for female, but names with this ending are not only found in women, in some cases these names are also found in men such as, "Hamzah", "Misbah", "Satirah", "Rahmansyah", and others. Many borrowed names from Arabic were romanized or translated into Indonesian such as “Ahyar” which come from arabic أَخْيَار (Noble, Admirable and Praiseworthy) and “Tahir” which in arabic is رَاطٍ (holy, pure, innocent), old spellings such as “Djapar”, “Djahrah”, “Jusuf”, or “Syarifoeddin” also have many users. Because of this early period had limited name variations of only one word so that many names sounded similar or even identical.

#### **1.2 Generation X (1965-1980)**

Gen X names in Labuapi are still dominated by names with 1 word and similar to the baby boomer era, this generation continued the tradition of one-word names, indicating the persistence of cultural and linguistic factors in naming practices. Many male names start with Mu- such as "Mustarip", "Mustail", "Mursa'um, and "Musleh", while many female names end in -ah such as "Anisah", "Turkiah", "Mukminah", "Minrah", "Sara' iyah", "Sarisah", the same as in the baby boomers era.

Names with 2-3 words also began to appear and were usually combined with Javanese names such as "Endang Royani", or "Surya Lesmana" which came from Sanskrit. During this period several names were found using old Indonesian spellings such as "Dortje" and "Ichlas".

#### **1.3 Generation Y/Millennial (1981-1996)**

In this era, Gen Y marked a shift from one-word names to names with two or three words. This shift signifies an evolution in naming trends influenced by socio-cultural and linguistic factors. Gen Y in Labuapi receiving quite a lot of influence from names from the surrounding areas such as the names of the inhabitants of the islands of Bali such as “Krisna”, “Wisnu”, and “Laksamana Surya”, Javanese names such as “Wartining Asih”, “Ayune”, “Sri”, “Catur”, “Purwanto” and sundanese names such as “Wawan Satriawan” and “Een”. European-influenced names are also found, such as "Clarissa", "Betty", and "Elizabeth". There are also several names combined with Sanskrit such as "Darmawangsa" which means sharing goodness, "Sukma" which means spirit or soul.

Gen Y's personal naming practices in Labuapi signify a departure from traditional one-word names. The adoption of multi-word names and the incorporation of names from surrounding regions reflect their generation's adaptability, openness to cultural influences, and a shift toward more diverse naming patterns.

#### **1.4 Generation Z (1997-2012)**

In this era Gen Z in Labuapi largely abandoned one-word names, opting for two- or three-word combinations. This shift aligns with the theory that naming trends evolve over

time. European names such as “Jimmy”, “Ebien”, “Allexyst”, “Ricky”, “Alex”, “Alexander”, “David”, “Dennis”, “Queen” also appear and usually combined with Islamic names, or Indonesian names such as “Mohammad Alex Ikbal”, “Mery Siti Fatimatuzzahrah”, “Muhammad David Khalik”, “Queen Nadia Maharani, “Chalista Riananda Azizah” “Alexander Saifullah” or “Feliya Erieka Selma Rasyid” but name with full combination of arabic like “Muhammad Djulrizki“ and “Ahmad Salman Alfarizi” is still popular.

The inclusion of European names combined with Arabic elements, showcases the globalization of naming practices and the willingness to incorporate diverse linguistic influences. The correlation between Generation Z's naming choices and their technological environment suggests a potential link between technology and personal naming. This generation's names may be influenced by digital culture and online trends.

### **1.5 Generation Alpha (2013-2025)**

In the Alpha generation, names that were popular in the previous period, such as the names of Gen X and Boomers, are almost never found again. The Alpha Generation still uses a lot of names that are influenced by Arabic culture, but with a more varied choice of names and fancy sounding. In spelling, these names are more complicated and not as simple as the older generation, Generation Alpha maintains the trend of multi-word names, similar to Generation Y and Generation Z reflecting their generation's adaptability to evolving naming trends. Their diverse name elements indicate a generation that embraces linguistic diversity and creative combinations.

Other Arabic names are usually combined with modern Indonesian names such as "Sapina Rosidin" where Sapina is used for Indonesian female name while rosidin comes from Arabic رَشَدٌ (to be on the right path), another example is "Novalia Busro" which is a combination Novalia, the female names in Indonesia, and شَرِيبٌ (Glad tidings, good news) which also comes from Al-Qur'an. This suggests a continued attachment to Islamic and Arabic traditions, even in a rapidly changing world. This blending of linguistic and cultural elements in names of younger generations suggests the concept of cultural hybridity.

Apart from names containing Arabic elements, there are still many combinations of European names, some examples of which are "Ineeza Ufaira Shaqueena", "Thalita Arkina", "Siren Mafira" for female and "Joe Safri", "M. Arcelio Fatih" for male.

## **2. Socio-Cultural and Linguistics Background**

### **2.1. Religious**

In the Labuapi community, names have traditionally been deeply rooted in Islamic culture and religion. This is evident in the prevalence of names related to Islamic figures and Arabic-Islamic elements, such as "Muhammad," "Salman Alfarisi," "Aminah," and "Khadijah." These names reflect the strong Muslim population in the community.

In examining the generational differences, it becomes apparent that naming practices have evolved over time. In the baby boomer era, names predominantly carried Arabic-Islamic characteristics, with only a few foreign names. However, in the generations from X to Alpha, there has been a noticeable trend of combining Arabic-Islamic names with modern or European names. Additionally, the number of words in names has increased, indicating a shift towards more complex and diverse naming conventions.

A fascinating aspect of Labuapi's naming practices is the presence of names like "Abraham," "Gabriel," and "Adam," which are shared across both Islamic and Christian

contexts. This suggests a cross-religious influence within the community and a broader acceptance of diverse religious identities.

Beyond the religious and cross-religious aspects, Labuapi's naming practices also reveal a deeper layer of meaning. Names are seen as prayers and reflections of the hopes and intentions of the giver. Informants like Fauzan emphasize the significance of good intentions and consider a name to be a form of prayer. For instance, Fauzan's name, which means safety and victory, reflects his parents' hopes for his success. This underscores the spiritual significance of names in the community.

Furthermore, Labuapi's naming practices have also embraced elements of Hinduism. Names such as "Vishnu" and "Srikandi" are now employed, often combined with various elements from different religious backgrounds. This harmonious blending of diverse religious influences in naming practices is indicative of the community's openness and acceptance of different faiths and traditions.

The evolving naming practices in Labuapi reflect a dynamic interplay between various religious traditions and contemporary naming trends. It highlights the adaptability of religious factors in names and the community's willingness to embrace both traditional and modern elements from different religious backgrounds in their naming conventions.

## **2.2. Cultural**

Labuapi's naming practices reflect a rich blend of cultural influences. Islamic Arabization culture has left its mark, with names like Sa'ban, Mustajab, and Rajab, reflecting a strong connection to Islamic traditions. The use of the '-din' morpheme, derived from Arabic, underscores the religious significance of names. Balinese Hinduism is prevalent, leading to names like Sindhu, Gusti, and Wisnu. Javanese and Sundanese cultures also contribute names like Raden, Roro, and Wawan Kurniawan.

Apart from external cultural influences, Labuapi's family naming system is deeply rooted in tradition, emphasizing the significance of names as prayers and hopes from parents. Names are considered not only individual identifiers but also a link to family and cultural heritage. The cultural perspective on names and their role in shaping identity and continuity is shared by many in the community.

The younger generations, particularly Generation Z and Generation Alpha, have been exposed to a globalized world and diverse influences, which has led to a shift in naming preferences. Longer, more modern-sounding names have become popular, signifying a departure from traditional conventions and an embrace of contemporary choices.

The coexistence of names influenced by multiple cultures within Labuapi exemplifies the dynamic socio-cultural nature of the community. Cultural factors intersect with norms, values, and historical legacies, shaping naming choices. This diversity underscores the importance of cultural traditions in personal naming, with names serving as markers of identity. While Labuapi maintains strong cultural ties, the community's naming practices have also evolved to incorporate modern elements, striking a balance between cultural preservation and adaptation to changing times.

## **2.3. Naming-after-someone**

In Labuapi, naming practices extend beyond individual preferences and reflect deep-rooted familial and cultural connections. Some Sasak people name their children after relatives, emphasizing the sentimental significance of family ties. For example, H. Fauzan

shared a touching family tradition where his youngest child was named "Fauzan" to honor his father's memory, highlighting the enduring bond between generations. This practice of naming after relatives also has historical roots, as it was more common in the past to name children after their parents or ancestors, providing a historical perspective on this tradition.

In addition to family names, Labuapi residents also name their children after famous personalities, such as "Muhammad Zainul Majdi," "Dedi Mizwar," and "Siti Nurbaya." This practice not only honors these figures but also serves as a means to maintain cultural continuity. By bestowing names associated with historical or cultural icons like "Kartini," "Sukarno," and "Moh. Hatta," Labuapi keeps alive the memory of individuals who have played significant roles in their cultural history.

Naming-after-someone, whether a family member or a renowned figure, serves as a testament to the deep familial bonds and cultural heritage within the Labuapi community. It reflects a desire to honor and remember relatives, bridging generational gaps, preserving family legacies, and maintaining the rich tapestry of Labuapi's culture. These names also carry a deeper significance, as they may symbolize aspirations and ideals, aligning with the notion that naming can be a powerful form of expression and identity formation.

#### **2.4. Musicality**

In the names of the Sasak ethnic group there are many names that have similar or even identical sounds, especially names in the baby boomer and gen X eras, names that are very similar and had popularity in their time, these names have similar sound, such as "Munah" and "Munaah", "Munawar" and "Munawir", "Aliman" and "Saliman," "Seriman" and "Serimani", "Minrah" and "Minarah", "Hendra" and "Hendri".

In both Baby Boomers and Generation X suggests a preference for phonetic resonance in naming practices during those eras. These resonant names may have been favored for their melodic and harmonious qualities, which can make names more memorable and appealing.

The similarity in musicality factors in these two periods is thought to have occurred because the periods were adjacent and the similar sound characteristics of these names were passed down continuously from generation to generation. This may also happen because it reflects the desire to unite in a time of social and political change, considering that in this era the post-war attitude of unity and culture was still strong so that it had not been affected by the naming factor of foreign culture.

## **CONCLUSION**

Personal naming in the Sasak ethnic group in Labuapi is influenced by a series of factors and changes throughout the five generations of the periodization: Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y (Millennials), Gen Z and Generation Alpha. In other words, when choosing a name, parents are often influenced by these factors. This research analyzes the socio-cultural and linguistic factors that influence the personal naming of the Sasak ethnic group in Labuapi. This analysis includes five factors including: religious, cultural, naming-after-someone and musicality.

The results of the analysis show that the religious factor is the factor that most influences personal naming in Sasak, from the baby boomers era to the alpha generation, names with Islamic elements are always present and dominant, besides that cultural factors also have a significant role, including other cultures around the island. Lombok includes Islamic culture,

Hindu culture, Christian culture, Javanese culture, Sundanese culture, and European culture. On the naming-after-someone factor is a reflection of a giver's preference for a child's name, these names usually follow the family name or the name of a famous person. While the musicality factor is often found in the baby boomer generation.

The main difference between the factors that influence the choice of names for the older generation and the younger generation is the choice of fashionable and fancy sounding names, names resulting from foreign cultures are generally names that are influenced by the results of modernization and digitization.

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