

IDENTITY CRISIS IN JHUMPA LAHIRI'S; THE NAMESAKE NOVEL

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ABSTRACT

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Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies* established this young writer as one of the most brilliant of her generation. *The Namesake* (2004) is the first novel by [Jhumpa Lahiri](#). It was originally a [novella](#) published in [The New Yorker](#) and was later expanded to a full-length novel. Her stories are one of the very few debut works -- and only a handful of collections -- to have won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. The story of the Ganguli family whose move from Calcutta to New York evokes a lifelong balancing act to meld to a new world without forgetting the old.

Gogol is the son of Ashima and Ashoke in the novel. They gave Gogol name to their son. He is given the name by his father who, before he came to America to study at MIT, was almost killed in a train wreck in India. Rescuers caught sight of the volume of Nikolai Gogol's short stories that he held, and hauled him from the train. Gogol changes his name to Nikhil because he doesn't like Gogol name. He believes that Nikhil is a Bengali name, and Gogol is an old Russian dude's last name. Gogol is torn between finding his own unique identity without losing his heritage. The major theme in the novel is searching for *identity*. So, the *Namesake* novel considers identity, culture and post-colonial literature.

KEYWORDS: Culture, Identity, New Name, Post-Colonial, Immigration