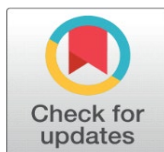
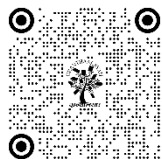


IDENTITY CRISIS OF QUEER INDIVIDUALS EXPLORED THROUGH THE MOVIE – COBALT BLUE

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ABSTRACT

Although homosexuality has always been a part of human civilizations, it has not always been positively accepted. From religions to mass culture, we have seen a major objection to homosexuality. This rejection can instill fear in individuals who identify as queer or homosexual. Male loving another male is still consider as a crime and homosexual people as criminals. Even among young people, a sizable segment of Indian culture still views homosexuality as taboo. The movie highlights the controversy around homosexuality. In a challenging milieu, homosexuality is discovered, the ensuing bewilderment and bravado are explored in "Cobalt Blue."

Keywords: Homosexuality, Identity Crisis, Sexual Awakening, Love, Freedom of Choice, Queer

1. INTRODUCTION

Tanay and Anuja, two siblings, are the focus of the narrative as they fall in love with a paying guest residing at their household. The sensual yearning of youth and the disillusionment of unfulfilled love are both beautifully captured in Cobalt Blue. The prospect of a new concept of intimacy, however, is equally limited by disappointment because all relationships include a negotiation with isolation, alienation, and loss. How Tanay, the central protagonist, overcomes difficulties and establishes a new life far off from family. The novel talks about issues related to

sexuality, relationships, and society norms. The events that followed in plot overturn their traditional family. The story takes place in the present, up until the siblings decide to leave their house after the paying visitor dramatically flees. The movie is an adaptation of the novel 'Cobalt Blue' by Sachin Kundalkar. Firdaus Kanga is another writer with Indian ancestry who openly supported homosexual rights and sexuality in general in the early years. His most well-known work is the autobiographical *Attempting to Grow* (1990), in which he addresses several sexuality-related subjects. In 1994, Shobhaa Dé released her *Odd Obsession*, which had a clearly lesbian plot but also a gloomy undertone. Rakesh Ratti's anthology *A Lotus of Another Colour* (1993) featured a few tales on the homosexual and lesbian lives of people from south Asia. With Deepa Mehta's much contested 1990 picture *Fire*, which watching sounded more like shattering the rules of heteronormative society, a breakthrough was made. The gendered main colours are broken by cobalt blue. [Jaiswal \(2022\)](#)

2. OBJECTIVES

Through this research, the identity crisis faced by protagonist in a heteronormative society is examined. The paper also challenges the conventional idea, examination of how men and women must act in society and the protagonist's reaction to events. How a woman should act in a society in accordance with its rules and customs. It also explores both society and family structure. The identity crisis of queer character is portrayed throughout. Being gay, lesbian, or bisexual is a difficult and complicated journey. Their identity is still a mystery in the society. The fear of expressing the identity of queer community is still a taboo in twentieth century. The paper analysis the pain of being a queer. The realm of Cobalt Blue, loving a person of the same gender was still a crime. It also discusses about love, suicide, homosexuality, sex, desire, heartbreak, self-exploration, loneliness, and strangeness in society. Homosexuality as a taboo in Indian society. [Kundalkar \(2016\)](#)

3. ANALYSIS

Cobalt Blue is a delicate queer love story. Sachin Kundalkar's Cobalt Blue was published in Marathi in 2006 and was translated in 2013. It depicts the tale of a brother and sister who fell in love with their new paying guest. The film explores sexual awakening, identity crisis and questioning the imposed heteronormativity prevailing in society. [Kundalkar \(2022\)](#)

Homosexuality is defined as attraction between persons of the same sex. The term is derived from the Greek homos, which means "the same." It refers to a person's gender identification, including male, female, and non-binary. Individuals who identify as homosexual may use the labels gay, lesbian, LGBTQ, Queer, or a few more categories to describe themselves. Throughout their adolescent years, many LGBT persons start to feel affection for their sexual partners. People express their sexual, romantic, and emotions for another person in a variety of ways at different times in their life. Everyone's experiences of coming out or disclosing their sexual orientation to others in their lives differ. A moving depiction of a queer love romance in which two sets of siblings fall in love with the same man. It is a journey of sexual awakening for both Tanay and Anuja. The big twist is that the brother and sister fall in love with the same person. Romance and tragedy have both exploited this twist in subtle, dramatic, and over-the-top ways. [Rosario et al. \(2005\)](#)

The major part of story is set in Fort Kochi, In 1996, a time when same-sex love is not yet legal. The major plot wrinkle is that both the brother and sister develop

feelings for the same individual. This twist has been employed in romance and tragedy in subtle, dramatic, and over-the-top ways. Tanay and Anuja falls in love with the mysterious young nameless paying guest of their upstairs, who reciprocates both their love, and neither sibling comes out of it as the same person. Cobalt Blue is both normal and unusual. Both go through the heartbreak of inexperienced lovers, learning realities in different ways as their love leads them in different directions. Tanay, however, finds the experience to be doubly strangling because he must keep this a secret from his family, to whom he has not come out, even as he heals from the shock of his beloved fleeing. Tanay's constant gaze throughout the film causes some unease because it seems to be motivated by sexual desire, whether it be with random people playing football on the street, his barber, his professor, or even the main character of the plot, the paying guest. The character, for some reason, is constantly shirtless, which makes the intense sexualization simple to capture on camera. They can depict men's bodies entwined and writhing with ecstasy in between shots of nature and hands holding on to one another. The film depicts the anxiety of a gay guy feels in an unwelcoming society. To young men who are homosexual, bisexual, or other males who have sex with men, homophobia, stigma, and prejudice can be especially difficult. When compared to other men, these negative opinions raise their risk of encountering violence. Violence can include behaviours such as bullying, teasing, harassment, physical assault, and suicide-related behaviours. Beyond prejudice and stigma, LGBTQ men are more prone to experience mental health issues. One must look at a variety of factors, such as existential crises, familial issues, stereotypes, the effects of the LGBTQ community, and much more, in order to completely comprehend how their sexual orientation affects their mental health. When homosexual men are repeatedly exposed to homophobia, myths, and stereotypes, some of them may internalise this negativity and begin to believe it to be real. This creates internalized homophobia. Gay men may fight to be emotionally expressive and affectionate due to the need to appear manly. The outlined body image problems are further worsened by masculine values and the rejection of femininity. It goes against the openness, equality, and acceptance that the LGBTQ community should promote, some homosexual men find the push to be physically strong and the devaluing of femininity frustrating. Gay males begin to hate their own bodies which leads them to identity crisis and trauma. Even now, most still view gay males as abnormal and strange. [Team \(2019\)](#)

Tanay and Anuja also provide narrative for the Cobalt Blue book. Tanay's is a monologue, whereas Anuja's is a journal entry. But two people come into prominence for us because of the gender and personality differences in their experiences. Tanay comes out as more reserved and introverted than Anuja, who comes across as louder, braver, and more outgoing. She takes command of her life and resists the gender stereotype of the submissive woman, especially when it comes to independence and eloping. Her brother, however, does it more gently. He simply calls his sister before leaving the house and does not let anybody know he will not be returning anytime soon. Perhaps this comes to represent his existence in his family, where he must be hidden in all he does as a homosexual young man who has not come out. Without his own family's knowledge, he goes on dates, meets up with others, and goes about his social life. Even his sister, who cannot grasp why her brother spends so much time upstairs, doubts his sister's love for the paying visitor, which must be concealed as friendship. The movie is much more than just a story of unrequited love. Both of its protagonists have a coming-of-age narrative as they experience love, rejection, and learning so much about themselves and the world around them. One hopes for a happier outcome for them as they struggle to recover from their shock and loss. [Vatsalya \(2022\)](#)

For sexual and gender minorities who are not "straight," the term "queer" is inclusive "in their sexual preferences. This covers cisgenders, lesbians, homosexuals, bisexuals, transgender people, and others. The word literally means "weird" or "peculiar." "Consequently, it started to be applied quite derisively in the late nineteenth century to those who engaged in same-sex relationships or desires.

Sexual minorities, as if by default have always been epistemologically portrayed as the 'other' to the dominant heterosexuality. The assertion remains that homosexuality is subservient to a binary relationship that upholds heterosexuality, as the only way of surviving and comprehending the world. In recent years, heterosexuals who identify as queer to define their sexual orientation and gender have become more common. Such identification and comprehension establish queer theory as a set of ideas that contends identities—particularly those of a particular sexuality, sex, and even sexual identity not constant or deterministic. Queer theory aims to criticize and disprove earlier theories of identities. Queer theory undermines the assumption, privileges, and expectations of stable heteronormative models of daily life and politicizes and acknowledges the fluidity and instability of identities, whereas heteronormativity assumes that heterosexuality, which is the inevitable relationship between the fixed binary masculine and feminine, is secure and constant within its rigid structures. One component of queer studies is queer theory, which has origins in postmodern and poststructuralist ideas as well as women's studies, feminist theory, gay and lesbian studies, and women's studies.

Identity which, forms the part and parcel of human Self/Being is essentially unstable. It is the sum total both external and internal agencies, that goes into its formation. An Adolescent queer identity is the result of synthesis of Identity Crisis and Identity formation from time to time. Coming out is the outcome of this synthesis. The process though cannot be claimed to follow a linear trajectory in terms of stipulated age range, yet do trace the subtle growth and change in perspective of the character about himself/herself and the society. Queering, or transgressing the rigid boundaries of the patriarchal, heteronormative society is the means adopted by the queer community, disclose their existence, justify their becoming and doing. Prejudice faced by the queer community is on the rise but hardly ever do anyone feel the need to blot their scorn for the heteronormality in the majority. [Zalis \(2019\)](#)

The movie gives the spectator a wonderful visual pleasure. The film's title is appropriately reflected in the art direction, since some of the shots may pass for stunning still paintings. Situations with dramatically opposing colours stand out the most, yet the colour scheme is always shifting to reflect the mood of the environment. The unnamed tenant's preferred hue seems to be blue, and shades of it appear significantly more frequently than usual, eventually coming to stand for him. In Tanay's dream, the paying guest paints cobalt blue on his neck, making Tanay become an embodiment of the paying guest's absence. When Tanay recites a poem that encapsulates the complete freedom that the paying guest epitomizes and that comes with letting go of everything and everyone, Tanay and Anuja witness cobalt blue water running down the stairs after the paying visitor's absence. The colour is even reflected in choice of costumes. Tanay wearing a yellow shirt, which symbolises a new ray of hope and happiness in his life, whereas Tanay is wearing a red shirt when he meets the love of his life, which represents the colour of love. Tanay, the main character, frequently dons blue-coloured clothing to express both his peaceful demeanour and his expansive imagination.

Tanay, the main character, is a sensitive gay boy who uses poetry and art to explore love in its purest form. The grief and isolation that gay men experience in a

nation where homosexuality is against the law is powerfully expressed by His Professor, another notable character. "Women take away every man you love," he says sadly to the protagonist. When Anuja returns from abandoning the house, she argues that the missing mysterious man assisted her in embracing her body. The novel by Kundalkar is divided into two halves. We can comprehend Anuja's perspective on the events in the novel's second half. Both Anuja's mental state and the development of the connection are revealed to us. Anuja's therapist, Dr. Khanwilkar, does not exist in the film. In its replacement, Mary, a nun, and Anuja's confidante, is presented. No one may question if a nun was chosen just because Kerala is where the story takes place. We do not know all about Mary's past, but the fact that she was pressured into becoming a nun urges her to assist Anuja. The story of Anuja is not fairly represented in the film. Her entire relationship can be summed up in a few words and a single incident. The most significant incident is when she refuses her father's attempts to get her to accuse him of rape. She reminds her father that he was the reason she felt the need to go, saying, "He introduced me to my own body." As Anuja returns home, the family immediately starts training the shew. She is told to put on a sari and has her hair extensions fastened in, totally changing her appearance. She is depicted as a tomboy who rejects the notions of female identity throughout the entire movie. And the film makes an awkward attempt to portray this. Tanay, for instance, is alright with spending time in the kitchen and uses Ponds, which is referred to be "girl's cream." Anuja says she will not do any labour in the kitchen. Later, she requests that Tanay demonstrate how to apply cream and deodorant, which appears to go a bit too far with the stereotype. It is painful to contrast Tanay's private and alone anguish with Anuja's heartbreak, which is a public event. Here, family politics and gender politics are pervasive. Tanay is frequently shown as experimenting and attempting to have sex in public places. Nobody really finds fault with Tanay having easy accessibility to the guest's room or their proximity during the day. Anuja, on the other hand, is always seen pleading to be allowed to visit his chamber. They were required to leave the house for her love story to progress.

Sexism in Colours – Why is Pink for Girls and Blue for Boys. The convention that blue is for boys and pink is for girls has lately been strengthened with the introduction of "Gender Reveal Parties." Despite parents being more innovative with their reveals, pink and blue continue to be the two most popular colours used to announce the sex of their children. By assigning a colour to new-borns, a role is imposed on them that they are supposed to develop into. They are just two colours; thus, you can only identify with one of the two genders. If you are a woman, pink must be your top choice, which also defines you as feminine. You need blue, and you shouldn't even like pink, if you want to appear as a male. If you are a girl who enjoys the colour blue, you are perceived as a tomboy and not as a strong woman; rather, you are seen as a young lady who doesn't know how to act like a lady. Some of the primary justifications for stigmatizing men who choose to wear pink are prevalent gender stereotypes. These are beliefs that have been shaped by societal and cultural conventions regarding the traits, characteristics, and standards of conduct of individuals who represent both sexes. Stereotypes have long been acting as a set of rules that tells individuals how to act, dress, and speak. Additionally, they are rooted in society, making major reform impossible. In short, gendered colours are entirely irrelevant, and we should stop forcing colours on young children if we want a society free of stereotypes, misogyny, and other sorts of bias.

The most well-known gender stereotypes facts typically include clothes. Even in the twenty-first century, there remains a widespread conviction that real men should not dress in feminine-themed attire. For instance, such attire can include

tight jeans and pink blouses. But since it should be free to choose what to wear, contemporary society demands that labels that stigmatize such a basic liberty be rejected. Sadly, in this society you cannot choose your gender or even the gender you identify with. Individuals who do not adhere to society's expectations for their gender are rejected, kicked out of their homes, and attacked all over the globe. Men usually hear that they need to be strong, manly, provide for their families, and engage in copious amounts of sex. Women must be physically appealing, conceal defects, participate in sexual activity only in committed relationships, and give birth to children.

Today, there are guys who like wearing cosmetics even though it is typically categorized as a women's product. By creating a product that was essentially the same thing. The same way as women's cosmetics highlights or defines characteristics that are typically associated with femininity. In essence, we created a product that was intended to challenge gender stereotypes by using them to our advantage. The wealthy Bollywood business has been crucial in breaking taboos and preconceptions around male grooming and beauty regimens, which has contributed to the growth of this newly discovered field of labour. It is undeniable that the fashion and Bollywood industries have made the wearing of jewellery and makeup commonplace, and that this tendency has spread to everyday Indian men as well. The growing trend of males wearing makeup as costume-wear has its roots in Indian culture, where men engage in folk dances and plays as well. It is reasonable to state that men are acing makeup looks and methods because influencers have played a significant part in breaking the taboos related to men and beauty Tanay uses moisturizing creams throughout the film that are overly gendered to feminine standards. The usage of cosmetics and makeup is seen critically by majority. This view must be changed. Sociologists and other behavioural scientists use the term heteronormativity to describe how sex and gender are used to categorize persons in our society. Heteronormativity is the idea that the only sexual orientation that is socially and legally acceptable is heterosexuality, or a romantic or sexual attraction to the other sex. Various sexual orientations are demonized and may even be illegal. Heteronormativity encourages strict sexual norms and traditional gender roles in society. The notion that men and women in our society have distinct obligations to fulfil. It supports the concept that women should care for children while men are at work. This also relates to how people are classified as either male or female according to the gender binary. Gender refers to the physiological and hormonal differences between men and women, whereas gender refers to the social interactions and norms that determine how men and women should behave.

Cobalt Blue is a great depiction of the purest nature of love. Love is a habit, and if your habit dies, you die. The story depicts the sibling's unrequited love. The two-sibling loving the new paying guest is the main jest of novel. It also portrays the love of grandfather and grandmother which ended the same day. Tanya's never-ending love for the paying guest which was a mystery for whole family. Male loving male is still considered strange in society. there is no room for them even in this modern world. Homosexuality is still odd and unnatural.

4. CONCLUSION

When homosexuality was widely viewed as "taboo, gay and lesbian persons were subject to prejudice, stigma, and even persecution. However, opinions against homosexuality have significantly changed in recent years, and they are now more universally accepted and normalized in contemporary culture. The increased acceptance of the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity is a significant

contributor to the normalization of homosexuality. Today, a lot of individuals feel more at ease expressing themselves honestly and publicly, which has aided in fostering a more accepting culture where everyone is welcomed for who they are. It must be realized that homosexuality is not a disorder or sickness. The story introduces us to two characters whose beliefs are constantly in war with external definitions of ideal human cycle. The normalization of homosexuality has also been significantly influenced by media portrayals. Even Nevertheless, there is still a long way to go until homosexuality is fully accepted as the norm in contemporary culture. In many nations across the world, homosexuality is still illegal, and many people still experience discrimination and persecution because of their sexual orientation. It is critical that we continue to bring attention to the struggles that the LGBTQ+ community faces and fight to create a society where everyone is welcomed for who they are. We can work to build a more tolerant and inclusive society where everyone can thrive through activism, education, and understanding. The film culminates in a dramatic and emotional finale that sees the characters come to terms with their feelings and make difficult decisions about their lives. Cobalt Blue is a powerful and thought-provoking film that explores the complexities of love, marriage, and relationships.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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