* Our study was on the Halo-Effect, which is a cognitive bias in which a global evaluation of a person affects later evaluations of individual attributes of that person.
* In previous research regarding the Halo Effect, a study by Landy and Sigall found that physical attractiveness had a significant effect on judgments of essays, but only when the essay was of poor quality.
* We also looked at another study by Nisbett and Wilson, in which the judgment of specific attributes in relation to a presented guise, persona, or disposition; was examined. To determine how an impression of the whole can affect later impressions of individual traits, they created scenarios where participants watched videos of a professor with either a warm or cold guise. They found that when participants were presented with a professor displaying a cold guise, they rated said professors attributes lower than when that same professor was presented while displaying a warm guise.
* For our study, we used as our independent variables a name, in particular a racially specific name, and a particular guise, either a warm or cold guise, which was facilitated by the use of a good or bad day story account.
* We pulled these independent variables from the previously mentioned research I that we used a racially specific either Caucasian or African American name in place of a photograph, and we pulled the independent variable for guise which we facilitated by the good day/ bad day story account from the use of the warm or cold guise in the Nisbett and Wilson study.
* We predicted that
  + When presented with an African American name, participants would judge personality attributes more negatively than those of a Caucasian name
  + When presented with a cold guise situation, participants would judge personality attributes more negatively,
  + And that an interaction would occur in which, when presented with a cold guise situation the difference between the ratings of personality would be more evident, as an African American name would be rated significantly more negatively.
* Our study was a 2 X 2 between subjects design in which name, either an African American name: Ebony Jackson or a Caucasian name: Emily Smith, and guise, either warm guise-good day or cold guise- bad day were crossed.
* We created a short story and questionnaire packet and presented these materials to 24 UNCG-entry level psychology students. The questionnaire contained 30 questions, some of which pertained to the short story, but most pertaining to personality attributes.
* The participants read the short story, answered the questions, and then answered a few additional questions about themselves.
* We conducted an ANOVA, where we used a differential means score, obtained by subtracting the mean scores for negative attributes from the mean scores for positive attributes. We found that there was a significant effect for guise, a marginally significant effect for name, and a marginally significant interaction between name and guise.
* Results suggest that in general an African American name elicits more negative and less positive judgments of personality attributes than a Caucasian name. Also, we found that under a cold guise-bad day situation the judgment of personality attributes was more negative, especially for an African American name. The results of this study indicate that a racially specific name, not only visual stimuli, can elicit the halo-effect.
* There were some limitations to this study which and further research should examine situations using a larger-population, as well as the use of other racially specific names or even non-racially specific names.
* In conclusion, it is suggested that the halo-effect in relation to a racially specific can affect perceptions of an individual in instances where visual cues are not available, such as the submission of a college application, class essay, or resume. This information is important because it can be applied to many walks of and situations in life, and it’s possible that you or I have even been judged on our names alone.