



PSYCHOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IN JHUMPA LATHIRI'S THE NAMESAKE

Ms. B. Lavanya¹, Assistant Professor, Research Scholar

Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R& D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai.

Dr. R. Udhaya Kumar², Associate Professor

Vel Tech Rangarajan Dr. Sagunthala R& D Institute of Science and Technology, Avadi, Chennai.

Abstract

In postcolonial Indian English Literature, conflict is a recurring theme. People across the globe are confirmed with a variety of competing circumstances. Immigrants leave their home countries for various reasons, including social, economic, and political changes in society. Numerous issues confront the person in today's society. A dispute arises as a result of a shift in lifestyle. Inherent and inherent in the mind, psychological conflicts occur when one person or social group perceives their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, ambitions, and interests as being challenged by another. Jhumpa Lahiri is an Indian expat from West Bengal who moved to the United States in the 1990s. She is an Indian American novelist and Pulitzer Prize-winning postcolonial South Asian woman writer.

Her stories are rife with internal struggles that she explores in great detail in her writing. Internal and external conflicts of character are shown and social matches in *The Namesake*. Her work also focuses on psychological struggles, such as perplexity and dread, and the protagonist's existential search. The emphasis of this research is on the psychological tensions between immigrants of the first and second generations.

Keywords: Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*, conflict, immigrant, Postcolonial, expatriate, Multicultural

DOI Number: 10.48047/nq.2022.20.19.NQ99224

NeuroQuantology2022;20(19): 2631-2636

Author Jhumpa Lahiri has been praised as a pioneer of the new movement in Indian writing, and her books have sold millions of copies worldwide. Nilanjana Sudehna Jhumpa Lahiri, the daughter of Bengali immigrants to London, was born on July 11th, 1967. Jhumpa Lahiri is an Indian by Birth, although she received her formal education in the United Kingdom and how

resides in the United States. When she writes books, she uses her experiences in other countries as inspiration. People of Bengali descent who have relocated to United States are the inspiration for fictional characters. In 2003, Lahiri released her debut book, *The Namesake*. Originally published as a novella in *The New Yorker*, it was extended into a whole book.



Lahiri's first novel, *Ganguli*, tells the story of the Ganguli family's struggle to adapt to life in the United States. First-generation immigrant Ashima faces culture shock when she and her spouse Ashoke move to the U.S. from India, where she was married to Ashok. Ashoke is a first-generation immigrant from India who comes to the United States in quest of "better jobs, better living standards, higher education" in the area of "fiber optics" (TN.105).

Ashima is a young woman who travels to her husband's side alone. "Not to eat beef or wear skirts, or cut off her hair, or forget the family the moment she landed in Boston" were some of the instructions she received from her family members and relatives at Dum Dum Airport (TN.37). In contrast to her parents and other family members, she believes that "her grandmother had not warned" her (TN.37). These words reveal her original country's cultural values.

Ashima misses her Bengali pals and her own country. An open-mindedness and freedom of mobility outside the home are discouraged in her devout Hindu Brahmin household. 'Ashima Ganguly is primarily restricted to the four walls of her home,' write S. Robert Gnanamony in "Diasporan Divided Souls and Identity constituting. When it comes to the clash of eastern and

western cultures, she is always on edge. (157)

Preparing and eating her favorite Indian foods was on her mind when she expected her first child. She went to a supermarket in the United States to buy ingredients for Indian cuisine. She was unable to put together the meal. She wasn't happy with the flavor. As she reaches into the carton for one more onion, the contractions in her lower belly begin. Throwing the onion, she uses his surname to address her husband, who is in the bedroom doing his homework as she tosses the onion. She never uses his first name to call out to him. She speaks in the typical Bengali interrogative, asking "Are you listening to me?" (TN.2).

Ashima and three American ladies are at the hospital for childbirth. Having grown up in a mixed household, she, like other Indian women, has a strong desire to express herself and share her opinions openly. Her loneliness is palpable when she is recovering in the hospital. It is, however, impossible for her to meet with other American ladies. 'She feels lonely and abandoned as she battles over the boundaries of culture and languages,' writes Anitha Singh in "The Theme of Dual Identity." Vermilion on her forehead and flower-garlands in her hair complete the look of a silk sari.



In the hospital, Ashima has a hard time sleeping on her own. As she puts it, "It's the first time she's slept alone in her life" (TN03). There are just a few Indian women in the hospital, and she wonders why she is the only one. Her thoughts return to her nation, where customs and culture dictate that a pregnant lady should give birth in her parent's house (TN04). There is no privacy when it comes to childbirth in Calcutta. Solace and counsel from a large group of individuals are offered to the pregnant woman.

A nurse at the hospital asks Ashima, "Do you want a boy or a girl?" In anatomical detail, she explains her thoughts without preconceptions. The nurse grins and says, "as long as there are ten-finger and toe" (TN.07). Ashima then realizes her mistake, "she should have said fingers and toes" (TN.07). Which causes her even greater discomfort. It's a huge responsibility for Ashima to take on the role of mother. When she gave birth, she had a son. Ashima and Ashoke had difficulty adapting to the American way of life. She eagerly awaits the arrival of her grandmother's letter, which will bring her infant a new name. Pet names that remind her of old-time intimacy are something she refuses to give up. American hospital officials ordered them to register their child's birth certificate before being released, which cannot be altered. Ashoke came to grips with the reality of the

situation and recalled an experience that saved his life when he was 21 years old, He gave the name 'Gogol' to his kid.

When Ashoke and Ashima moved in, the flat became their new home. Despite her best efforts, she cannot break free from her cocoon. She has lost touch with who she is and where she belongs emotionally. She sobs nonstop in her room all day. Which is rather unusual for her. She has no one to lean on for support. She misses her mother, father, and other family members. The Bengali periodicals she bought from home keep her busy with short tales, poetry, and essays in Bengali. She keeps her ears attuned to the sound of the gentle lick in the mailbox between the hours of twelve and two "in the door" (TN.36), waiting for her parents' letters, which she collects in her white bag and read through often.

To avoid raising her kid alone in this nation. Ashima resolves to return to her native Calcutta, where family and friends surround her. It's wrong. "I long to return" (TN.33) Even yet. She's a woman, and she'll do everything her husband says. In her mind, she wanted to raise him in the Bengali tradition. In the end, she chooses to remain with her husband and not to worry about her parents' worries, so she keeps all her emotional difficulties and disappointments to herself. "She signs



Bengali songs that her mother used to sing to her as a child” (TN.35).

It is customary to execute Gogol's annaprasan (a rice ritual) Six months old. Ashima feels enraged at the situation. The annaprasan ceremony is one of the most significant events in Bengali culture when a baby is born. The maternal uncle performs the ceremonial feeding of the baby's first solid meal. A Bengali annaprasan ceremony for Gogol by Ashoke and Ashima and their American Bengali friends. Because of their cultural identity. They wore traditional attire (Bengali language).spoke in Bengali, and performed rituals, she strives to instill Bengali culture in her kid while raising him in a foreign nation, symbolizing their conflicted relationship with one another's cultures.

Ashoke and Ashima are both distant from their families and friends. Despite this, they make an effort to maintain and honor their Indian heritage via various customs, such as Gogol's annaprasan, which is performed on a foreign country. Gogol is sent to Bengali language and culture classes every other Saturday in third grade. Gogol teaches other students how to read and write the Bengali alphabet while also reading handouts on the Bengali Renaissance published in English (TN.66). They are not interested in this at all, even Gogol. Bengali youngsters suffer mental

anguish when their parents watch an American movie in another room during numerous gatherings hosted on Saturday nights, traditionally by Bengali families' houses.

Exile in the United States is difficult for Ashima. These feelings of estrangement and a desire for a bygone era are increasingly apparent. Disorientation and homesickness are overcome by connections with Bengalis who have immigrated to the United States. Going on, Gogol's parents will call him “Nikhil” when they enroll him in school. He deems this moniker indefensible since it implies a stranger to himself. A fight between Gogol and Nikhil has worried him because of the newness they are creating. When Gogol tries to use his new name, it doesn't work. The rejection of a dual identity was his first effort. Because of this refusal, he was forced to resume using Gogol's name. which he had previously used Symbolically, Gogol had an issue with his name since it wasn't American or Indian but Russian. His name irritates him to the point of annoyance. When he discovers that Nikolai Gogol was a disgruntled man who spent his life away from home, he feels inferior to his pals. Erin must do something now, or she will be humiliated for the rest of her life. When he was younger, he refused to use his given name, Nikhil, even though his parents urged him to that's why the school's principal is listed as Gogol.



During his youth, Gogol learns to resent his name. He views it as a barrier to his integration into American society and culture since it binds him to the culture and history of his parents and family. Gogol suffers from feelings of loneliness and isolation. When he thinks of India, he thinks of it like any other nation. In contrast to the United States, there is no emotional attachment to it. For him, though, Boston in the best place to be: here is where he calls home. Nikhil is the new name given to Gogol after he turns 18 in New Haven, Gogol wants to study architecture over popular courses among immigrants. Like physics, chemistry, and engineering. Concerned about his connection with an American woman whose last name he can't pronounce is not uncommon for him.

Ashima is concerned about the Americanization of her Children's views. Gogol's rebranding has irked her. She refuses to use the name 'Nikhil' in any correspondence. She is aware that her son disliked the name she gave him as a child. She is more devoted to her heritage. Parents never referred to their children by their first names." In a family, "good names has no place" (TN.66). Ashoke (Mithu) and Ashima have a pet name (Monu). As a result, she wrote the names one by one in chronological order. Starting with the youngest. Instead of succumbing to her children's transformations, Ashima rises

from the ashes. After attempting to raise her children to the best of her ability. She now works as a librarian to fill the void in her schedule.

As a result, Lahiri's work serves as a wake-up call for Indians living outside of India whose undiluted love for their old home nation interferes with the care and future of their children in subtle and unthinkable ways.

Work Cited

"Interviews with Jhumpa Lahiri" in Das, Nigamanada, ed. Jhumpa Lahiri: Critical Perspectives,

New Delhi: Pencraft International. 2008. 171-81.

Gnanamony, S. Robert. Diaspora Divided Souls and Identity-Constituting in Jhumpa Lahiri's

The Namesake. "Seva-Bharati Journal of English Studies 3.(Feb.2007): 55-65. Lahiri, Jhumpa. The Namesake. New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2003.

Raul, Kamal Kumar, 'The Cultural Landscape of Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake.' Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd. 201. 55-65.

Singh, Anitha. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora: Jhumpa Lathiri's The Namesake." The Atlantic



Literary Review Quarterly 7.2(Apr-Jun
2006):1-14

