

THE IDENTITY CRISIS IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S THE NAMESAKE

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Abstract

The Namesake written by Jhumpa Lahiri is a story about culture, race and heritage, and how these factors shape our attitudes and our lives in a changing society. The novel tells the story of the lives of Ashima and Ahsoka Ganguly and how they left the life in India that they knew and loved, living the American dream and giving themselves and their children a better life. The only son and last name is Gogol, he is constantly trying to find his identity in order to adapt to the expectations of his family and the expectations of American social environment. The latter states that adherence to the standard family model is the norm in North America. Gogol continues to fight to remain faithful to both worlds. Thus, the theme of the novel is personality. This becomes apparent when one looks at the cultural meanings and origins of the people, genders and names that determine the patriarchal family and destiny of life. The factors contributing to the emergence of the identity problem are evident not only in Indian culture, but can also be an obstacle to the many immigrants who come to the United States every year.

Keywords: *Identity, Namesake. Culture, Attitudes.*

IDENTITY CRISIS IN NAMESAKE

Nilanjana Sudeshna Jhumpa Lahiri was born in July 11, 1967. She is an American writer known for her short stories, novels and essays in English and more recently in Italian. Her first collection of short stories, *The Interpreter of Maladies* in 1999, won the Pulitzer Prize for Novel and the Penn/Hemingway Prize. Her first novel, *The Namesake* (2003), was adapted into a hit film of the same name. Her first novel, *The Name sake*, became a New York Times Notable Book and a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Award, and established itself as a major film. This novel clearly describes the theme identity crisis, exploring the meaning of human names as a patriarchal definition of sex, ancestry as a means of determining the fate of a person's life and sexuality.

The factors contributing to the identity problem are evident not only in Indian culture, but can also be an obstacle to the many immigrants who come to the United States every year. The first ever, name can have a great personality and can be very important in maintaining a good surname. For example, "all the time I hear my friends say, this is not just a name!" Gogol struggles to give up himself and accept the name of his only for his father, whom he hates. Soon the official name was changed because he could not bear the pain associated with this man's legacy.

Ashima and Ashoke want to give their children meaningful names and impetus to his life. Ashoke gave his son the name of hope for a better life and a second chance, but that was also a tragedy. On the way home by train, young Ashoke is fascinated by the work of Nikolai Gogol and refuses to part with the anthology until late at night. The morning silence is suddenly broken when Ashoke's car derailed and he, along with his new hammer, hit the cold, wet ground near the train. Rescue teams roamed around looking for survivors. If it were not for the pages of Nikolai Gogol, who twisted his limp body with Ashoke in his arms, he would never have been found under the

rubble that covered him.

Knowing the origin of his name changed the way he started his life. Gogol's life is full of impasse, disappointment and confusion as he struggles to figure out who he is and where the same curse will lie on him.

On the other hand, the names of Gogol's parents Asim (infinity, infinity) and Ashok were carefully chosen in accordance with Hindi conventions. Their names guide their lives in a positive direction and give them the strength and determination to move forward even in the most difficult times. The name Ashok deserves special respect, is culturally sacred and should not be used by his wife. The same respect for names applies to other cultures also. He never mentioned the name of his father or brother to them. Because it was a sign of disrespect and disrespect. They call older siblings "brothers" or "sisters." Essentially, culture views age as a means of establishing identity in relation to social status through names and titles. This practice is common and that many people are just starting to abandon this old practice.

In fact, the names of the main characters in the name book not only give meaning and direction to life, but also give them a cultural identity and a sense of belonging to other Bengali peoples. However, Bengali names and their heritage cause stress and anger as they try to find their place in American society. Although the name Gogol is named after a famous Russian writer, it refers to his presence associated with a backward Bengali heritage, to which he sought freedom. From an early age, Gogol's father Ashok admired the works of Nikolai Gogol, as well as the new meaning that he brought into life.

Nikolai Gogol's characters represent the humble beginnings of Ashok's father's life, and their story can always be identified by Ashok. History reveals the secrets of a world he had never seen before, and the ghost of Nikolai Gogol dwells "somewhere deep in the soul of Ashok" (Lakhiri, 2003, p. 14). Therefore, Gogol renounced his name. Associate him with seemingly meaningless traditions that he should have admired in the past and that prevented him from leading a free and satisfying life; The name connects him with his father. If Gogol is Russian, what does this have to do with his Bengali heritage? Having lived all his life in America, Gogol renounced his name. Not because he is ashamed of his relationship with his father, but because he is ashamed of his history and wants to be part of the seemingly excellent American "fit."

Culture and education as a means of forming identity are the main themes of this novel. Cultural differences also create the identity crisis that the protagonist faces. The title traces the lives of the father and sons of Ahsoka and Gogol, who lived in two different eras. Although both are of Indian descent and live in strict accordance with Indian culture, Gogol's cultural identity has been bombarded by the intense consumerism, materialism, and openness that shaped American society in the 1970s.

Gogol considered his parents' hometown in India upside down and did not want to associate himself with the traditions that many family members had adopted. His parents raised him the way they thought he was supposed to grow up in Bengali, but Gogol discovered early on that he was a real American. However, his choice met with great resistance from his family. Therefore, he decided not to deviate from Bengali customs. This causes great confusion for Gogol, who is trying

to achieve what is expected of him as an American and an Indian.

The struggle for the identity is widespread in modern society as the demands for compliance with certain norms increase. This struggle is especially acute for immigrants in the United States in the hope of improving their quality of life by adopting the social standards of their ideal family in order to achieve a sense of normalcy. Likewise, in thriving multi-ethnic communities, people are often strongly encouraged to identify as racial and to act within that race so that they are not considered "abnormal."

The novel *The Namesake* is primarily about names, culture and heritage to shape personality, but they also shed light on how gender defines life. In the novel, Ashima's whole life revolves around his children, and he feels an inner emptiness, going through important stages of his life. Her main goals in life are to take care of her children and husband, and she was trained for this role from an early age by closely observing other women in her family. Such observations put their personality as their main concern and suggest that there is no point in giving up this lifestyle.

In this novel, the author states that when Ashima gave birth to her first child, "her mother and grandmother admired her body's ability to shape life despite growing discomfort" (Lahiri, 2003, p. 6). She found her personality in life: motherhood. And nature wants it perfectly. Unlike Ashima, who quit her job after marriage, American women today are taking on roles that include more educational opportunities and a variety of activities in addition to traditional home and childcare expectations.

Although Ashima had the opportunity to experience privileges she never knew about and she still held to the traditional position of being a wife in the home. Ashok considers himself the head of the family and feels responsible for the well-being and well-being of his entire family. For example, since Ashima is separated from his family and complains that he cannot raise the child on his own, Ashok feels responsible for his heartache because he was the one who took him out of the family and his life. Likewise, the father seemed to be a more emotionally stable side in the family and felt responsible for the family's financial and spiritual growth. Although the mother played an important role. Thus, the family dynamics described in the list are very similar to today's Normal American society. Thus, the popular notion that gender is based on personality is widely supported.

Ganguli adopted many traditions and customs during his emigration to the United States, which made it difficult for his son to settle into society and find his identity. This is explained by considering the meaning of the human name as a patriarchal definition of sex and gender as a means of determining the fate of human life. The endless search for identity is a growing problem for many in modern society, especially for those who have recently immigrated to the country..

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