

Problem Of Existentialism Presented In The Novel- 'The Namesake'

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Abstract:

The debut novel of American author, 'Jhumpa Lahiri', 'The Namesake' (2003) was originally published in 'The New Yorker' before being published into a full-length novel. It depicts a person's dilemma being caught between different cultures with distinct religious, ideological and social differences. It was published in Bengali language (2005) by 'Ananda Publishers'. It was given a Bengali title 'Samanamiie' translated by 'Poulami Sengupta'. This novel is adapted into a major motion picture, directed by highly acclaimed Indian American filmmaker 'Mira Nair', screenplay by Sooni Taraporevala and it features some of the talented actors like Irrfan Khan, Tabu, Kal Penn and Sahira Nair. Even Lahiri too had a guest appearance in the movie. This movie was jointly produced by Indian, American and Japanese studios. This movie was screened in 'Film Festival' in Toronto and in New York City and overall it received positive reviews.

This novel presents the journey of an Indian Bengali family 'Ganguly' - Ashoke Ganguly and his wife Ashima Ganguly and their children Gogol or Nikhil Ganguly and Sonali Ganguly and for some time Moushumi Mazoomdar, Gogol's wife. In this novel our characters travel to various places like America, India and Paris. Through this thesis we will witness our characters not just physical but spiritual journey. How our characters experience self-isolation and the problem of existentialism in various ways. How our characters live up to their name in the novel- 'The Namesake'.

We give a specific label to everything in this world and refer to it as its 'name'. It can be anything whether it is a person, place or thing. Every element on this earth, whether living or non-living, has a specific name to address them. The name of a person is a direct connection to his/her individuality and to his/her identity. We use a name of a person with courtesy to

address and recognize him/her. If someone remembers our name after the first meeting, we feel respected and more important but if someone forgets our name even after repeated reminders, we feel slightly agitated. Name is the first thing which a person receives after he/she is born in this world. Thus every human being has their own separate name which segregates them from the other humans. Without a name it would be very difficult to refer a particular human in between the entire crowd or a group of people. It is said a name of a person helps in developing a person's personality, his/her character. Therefore a name is not just a label to recognize a person but a name of a person is much part of him/her. Thus, for any person his/her name is very important thing to them.

Through this novel we get to know that in Bengali culture everyone has two names. One is Pet Name which in Bengali is called 'Daknam' - a name which is used only by a person's family members, his relatives and close friends, basically people in his very close circle. It is very personal and is used informally with affection. These types of names are reminder of childhood, that life is not so complicated and is full of fun and love. Our characters too have their own pet names- Ashoke's pet name is Mithu while Ashima's pet name is Monu and Nikhil and Sonali's pet names are Gogol and Sonia. Then every pet name is paired with a 'Good Name' which in Bengali is called 'Bhalonam'. It is used for identification in the outside world and not in a person's personal life. These are formal, always officially recorded and are used for official matters like they are written on diplomas, telephone directories and on envelopes (that's why Ashima's mother used to write Ashima outside the envelopes and Monu inside the letters). Pet names are generally meaningless, ironic and silly whereas Good names are more dignified and enlightened.

Keywords: Ganguly, The Name sake, Ashoke and Ashima.

Introduction

We are introduced to the head of Ganguly family, Ashoke Ganguly. Good name 'Ashoke' is actually the name of a very respected, powerful and mighty Indian emperor, 'Emperor Ashoka' and it also means 'one who transcends grief'. Ashoke since his childhood was a bookworm even while walking to his

school, he used to have a book in one hand to read it and he never stumble. Still his mother used to comment that he would be hit by a bus or a tram. He read all the writers whether old or new like Charles Dickens but Russians writers were his favourite. His parental grandfather was a European literature professor at Calcutta University, he always told Ashoke that- 'Read all the Russians, and then reread them', 'they will never fail you'. While his siblings used to play, cut off from the outside world, he used to spend hours in his grandfather's library reading books. While his grandfather was near his end, he wanted to meet Ashoke and wanted to give his literary legacy to Ashoke. While travelling in a train to meet his grandfather 21-22 years old university student Ashoke met an American returned man, Gosh. Gosh said to him- 'You are still young', 'do yourself a favour. Before it's too late, without thinking too much about it, first, pack a pillow and a blanket and see as much of the world as you can. You will not regret. One day it will be too late.' to this Ashoke replied- 'My grandfather always says that's what books are for', 'To travel without moving an inch', and he opens his volume of collection of stories by Russian writer 'Nikolai Gogol'. It seems like while reading the books, he transcends into the fantasy world which authors have created in their literary works. While reading books, he is completely isolated from the world outside and lives in his books. At this moment train wrecked. This was the turning point in his life. During this accident he almost died but somehow he was able to muster up strength and was able to throw away a page from the book he was reading in the train before the accident, 'The Overcoat' by the Russian writer 'Nikolai Gogol'. This was how rescue team located him and saved him in time.

But this incidence left an everlasting impression on him. For next entire year he was paralyzed. In the morning he heard his parents cheering him up about the future but in the evening he also heard their cries and prayers to the god for his wellbeing. He was extremely traumatized. He had continuous nightmares of being stuck in that train and died. During that period he didn't read any novel. Even when his grandfather brought books for him, he refused to read Russians as they presented the country which he has never and possibly will never visit. It only reminded him of his confinement and he just kept on thinking about Gosh's advice (who didn't survived in the accident) to him. After being bedridden for a year, Ashoke secretly applied for his higher engineering studies in America. Even after seven years of that incidence, even after being married to Ashima, he is still traumatized because of that

accident. He can still taste mud in his mouth, can see giant overturned iron wheels and can still visualize the twisted train. From that day onwards he became claustrophobic. He had problem in travelling in cars without opening windows on both the sides, during his air journey he requested for bulkhead seat. He had problem in using elevators and used to touch his chest to be assured that they are solid. Cries of children still depresses him. He didn't have any memories of that accident, what haunted him was the time period during which he was waiting for the rescue team to save him. During that time all he saw was dead bodies and blood thrown everywhere, heard wailing of the people and witnessed a completely distorted train. What if they had not caught his feeble signal? These memories and thoughts were what kept on traumatizing him. It was like he was still trapped inside that wrecked train. Even though Ashima used to console him when he would be awoken due to this nightmare, still it didn't helped him from getting free from this pain. For him, his nightmare has never ended. He kept on reliving that nightmare again and again. Instead of fighting off his fears, his insecurities and his nightmares, he kept on running away from them. He was not able to accept the reality that he is still alive from that terrible accident and move on from this dreadful past. Moving and settling down in America in the name of studies and better future, even against the will of his family, was just his way of escaping this haunting experience and his pain. He was not able to live his life freely as he wasn't able to break free from that horrid experience. Even though he survived that terrible accident it seems like he has lost himself in his fearful past related to that accident.

It was the birth of his first child that marked another turning point in his life, a new happy phase in his life. It was like three lives in one birth. First born in India to a Bengali family, second reborn after surviving in that train accident and the third one was his rebirth the day his son was born. Instead of thanking god, he thanked Nikolai Gogol for saving him. When their first child was born, Ashoke and Ashima were waited for Ashima's grandmother's letter in which she has written down their house's first Sahib's name. Ashima and Ashoke wanted like the other children of the house and being eldest in their entire family grandmother should give name to their first child. But hospital staff pressurized them to name the baby before leaving the hospital. They suggested to name the new born after their father or grandfather. In America or Europe it might be a mark of respect but not in India. In India, names are

inviolable and scared. In India, people prefer naming their children with names which have a very deeper meanings, or are related to gods and goddesses or have religious significance or relations. As Indians believe that this way they are more connected to their religion. In the mark of love and respect for their deity they name their children after gods and goddesses. They want their kids to inherit the qualities which their name signifies. Whereas in American or in European culture such beliefs do not prevail. They name their children after any of their family member, any writer or character from novels (Barrett- a famous Victorian poet, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, David- David Copperfield a protagonist from Charles Dickens 1846 novel, David Beckham a popular and talented football player), anything related to nature(Lily- flower, Amber-gemstone) or any king, famous and respected politician or personality. In India within first few years of the child parents can give him a good name till that time they all can call him by his pet name but in America there is completely opposite system. In America when a child is born then at that time it should be given a name which becomes it's official name. With this discovery Ashoke and Ashima were in dilemma whether to follow their tradition or go with the American tradition. Here we see the cultural difference as well as how differently system works in different countries since the birth of a person.

Thus due to these circumstances, Ashoke on birth of his son, on birth of his third life gives his son a Pet name 'Gogol' from his favourite author, from his saviour's last name 'Nikolai Gogol'. It was first time in his life he thought about that accident not with pain and fear but with gratitude. With this their son's name on his birth certificate is registered as 'Gogol Ganguly'. With the birth of Gogol, Ashoke's third life begins that is now he has entered in a new phase of his life- 'Parenthood'. Now he is not just a man who is son to his parents, brother to his siblings or husband to Ashima and a son-in-law but now he is a 'father'. Just like any other father, now his supreme priority is his son- 'Gogol' as in this third life, his chief role, chief relation was being a good father, his father and son relation with his son Gogol. It looks like now he got a new identity- Gogol Ganguly's father Ashoke Ganguly. Ashoke's first life in India was his childhood in which he loved reading books especially Russians. His second life started when he was a university student from the that train wrecked incidence in which Nikolai Gogol's *The Overcoat* saved him, now terrified by near the death experience, Ashoke started avoiding reading Russian authors.

His third life started along with the birth of his son, he named his first child 'Gogol', from the Russian author. Now he wasn't running away and avoiding his horrible past experience. Instead he realized a person can never forget his past. He can only accept it as a person's past is permanently inscribed in his life, it can never be erased. Slowly the joy which his son Gogol brought along his birth, the happiness and peace this new phase of parenthood brought in his life helped him to achieve freedom from his painful past. Though he didn't forget that incidence but since the birth of his son those horrid memories didn't stalk him and darken his days like they earlier used to do. Now he had to invest his time, energy and his life on his son and not on escaping and fearing those horrible memories. Ashoke was a person whose existence was lost in his past (time and years went on but he was still left in that wrecked train) and now was finally able to break free from the clutches of his past and achieve his identity, a purpose, happiness and peace in his life- his son Gogol

The second member in Ganguly family is Ashima Ganguly, Ashoke's wife and Gogol and Sonia's mother. She is a homemaker (for most of her life) and her marriage with Ashoke was arranged by their parents. Before marriage she used to take English tuition classes of neighbourhood school students. When she was going to enter in a room to meet Ashoke and his family for the first, she found his shoes outside the room. She involuntarily wore his shoes. His lingering sweat in the shoes mingles with her sweat on her feet. Her heart flatters as it is first time she had such intimate contact with a man. They had a typically Bengali wedding in India. Before leaving for America to start her married life with Ashoke, she took her grandmother's blessings who said no matter where Ashima lives she will never change. Grandmother's words proved to be true, in the entire novel Ashima always wore Indian attire-sarees, always loved preparing Bengali food, enjoyed their Bengali festivals etc. In fact novel starts with her preparing her favourite Bengali snacks in her American kitchen, which taste is not satisfactory for Ashima maybe because that real feeling and taste can only be found in India. After her marriage it was first time she with few belongings travelled alone that too in plane to another country, America.

Now a new phase in her life has started- a married life, from young woman to a married woman. When she first entered in Ashoke's rented apartment, it was no where close to what she

had imagined like the ones in American movies. Still she subsides her displeasure not to upset Ashoke and lied to her family as not to worry them. Ashima didn't liked the lifestyle of Montgomerys, their landlord like keeping the house untidy, dozens of liquor bottles or leaving their children alone at home. Ashima didn't approve of their American parenting ways and their American lifestyle which was far different from their Indian ways. When Gogol was born, he had only three Bengali visitors- Maya and Dilip Nandi, a married young couple whom they befriended few months ago in Purity Supreme and Dr. Gupta whom Ashoke befriended in MIT. Dr. Gupta gifted Gogol a book and congratulated the couple for their first child. Ashoke commented 'Lucky boy, already an owner of a book'. Ashima thought differently, she felt bad. Birth of her child without both his grandparents or without any of his relatives besides him, no blessings and gifts from the elders of their family just like it would have happened in India. He was born just like any other American child. She felt bad for her baby.

Here we can observe the situation of Indian girls who are married to NRIs. Career and dreams of these women become bygone, after their marriage and shifting to another country to live with their husbands. They become totally dependent on their husbands whether it is financially or emotionally. Now their husband's friends, family, social life becomes a part of their lives too as they themselves have no social life and career in the foreign land. In other words, now their husband's world becomes their world. They are not left with any separate identity and life. Unlike their husbands who enjoy financial independence, their own friends and social life and their own personal and professional lives. These women are reduced to just a housekeeper with a tag of a 'wife', who looks after the house and bore kids for their husbands. These women suffer from loneliness and isolation because of different cultures and being all alone in the foreign land. The feeling of alienation keeps on engulfing them making them feel suffocated and unbearable to adjust in their new lives.

At the end of the novel, when her children grow up and started leading their own lives, and Ashoke was died too, she decides to sell their house on Pemberton Road in Cambridge. She decided to divide her time in both countries, for six months she will stay in India and for other six months in America with Gogol and Sonia. That was what Ashoke and she had originally planned when he was alive. Now that in few days their house

will not belong to them anymore she feels upset about it. She should be happy that finally after thirty three years of yearning for her native land and her relatives, she would finally staying with them. But now things has changed for her, leaving behind the house in which she has spend twenty seven years of her life in America doesn't seems right. Now in this house none of their belongings will be present. The height marks which Ashoke used to mark for Gogol and Sonia will be erased too. She refused Sonia's request on helping her out in packing up all their belongings. Ashima alone wanted to pack up all their belongings. This was the proper house which Ashoke and Ashima brought it together in America. This was their own home which they have built together. Each and every item in that house was brought by them, Ashima has taken care of every single belongings till the every end. This was the house where Gogol first started his school, Sonia was born, they have hosted many parties and news of Ashoke's demise too came in this house. This was not just a house but their home where they have built their small little world. Alone Ashima wanted to clean and prepare for the last Christmas party hosted by her in this house and first after Ashoke's demise. She carefully analysed every corner of the house as if imprinting every corner of the house along with every memory related to it in her memories. As now after few days there won't be a single sign which could tell that once Ganguly's used to live in this house.

When Gogol was eleven years, he went to a historic school field trip. There they went to a graveyard. Now he is old enough to know that his religion is different from them. Christians are buried but Hindus burn the dead bodies. He knew he won't kind any Ganguly in the graveyard. He will not occupy any spot into this earth, in this graveyard and no stone of this country will bear his name. Except for living there will be no sign of any Gogol Ganguly in this country. When he saw grave stones of 'EZEKIEL AND URIAH LOCKWOOD, BROTHERS, R.I.P'. He like them because they appeared to him unique and flamboyant. Other gravestones generally had names like- 'Collin or Wood' but these were different. A chaperone said- 'Now those are some names you don't see very often these days. Sort of like yours'. it was at this moment Gogol realises that along with the person his name perishes too. When Ashima came to know about this trip she was shocked. In India burning ghats are most forbidden place to go. She said that- 'Death is not a pastime, not a place to make paintings'. For the first time she refused to

display his piece of art in her kitchen and with disgust asked it to throw away. Here again we can observe another thing that is difference between the two cultures. While in Christianity it not wrong to visit graveyard while in Hinduism visiting or witnessing such things are not considered good. Like when they are travelling and if by chance they witness a funeral ceremony or come across a graveyard, even if they are in a car they used to turn their faces away and used to across that area quickly. Even after his mother's order, he silently rolled up his art work and hide them behind his chest of drawers. He was attached to these ancient puritan spirits who were first immigrates to America. There can some reasons why he was feeling a sense of belongingness and protectiveness towards these rubbings. First these were first generation immigrates to America like his parents. Second and most valid reason can be because of their names. His name was always different amongst Americans that's why those dead people's unique names attracted him as he felt connected to them. He felt a sense of familiarity with them.

When Gogol was going to start his college life, another new phase in someone's life. Gogol decided to change his name. From that party's experience, he realised that Nikhil brings him self-confidence. When he officially gets his name changed from 'Gogol Ganguly' to 'Nikhil Ganguly' he feels nothing has actually changed nor he feels a new kind of happiness. He wanted to scream and tell everyone that he is Nikhil. When he reaches reaches in his college, it was his suite mates who first addressed him as Nikhil though they were notified that GOGOL GANGULY was the other suite mate. When Brandon asked about it NIKHIL replied it was his middle name but got left out for some reasons. It was NIKHIL who smoked with his friends, got fake ID to get liquor in New Haven bars or to loose his virginity to some girl in a party.

Then he met Ruth in a train. She was a college student in his university. He liked how she frankly talked about her dysfunctional family and how she asked him about India. Till now he has never talked about India to any American. Later they started dating each other. He liked how her parents willing accepted him. He can never imagine her wearing jeans and bulky sweaters standing in his mother's kitchen, eating her food and mixing up with his Bengali family. He didn't want to take her to his home first because he knew his parents won't be much happy about it and second he doesn't want to take her to the world where he is still Gogol. On every weekends he used

to obediently go home to his parents. There he did nothing other than eating and sleeping. He witnessed scenes like argument between Sonia and Ashima when Sonia threatens her by telling she would dye her hair and get more ear piercings. Ashima used to cry and Sonia used to slam the door shut. All his weekends what he does was to miss his life in Yale. He missed Ruth immensely and secretly talked to her at nights. Whenever he comes home, it's like Nikhil evaporates and Gogol takes over.

Eventually when his parents came to know about Ruth they were not much happy and said he was too young for all this. They wanted him to concentrate on his career while Gogol feels sad that his parents have never had a joy of falling in love and dating. Here again two different ideologies of two different generations is highlighted. In case of Gogol, he knows even though they are living in America his parents will never be like American parents who completely give freedom to their children in all the matters. He was aware that when they will come to know about his relationship with Ruth, they won't be much happy. They would say that he is too young for all this and should focus on his career which eventually became true because this was how they reacted when they vaguely came to know about Ruth. Moreover, in India a girl and a boy meeting and dating each, kissing and having sex with each other without marriage is extremely immoral. It is very common in America and is part of its culture but it is extremely scandalous in India. In India, it is extremely disgraceful for both the girl and the boy and as well as for both of their families but it is more sinful for the girl and her family. Her parents' upbringing and ethical values are questioned in the entire society. In Sonia's case too problem of generation gap can be witnessed. Ashima feared if Sonia did what she said then what their Bengali friends think about them. This might be common things to do in America but this is not the part of their Bengali culture. In India, it's not dignified for a girl to have such style. What Ashima wants is that their children should be attached to their original roots but she needs to understand that her children are born in America with American citizenship. They consider themselves as Americans and they have no plans to live their lives in India. Gogol and Sonia want to behave and look like the people amongst whom they will be spending their entire lives. They want to feel like a part of the American culture and do not want to feel left out amongst their American friends. They don't want to feel like an alien in between all the Americans in America. Thus, as readers

we can clearly witness the cultural differences as well as problem of generation gap within the family.

Things take completely a U-turn for Gangulys with Ashoke's unaccepted sudden demise. In Ohio, due to sudden heart attack he expired. Gogol's father dies while he was enjoying his vacation with Maxine. He ignored his mothers phone calls but when Sonia called at Maxine house he sensed things weren't right. His father's dismal brought him relatively close to his family. First he used to ignore Ashima's phone calls, lie to her for not attending the calls, he himself never called his parents, ignored them, used to get irritated with them and had cut them off from his life. His closeness with his mother and his sister was not acceptable to Maxine and they had a break up. Ashima and Ashoke had a reputed Bengali family as their family friend and she had arranged Gogol and their daughter Moushumi Mazoomdar relationship. Like Gogol she too was a second generation Indian American women. First her parents moved to England where she was born, then moved to Massachusetts and then moved to New Jersey. She was an year younger than Gogol and was pursuing major in French literature and was living in New York. They both dated for a while before they wedded in their Bengali tradition. What made them think that they are perfect with each other is they shared that same weird childhood. They both were forced to attend their parents Bengali parties, forced to attend their Indian pujas and festivals, and those forced trips to India and meeting dozens of their Indian relatives and all these things they cannot connect to. Gogol might not remember but she remembered him in his childhood days. She knew him as 'Gogol' and she knew all those things from which he had kept on running away throughout his life. She understands him as she had went through this same painful past. She tells him that when she was a child all their relatives would ask her whether she would get married in red dress or white gown. They always used to worry and discuss about her wedding and the shameful part was that she was not even included in her own future plans. She admits that Indian Americans like Gogol were never her choice which Gogol never found insulting as he himself was like that. She tells him that when she was a teenager like other teenage girls of her age she wasn't allowed to date. She had many crushes even silently tried her luck but all in vain. She hated her obedience towards her parents. At her teenage she hated her unstyled hair, not so appealing skirts and extra ten pounds she carried during her puberty. She comments that no wonder Gogol never came to

talk to her. Unlike any other teenage girl around her, she didn't look so appealing and had no boyfriends. She and her other two friends shared the same sad luck like her. When she was in her twelfth standard in bus she met Dimitri Desjardins, an university student majoring in French. In bus they talked to each other, it was first time she conversed with any man so comfortably and then he seduced her. She believed he would be her first kiss but he felt, leaving her heart broken. Then she tried to meet him in university pretending it to be just a coincidence and they sometimes went outside for coffee or something just as friends. When he introduced his girlfriend to her all her romantic bubbles with him busted. His girlfriend was all sexy and stylish which something she was not. When he left America, for sometime they still manage to maintain contact through letters and exchanging their favourite authors books. But soon this contact ended and again she felt all dejected and heart broken. All these experiences made her feel that she was ugly and was unacceptable in the society. No men would like to talk to her, date her and love her. She felt she was an outcast in the American society. This all severely hampered her self-confidence. She suffered severe identity crisis and problem of isolation in the American society. Gogol can relate to all of her sufferings as he himself used to feel an outcast in American society. Now he remembered she was a child who obediently wore traditions Indian attires during all their pujas, she was a girl who always used to silently sit and continuously read her book in the parties, and was completely a nerd.

Now in this article we will assess Gogol as an individual during his married life. After the marriage, their first trip was to Paris where Moushumi has to present her paper. Paris a place very well known to her but not to Gogol. When they walk on the streets he felt men were looking at her even though he was walking along with her as if he is invisible. He saw a white dress in her bag and he instantly thought that this would be the dress that she would be wearing during her wedding with Graham. During their wedding he thought that if she won't have called off her wedding with Graham, he would be one of the guest in their wedding, sitting around the table. When he saw her house he felt this was the part of her life which she would have shared with Graham. When he came to know through Donald and Astrid that she met Graham his dislike for them increased more. When he came to know that it was in their house, a room in the basement where she came and cried, he silently peeped into that room to see the area where she was totally shattered

after her breakup from Graham. When she had to go for another paper presentation in Palm Beach, he thought of her laying in her swimsuit near a poolside, with her eyes closed and book near her all without him, this thought gave him a mini panic attack. He wanted to ask her was she happy marrying him but thinking about this question makes him feel afraid. He kept on reassuring himself that she knew him as Gogol, they shared same weird childhood. Even after all this it was 'him' whom she choose to marry. While her extra-marital affair was going on, he sensed something off. So, he thought that they might need a trip to a place which is unknown to both. But he didn't understand what was stopping him to plan a trip together. So, he thinks of planning a surprise trip for both in summers. Her simple act of returning back makes him feel unburdened, happy and he was grateful just of her simple act of returning back home, to him.

In this novel, we can see two type of problem of existential crisis. One which first generation Indian immigrates like Ashoke, Ashima and all their Bengali friends suffer from. They together have come together and made their own tiny Bengali world in America. They greatly miss their country India, their families in India, their true Bengali culture and their own Indian environment. Some people like Ashoke choose to ignore when Americans mock them or learns to wear from tailor- made clothes to ready- made clothes, opts for ballpoints from fountain pens, started using razors and stopped wearing wrist watch like Favre Leuba. He insisted Ashima to try cooking American dishes. While true to Ashima's grandmother's word Ashima never changed. Ashima represents those Indian immigrants who are unwilling to change themselves like- their outer appearance and habits according to the host country, as this helps them to feel connected to their native world. Even though little it is because of Ashima that Gogol and Sonia have learnt some of their traditional values and are familiar with their native culture. Here we note that they suffer problem of identity crisis due to separation from their native land and their original roots.

Ashoke and Ashima let Gogol and Sonia fill shopping cart with their choice of items and for their happiness celebrated Christmas like any other parent would have done for their children happiness. Here we witness that they suffer from identity crisis as they loose their individual identity when they become parents. This is a real part and test of living the

parenthood. Parents are totally involved in raising their children the best that, their own dreams, identities and desires are replaced by their children's happiness, desires and wellbeing. Now Lahiri has depicted second generation Indian immigrants (Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi and children of their parents Bengali friends) dilemma. Unlike their parents, they are born, raised and are settle down in foreign land and are always deprived of their original roots, their original culture. Unlike their parents they are not excited to meet their relatives in India, celebrate their own festivals or are grief stricken on any of their relatives demise because they are not born and raised in India. These children never got know, understand and experience their native roots and land, India. For them India, their original roots are unfamiliar and foreign but this is opposite in their parents case. For their parents apart from India every other land will be foreign. Their problem of existentialism and identity crisis is more due to their own psychological factors. Like Gogol he sounds like Americans, he has friends except of Indians, he has his own social world, he has his own life where he is financially as well as socially independent. He lives his life completely in American style but still he fears that he might not be an American. All such feelings are born and live inside his own psyche and outside forces are not the cause of continuous elevation of such feelings. Gogol, Sonia, Moushumi and second generation Indian immigrant people strives to gel up in the world where they are living and will continue to live that they keep on disbanding themselves from their original culture, their real native land, India. Unlike their parents, who suffer more from the problem of existentialism and identity crisis due to outside physical factors. For example- sometimes when shopkeepers ignore Ashima and Ashoke because they didn't sound like Americans and would prefer to talk to Gogol because of his American accent or when children used to change their name plate from 'Ganguly' to 'Gang' or 'Green', these outside forces elevate the feeling of isolation and existentialism crisis in first generation Indian immigrants. Like Ashoke, these immigrants generally laugh it off and ignore such discriminative behaviour against them. Moreover, due to belonging to different generations plus being raised in different environment, amongst different ideologies, the generation gap between the parents and their children intensifies. This vast generation gap leads to clashes between their perspectives, their view regarding their lives, their ways of living and priorities in their lives.

Thus, we can very well conclude that Jhumpa Lahiri has depicted the problem of existentialism crisis and identity crisis through different generations which Indian immigrants suffer. She has cleverly selected the names of her characters just according to their characterization and in fact that the title 'The Namesake' is quite apt title according to this story. As in this novel all main characters somehow are always living in this conflict- what are their native roots, where they rightfully belong to and what is their original identity. Ultimately who are they Indians or not, Americans are not. Name of a person gives him his identity, here characters are all confused about their true identity, their name. So, title is quite satisfactory.

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