

## Recuperation of cultural Identity In Jumpha Lahiri's '*The Namesake*'

Asst. Prof. Prashant S. Jawade  
Indira Mahavidyalaya Kalamb  
Email-id:-bhaktijawade@gmail.com

### Abstract –

If we are thinking about the reverence about culture and identity, the world has not scaled in boundaries in Globalization. The migrants are failed to define their identity, so they are observing in immigration about their existence/ identity and honour about their own culture. No doubt the customs and traditions are practiced worldwide by people /group society. When migration took place from one country to other, from one culture to other, the various issues regarding cultural identity, pride about own country are occurred. The adaptation of new culture is demanded, at the same time the possession and maintenance of own culture by birth and inheritance is questioned. In such dilemma The migrants don't want to change themselves, They expects the change from others and as result they lack status from their home country and no reverence is given by people / society from other country. Therefore the immigrants have to face the various difficulties and problems to maintain their own identity and to stick to the culture. In these circumstances they unwillingly force to go under discrimination and compromise with the situations.

This paper is an attempt to look forward the issues of immigrants, emotional, internal struggle about identity in civilized society. Which Jumpha Lahiri focused in her novel '*The Namesake*'

**Keyword:** *Identity, quest, dominion, reorganization, migration*

### Introduction -

Nilanjana Sudeshana born and brought up in London took a Nickname Jhumpa. Jhumpa Lahiri credited her debut in 1999; The Interpreter of Maladi's bagged the Pulitzer prize. She published her first Novel in 2003. '*The Namesake*'. It is a Novel about the internal struggle for identity in the other country and culture which cannot match with the home country and culture. In "*The Namesake*". Jhumpa Lahiri discussed her experiences about the growing child of Immigrants, which we can see in the protagonist Gogol Ganguly. Being the writer of second generation of Indian Diaspora writings she depicted every minute change of migrants, discrimination in society and treatment given by the Native people to immigrants. The

immigrants are crushed between the homeland of their parent and country of their birth and nourishment. They are compelled to maintain the identity/culture/ideologies of both. In this mixer they have lost the sense of their own recognition and caught in the dilemma from which there is no way to come out. The parents expected from their children the preservation of culture and honor about their own country or land simultaneously. They should follow the civic sense of the host country. The immigrants are not welcomed as Native in the country of birth and they have no specific space in the host country. So the problem of cultural identity arises and they are searching for their own existence and identity. The Novel "*The Namesake*" is filmed by Meera Nair. It was appreciated by the society of immigrants in different countries. The American critics posted their positive responses about this film and novel.

### **The Quest for Identity**

Ashoke Ganguli a graduate student from MIT in electrical engineering met Ashima at Calcutta. Their parents were ready for marriage and it took place as arranged marriage. The novel starts in Cambridge Massachusetts, where she gave birth to a boy. It is tradition of Calcutta the eldest family member should suggest the name of new born baby and further procedure of nomenclature. According to the tradition, the Gaungali family waited so much for the name of new born baby. At last they did not receive the reply from Ashima's grandmother from India. But it was mandatory / rule of hospital that the couple must give the name to new born baby whether it may not be official; useful to discharge from hospital. Ashoke announced the name Gogol which was taken by his favorite Russian writer Nikolai Gogol.

Ashoke is working as professor, Ashima at home the schooling of boy started. Ashima grandmother expired the Gogol was registered as Nikhil. But school administration continued Gogol. It was the first incident to regret his identity. The rejection was hammering on the heart and mind of Gogol. His sister Sonali (Sonia) born and grew up in American society. They are well settled in American culture. Ashoke and Ashima took their children in Bengali parties and religious gatherings etc. some times they went to Calcutta also. When Gogol and Sonia stayed at Calcutta They felt like refugee. Their parents wanted to connect Gogol and Sonia with home country and culture. The culture discarded them. The problem of both the children is different; they spent childhood in America in American society. But a name Gogol never gave feel of an American. So the sound of Gogol becomes harsh for him. Jumpha

Lahiri depicted the case of identity as Gogol faced, the name already given by family is not accepted as documentary.

He wanted to get rid of the matter when he arrived at Yale, where nobody knows his past name. He felt relaxed and appeared as Nikhil which has been legally changed by him. His journey started with new enthusiasm and transformation. He has doing his routine and dared activities which Gogol has not allow him. After couple of months, he caught in new problem that he was not innerly satisfied with name Nikhil again he feels isolated. It is impossible for eighteen years Gogol that he transfigured in Nikhil and he was encircled in new dilemma. When he visited his home he recalled past memories of Gogol. He tried to make partition between past Gogol and present Nikhil, but it was not easy task for himself. So Jumpha Lahiri presented the question for identity in post colonial period. Lahiri highlighted the immigrants demolished their identity which was significantly adopted/ given by the parent. In the novel Lahiri also reflected the emotional identity which can provide inner satisfaction and confidence to live without the feeling of outsiders.

### **Core reorganization& new identity**

He wanted to settle his mind and heart He was expecting the American society will accept as an integral part of society so he is willing to see himself within society. In this direction he made some amount of efforts, it was not fruitful. To make wall between past and present Gogol pressurized by the two names by feelings of Gogol in Nikhil and he found appearance of Nikhil in Gogol. In the next plot of novel, the Jumpha Lahiri shown the love affair with American girls having different culture Ruth and Maxine As we have seen both girls came from foreign culture and elite class. As he did not found himself as American with Ruth And Maxine, he did not match himself with these two girls

### **Dominion of Cultural Identity**

His father's death brought a tremendous changes in his attitude and now he behave like a responsible son and wanted to look after his family (mother and sister). He realized that he cannot acquire or abbreviate the significance of adopted culture in which he born and brought up similarly he proved unable to maintain the culture heritage and legacy already blessed from parents/ home country. So he amplified by both the cultures and came on the finding that it is never ending process, it is always increases within and outside. Behaviors/ representation are secondary for the adjustment with other culture /society/ people. He put his

thoughts into action and announced himself 'Nikhil Gogol Ganguly' for the possession of Indian heritage and incorporates with American Culture and values. From this adoption, a feeling of new identity is emerged, he himself made away from dilemma of particular identification.

Jumpha Lahiri intends to suggest that national boundaries are not sufficient scale to measure/define the personal identity. Rather it is deep rooted sense of one's psyche from which one has its feeling, emotional display and due respect of that culture and identity.

## **Conclusion**

In colonialism the people wanted the voice and identity to make remembrance of past and glorify the present. Jumpha Lahiri sketched the childhood and youth of Gogol, in this stage he could not allow his desirable name or identity. When he became self sufficient to understand the realization of identity, his inner conflict did not permit him for further process of identity/status .It is ever winding process in which one has to find his meaningful life for better survival in foreign and native country. The film was appreciated by the migrated class lived in foreign countries. It was try of Jumpha Lahiri to pave the way to Indians for realization of their own culture and identity and symbolically acquisition of identity and norms of society in which they has to survive to fulfill their purposes etc.

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