

Objet petit a and Jouissance: A Critical Study of Gaulib Shiraz Dhalla's The Exiles (2011)

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ABSTRACT

The experiences of homosexual individuals are diverse and unique. Suppression of desire is consequential when homosexuality is considered a taboo, and heterosexuality is rooted in a social and cultural organizations. This research paper attempts to analyze Gaulib Shiraz Dhalla's *The Exiles* using the concepts of Jacques Lacan's *objet petit a* and *jouissance*. *Jouissance* describes the deeply rooted yearning/surplus enjoyment, and *objet petit a* discusses the lack that is present in an individual, which sets forth a journey of seeking fulfillment. This study also focuses on the difficulties of confronting one's homoerotic desires and attempts to demonstrate how the deeply embedded heteronormative society, including the family, suppresses and prevents homoerotic desires from attainment. The paper found that the heteronormative society does influence one's attainment of homoerotic desires, which results in the suppression of such desires accompanied by shame, despair, and loss. This paper also discovered how heteronormativity, especially the societal and cultural stigma, can be detrimental to homosexual individuals from achieving *objet petit a* and *jouissance*.

Keywords: Desire, excessive desire, heteronormativity, homosexuality, marriage, suppression, unattainability

INTRODUCTION

Heteronormativity can be defined as "a societal hierarchical system that privileges and sanctions individuals based on presumed binaries of gender and sexuality; as a system it defines and enforces beliefs and practices about what is "normal" in everyday life" (Toomey et al., 2012, p. 188). Heteronormativity, therefore, is understood as a system that authorizes and denounces

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individuals who are inept and unsuccessful in adhering to an “acceptable” and “normal” social structure. Heterosexuality marshals the sex and gender frameworks in society. Heterosexuality thus assumes privilege, naturalization, and normalcy (Myers & Raymond, 2010). Heterosexuality is understood and followed as the foundation of society. Due to this, sexuality is established in “societal structures and connected to central social institutions, such as the family and marriage” (Herz & Johansson, 2015, p. 6).

Heterosexuality in a heteronormative society can be maintained by the practice of marriage and family life (Jackson, 1999). This marital institution is believed to be sacred and mandatory. Marriage is important, but desire also holds precedence. Nevertheless, sexual minorities are not given the luxury of being with the person they desire (Rich, 1980); hence, these desires are suppressed. Over time, tolerating and suppressing these desires may become tormenting and problematic. Lacan’s *objet petit a* and *jouissance* are used to analyze and reconsider the hegemonic heterosexual system critically.

Lacan’s *objet petit a* and *jouissance* are central concepts of his contribution to psychoanalytic theory. Jacques Lacan’s unattainable *objet petit a* (Lacan, 2006) and *jouissance* is used in this research paper to analyze Gaulib Shiraz Dhalla’s *The Exiles* (2011). *Objet petit a* is an object that causes desire, but this desire may be unattainable. *Jouissance* depicts the surplus enjoyment one yearns for, which may also

be dangerous. The concepts are used to examine queer experiences as it expresses the unattainability of desire. This theory is used to bring forth the same-sex desires and the challenges of queer individuals living in a pro-heterosexual society.

While Butler (2002) discusses gender binary structure through gender performativity, Sedgwick (2008) explores the metaphor of the closet and the failure of contemporary western culture to include a homoerotic definition. Foucault (2019) discusses the systematic rise of the concept of sexuality, and Warner (1991) discusses the troubling queer existence and the issues of same-sex marriages. Freud and Crick (1899/1999) discuss Oedipus complex and castration complex and consequently discuss the concept of desire through heterosexual relationships where a man and a woman unite due to “mind and body, psyche and sensuality” (Belsey, 1993, p. 384). However, Lacan’s (2001) concepts include queer subjectivities that deeply support this study. Additionally, Lacan’s *objet petit a* and *jouissance* discuss the push and pull of desire that other theorists do not concentrate on. Lacan also observes that the origin of desire is in the language and consequently denaturalizes sex and sexual relations. By denaturalizing sex, Lacan also “deheterosexualizes” desire which helps in including non-normative sexualities (Dean, 2003; Miller & Lacan, 2018). Since Lacan’s concept of *objet petit a* and *jouissance* discusses the challenges faced by queer individuals and the difficulty of attaining sexual desire, the study uses Lacan’s concepts.

Additionally, Butler (2002), Warner (1991), Sedgwick (2008), and Foucault (2019) bring out different aspects and features related to sexuality, queer experiences, and gender binary structure; they also argue for non-heteronormative and non-gender binary structures that include all kinds of sexuality and gender expressions. Similarly, some of the seminal texts such as *Maurice* by E. M Forester (1971), *Orlando: A Biography* by Virginia Woolf (1928), *The Price of Salt* by Patricia Smith (1952), *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin (1956), *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall (1928), *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker (1982), *The Line of Beauty* by Alan Hollinghurst (2004), *The Single Man* by Christopher Isherwood (1964), *The Picture of Dorian Grey* by Oscar Wilde bring out the cultural and societal exclusion that ignores desires and carnal relations between same-sex and queer individuals. Similarly, the chosen literary text not only attempts to demonstrate the exclusion and discrimination faced by homosexual individuals but discusses the significance of desire and the unfortunate challenges faced by queer individuals in attaining desire as a result of the domineering heteronormative society.

Lacan's *objet petit a* has evolved and been discussed over the years with several interpretations. Lacan observes how fantasy could be structured and is a cause of desire (Lacan et al., 2020). Lacan uses his seminars to explain desire and its specificity. If desires were merely feelings or biological drives, the desirous object could be anything.

Nevertheless, human tendencies toward desire are specific, and only these specific features attract an individual's attention (The Dangerous Maybe, 2019). Lacan notes that people's desires could be dependent or highly based on unconscious fantasies. Nevertheless, this desire may not be completely satisfied. This lack of fully satiated desire represents the subject's *objet petit a*. (Lacan, 2001). Lacan also discusses *jouissance* which means surplus enjoyment. In his lecture, *Psychoanalysis and medicine* 1966, Lacan observes:

What I call *jouissance*—in the sense in which the body experiences itself—is always in the nature of tension, in the nature of a forcing, of spending, even of an exploit. Unquestionably, there is *jouissance* at the level at which pain begins to appear, and we know that it is only at this level of pain that a whole dimension of the organism, which would otherwise remain veiled, can be experienced. (p. 60)

Jouissance can also mean the presence of pain attached to excessive enjoyment. It implies that in *jouissance*, there is pleasure, and in pleasure, there is pain. Furthermore, the intensity wrought with such enjoyment may also cause harm (Clemens & Grigg, 2006).

As there might not be an end to seeking fulfillment or enjoyment, *jouissance* makes all individuals crave excessively such that the excessive need may create problems in one's life. For example, an individual keeps

switching off the light compulsively, which becomes problematic. That is why Lacan calls this a death drive. And hence desire in terms of *jouissance* is an unattainable continuous ache that cannot be fulfilled (The Dangerous Maybe, 2019).

Desire also describes the lack that the subject experiences trying to fulfill this lack. The lack is what authenticates the desire. Nevertheless, the subject's lack cannot be experienced because of its unstable state (The Dangerous Maybe, 2019). We also need to understand that *objet petit a* is the same as lack present in the subject and the other. Because of this, the subject has an impossible relationship with the lack: the one that gives pleasure and takes pleasure (Kirshner, 2005).

Jouissance makes an individual thrive on finding his/her meaning in life or symbolic identity. The symbolic order can be the various rules and regulations of language, traditions, or culture; hence, human subjectivity is influenced and embodied. It is where the Real comes to place. An infant's *jouissance* becomes its mother; that is to say, an infant's complete satisfaction or enjoyment is mother. Nevertheless, the infant is not yet touched by society, law, and custom; hence, the infant is a non-socialized being called an unmediated and focused *jouissance*. Nevertheless, as the *jouissance* becomes excessive, the infant tries to go far away. Lacan observes that while the mother's presence is soothing, the child also wants to distance himself. Lacan describes the mother as a crocodile with the child wedged between the jaws. The child

yearns to be free of their mother. At the same time, the father figure denies this drive satisfaction. The child must stop and search elsewhere for the drive satisfaction, which must be appropriate in terms of societal norms. Thus, the child falls away from the signifying chain and steps into the symbolic order, which denotes meaning or language (Clemens & Grigg, 2006). Henceforth the child becomes independent and must find its body of *jouissance*. Thus, this is when language plays its role (Miller & Lacan, 2018). It is also important to understand that the child is unhappy in the presence of *jouissance*. Nevertheless, the instant it is free from the mother, the child begins to feel a part of it missing. Furthermore, this part is *objet petit a*, something missing in our lives. Individuals are under constant stress to find it, but they never can. Therefore, *objet petit a* is something that is increasingly yearned for but can never be achieved. Even if it is achieved, it can only be temporary. Nevertheless, the void reappears and hence is incomplete. Thus *Objet petit a* is a void; the fulfilment of which results in making an individual one whole (Clemens & Grigg, 2006).

Subsequently, when examining queer experiences, the LGBTQA+ society faces tremendous stigma from mainstream society. Various reasons like homophobia, societal pressure, familial pressure, and patriarchy significantly marginalize the LGBTQA+ community from mainstream society. Society encourages and normalizes heterosexuality and thereby subverts homosexuality. Due to the onslaught of the heteronormative society,

forming relationships according to the needs of homosexual individuals becomes traumatizing and difficult. Resistance and prohibition from having same-sex relationships by the traditional and cultural norms of family and society lead to a life of isolation and loneliness. This paper attempts to use Lacan's *objet petit a* and *jouissance* to bring out and analyze the suppression of desire and stigmatization of society that can be wounding and disastrous to an individual belonging to the LGBTQA+ society.

METHODS

Various methods were used to find relevant materials. A combination of terms such as "Jacques Lacan," "jouissance," "objet petit a," "object cause of desire," and "homosexuality" was searched through many databases. The search results were chosen based on the relevance of the topic. Keyword searches were performed in Google Scholar, Google Search engine, and Publish or Perish software. Initially, concepts relating to desire, sexuality, psychoanalytic theory such as the Unconscious, Lacanianism, Lacan psychoanalysis, the language, symbolic order, signified, desire, the Other, Slavoj Žižek, Freud, Freudian Psychoanalysis, the Semiotic, objet petit a, jouissance, queer experiences, heteronormativity, homosexuality, and oppression were found and studied. However, some of these concepts were overwhelming, broad, and less significant to the current study. Consequently, concepts and key terms were excluded based on the inappropriateness and the lack of connection between issues

of the primary text and desire, resulting in filtering all the other theories that accept Lacanian concepts. To explore Lacanian concepts, seminars, lectures, and articles were then studied to find specific theories or concepts that would neatly fit the various attributes of the desire of queer individuals. Attainment, fulfillment, the actualization of desire, and failure to attain were also concepts that needed careful attention that helped to get an in-depth study of the current study. As these criteria of the primary text and theory were fulfilled, key terms were selected by filtering and retrieving them. The keywords were verified by searching the keywords in search engines, like Google Scholar, and Publish or Perish software to locate these terms in different research articles, conferences, and academic books. The inclusion of the chosen and finalized seven key terms reflected the specificity of the study, highlighting the theory, the concept of desire, and the queer culture. This research paper has taken the theory of Jacques Lacan's concept of jouissance and objet petit a to analyze Ghalib Shiraz Dhalla's novel *The Exiles* to draw out the domineering heteronormative society.

The Exiles provides a wonderful illustration of Lacan's *objet petit a* and *jouissance*. The novel follows the story of Rahul Kapoor, who married Pooja Kapoor for 21 years with a son Ajay. Rahul and Pooja have been chaste for seven years, due to which Rahul finds himself unfulfilled. When Rahul meets Atif, he is immediately attracted to Atif and begins a relationship. Rahul falls in love with Atif and is torn

between his marriage and lover. As Pooja and Ajay begin to notice Rahul's lies and late arrival (to home), guilt pervades his conscience. However, Rahul's attempt to avoid Atif and be faithful to his wife is unsuccessful as Rahul is drawn to Atif. After Sonali (Pooja's friend) reveals to Pooja about Rahul's passionate kiss with another man (Atif), Pooja confronts Rahul and is ashamed of Rahul's homoerotic desires. Ajay's disapproval of his father's sexual orientation escalates. Atif dies as a result of Ajay's physical assault on Atif. Ajay also meets with an accident and succumbs to death. Pooja, traumatized by her husband's abandonment and her son's death, smears her body with her son's ashes and commits suicide. Rahul is left all alone in the end.

Rahul's story marks the representation of *objet petit a* and *jouissance*. Rahul's interest in Atif embodies the presence of *objet petit a*. And Rahul's yearning for Atif connotes *jouissance*. However, *objet petit a* is idiosyncratic as it supports every individual with their peculiar and specific desires. At the same time, *objet petit a* is not the object of desire but the object that causes desire. In this novel, Rahul's homoerotic desires are evoked in Atif, who is also a homosexual.

The *objet petit a* is not what we desire, what we are after, but, rather, that which sets our desire in motion... however, desire nonetheless retains a minimum of formal consistency, a set of phantasmic features which, when they are encountered in a positive

object, make us desire this object—*objet petit a* as the cause of desire is nothing other than this formal frame of consistency. (Žižek, 1997, p. 53)

Therefore, *objet petit a* is the object that causes desire. Rahul finds Atif's features and mannerisms attractive, which evokes his desire. The newly revived interest in Rahul pushes him to fulfill his void with determination to find his drive. Therefore, an attempt is made to fulfill the void in him.

Objet petit a is paradoxical as it emerges and recedes. At the same time,

...this coincidence of limit and excess, of lack and surplus—precisely that of the Lacanian *objet petit a*, of the leftover which embodies the fundamental, constitutive lack (Žižek, 1989, p. 54)

Atif is the object cause of desire. Even though Pooja wants to be the object cause of desire, she is rejected by her husband. "I've always felt great love for her. But never great passion" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 91).

Pooja does not incite desire in Rahul. In consequence, she cannot be the object cause of desire. Rahul covets Atif as he is the *objet petit a* and begins to have feelings for Atif. Since the subject of love is incorporated with the object of desire for both the subject and the other, they must hold the place of the cause of desire (Clemens & Grigg, 2006).

In his childhood, Rahul, being involved with Hanif, loses him. Similarly, Rahul attains Atif but also loses him repeatedly. This constant ebb and flow between lack

and surplus enjoyment embody the lack in Rahul. Also, Rahul's deprivation of homoerotic love represents the lack of Rahul.

Rahul is not sexually interested in his wife.

Rahul was aware that this abstinence was not by Pooja's preference but his lack of sexual desire in her. On rare occasions that she was able to overcome the awkwardness and tried to initiate any intimacy between them, Rahul tactfully dodged it. The fires of sexual desire doused; The marriage turned more fraternal. (Dhalla, 2011, p. 30)

Rahul's marriage with Pooja feels devoid of love and happiness. He feels incomplete and like a non-being. Also, Rahul's disinterestedness, escape from intimacy with Pooja, and absence from household duties depict his apathy toward his life as a heterosexual man. As a homosexual man, his excessive need for homoerotic love also describes the pre-existent deprivation of the same homoerotic love. Rahul's unnoticed pursuit describes Rahul's lack indicating *objet petit a*. After attainment, it is lost repeatedly, and thereupon he never attains *jouissance* (complete drive satisfaction) altogether. The original *jouissance* Rahul received by having a sexual relationship with Hanif was lost. He was forced to sacrifice and dismiss his *jouissance* to assimilate into the heteronormative society. Also, when the school children taunted Hanif for being a homosexual, Rahul ignored and supported

the homophobic children. When Hanif's dead body washed up, Rahul remained mute. It evinces Rahul's attempt to conform and adapt to the heteronormative world.

Since the homophobic society does not encourage homoerotic love, Rahul does not attain *jouissance*. "The inscriptions will be repeated in an attempt (not) to attain *jouissance*: the signifier is both the means for arriving at enjoyment and the cause of its loss" (Clemens & Grigg, 2006, p. 38). As Rahul meets Atif for the first time, he realizes he can attain his drive satisfaction. Rahul is also completely captivated by Atif's physical appearance. Atif is marked with "Other who, through his or her gestures, marks the body, even the skin, as an object of enjoyment" (pp. 37–38). Rahul thinks, "Calm down, calm down... you're making things worse" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 5). These sentences depict Rahul's anxiety when he drives to meet Atif. "Now I can feel the air in my lungs. Now the merciless counting of time can stop" (p. 19). When Atif gives his phone number, Rahul is "pregnant with expectation" (p. 59). Rahul's yearning for homoerotic love is evident; thus, Rahul's interest in Atif describes *objet petit a* in a very insistent way.

Thus, the subject acquires enjoyment from the Other's enjoyment (Lacan, 1992). Atif is also attracted to Rahul. Disowned by his parents, Atif is in America alone. Nevertheless, when he meets Rahul, all his loneliness gets dispelled by his presence, and he becomes besotted with Rahul. However, Rahul's familial commitments lead Atif to extreme anxiety.

Rahul, masquerading the identity and role of a heterosexual, is still closeted. He “could scarcely even use the word ‘gay’” (Dhalla, 2011, p. 42). Even after sharing a passionate kiss with Atif, Rahul still “has been hiding in the closet all his life” (p. 43). Rahul also forces himself on Pooja to prove himself as a straight man. However, all that he discerns is the affirmation of his homosexual identity. Coming out of the closet becomes an excruciatingly painful process for him due to which acknowledging his same-sex desires becomes challenging.

Rahul is the perfect example of *jouissance*. Even though Rahul has an intimate relationship with Atif, he cannot fully attain wholeness. Nevertheless, he yearns for him and believes his life could be better. Rahul’s remembrance of his encounter with Hanif insists on his homoerotic feelings. The confused unacceptable feelings are clearly expressed by Rahul “why can’t I get him out of my mind? Can I really be feeling this strongly for another man? Why now? How do I stop this?” (Dhalla, 2011, p. 65). The painful excitement of *jouissance* is seen through Rahul. “I must be going crazy,” he thought. “I must fight this. Keep it under, where nobody can see. Even to think of it is to give it life, bring it to the surface” (p. 65). The excessive need to attain Atif and the anxiety is evinced. The aim of the drive/*jouissance* is not accomplishing gratification but the failure of satisfaction. It subsequently implies the repeated failure of attainment (The Dangerous Maybe, 2019). Therefore, here Atif becomes the *objet petit a*, which

Rahul wants and lacks in Rahul. Therefore, there is a movement from Rahul’s *jouissance* to desire. Thus, *objet petit a* is the cause of desire. Similarly, Rahul cannot stop going back and forth. On one side, he has his lover, and on another, he has his wife and son.

The problem involved is that of *jouissance* because *jouissance* presents itself as buried at the center of a field and has the characteristics of inaccessibility, obscurity, and opacity; moreover, the field is surrounded by a barrier which makes access to it difficult for the subject to the point of inaccessibility, because *jouissance* appears not purely and simply as the satisfaction of a need but as the satisfaction of a drive. (Lacan, 1992, p. 209)

Rahul has the perfect wife, “She was so reliable, beyond reproach, exhaustively impeccable. It was impossible for her to even botch a meal once in a while. How does one measure up to such a woman?” (Dhalla, 2011, p. 145). However, Rahul’s discontentment indicates his unfulfilled drive. Rahul is held up by his marriage vows and cannot stop feeling guilty whenever he meets Atif. It is a *jouissance* for Rahul, which includes extreme pleasure with Atif and extreme pain without him. Infidelity, excuses, societal pressure, and religious customs take a toll on his life. Rahul, also being an Indian, tries to live by the gender codes subscribed by the Indian traditional marriage system. Pooja, a devotee of

Lord Krishna, expects her husband to sweep her feet off the ground and love her. Nevertheless, Rahul who is aware, understands Pooja's sacrifice as Rahul's wife. However, soon their relationship disintegrates. To Pooja, Rahul "began to dissolve into a faceless lover" (p. 128).

This way, the original internal division and impossibility can be externalized onto the other. It is she who carries the enjoyment in her, with the result that it is to her that the demand will be addressed and upon whom the prohibition will be put. However, the structural impossibility ensures that this demand will never be fully met. It will have far-reaching consequences for the sexual relationship (Clemens & Grigg, 2006).

Rahul's dual self plays a vital role in pulling him into the mechanisms of socially appropriate heterosexual figures and the actual homosexual self. Manipulated by the dominant marital institution and family, Atif is plagued by agony. He says to himself, "You're all dispensable, he thought, looking around the room. Don't you see it? Replaceable" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 87). Atif feels like an outsider when compared to Rahul's wife. Nevertheless, Indian marriage adheres to strict norms and traditions which is a fundamental institution observed by Rahul and Pooja. Thus, Rahul's intentional dishonesty continually affects his relationship with Atif.

Rahul's continual attempt to be with Atif implies the attempt to attain *objet petit a*. Rahul is under constant confusion about his divided loyalties. His inability to attain Atif makes him undergo extreme anxiety, confusion, and emotional distress. "I don't

know how to do this. This going back and forth, one life to another," he said, "It's too hard" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 144).

However, his familial duties wrench him back, making him incomplete for Pooja, Ajay, and Atif. Ajay, noticing his mother's loneliness and dismal behavior, angrily cries, "You don't give a shit about her" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 15). Ajay, who observes Pooja on the verge of depression, blames his father for his irresponsibility, "If you did, she wouldn't be in this state. I want to know who's more important to you than mom, why you are fucking bailing out on us." (p. 151). Even after this angry exchange, a distraught Rahul tries to stop seeing Atif, "I wish I could cut myself in two but..." (p. 179). Clearly, "*Jouissance* still remains forbidden" (Lacan, 1992, p. 184). The inward fight in Rahul is clearly apparent to Pooja, who finally accepts that "'we're lost,' unable to go back and struggling to stay. We belong nowhere now. Perhaps not even to each other" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 161).

Rahul, who had found total enjoyment with Atif, loses that enjoyment again when Pooja discovers the homosexual affair. Ashamed and disgusted, Pooja lashes out, "What kind of a man are you? answer me!" she cried. "I've given you everything. Everything. What more is left, tell me? I made a promise to you, remember? For you, I gave up my home, my family...?" (Dhalla, 2011, p. 260).

RESULTS

Rahul's attempt to find himself and attain Atif demonstrates the challenges in acquiring

objet petit a. The *objet petit a* is structured in the unconscious fantasy as external to the subject (Clemens & Grigg, 2006). Nevertheless, as soon as fantasy begins to act, anxiety shows itself, and symptoms appear through language or actions. There might also be delusions removed from reality. Moreover, this is evident in Atif being the *objet petit* for Rahul. Rahul and Atif's physical intimacy displays an attempt to attain total enjoyment or drive satisfaction. Therefore, Rahul sacrifices his life with Pooja. Atif being the *objet petit a* is unattainable.

Atif's death at the novel's end proves that attaining *objet petit a* is impossible. Ajay's and Pooja's deaths, being the heteronormative representatives, account for the competent opposition against Rahul from realizing *objet petit a*. A void is forever present in Rahul, and his pursuit of procuring *objet petit a* is unsuccessful through Hanif, Pooja, and finally, Atif.

That object will be there when in the end all conditions have been fulfilled—it is, of course, clear that what is supposed to be found cannot be found again. It is in its nature that the object as such is lost. It will never be found again. Something is there while one waits for something better or worse, but which one wants. (Lacan, 1992, p. 52)

Every attempt is accompanied by heartbreak and emptiness. Even though he attains his *objet petit a* momentarily, complete attainment of "*objet a*" is "real-

impossible" (Žižek, 1997, p. 222). Therefore, the lack is always present and persistent but without attainment.

DISCUSSION

The present paper attempts to analyze *objet petit a* and *jouissance* to bring out the influence of the disruptive heteronormative society. "... Heterosexuality also is connected to a social and cultural system," which is rooted in the "critique of marriage, nuclear families, and "heterosexual lifestyles" (Herz & Johansson, 2015, p. 5). As a result, for non-confirmative individuals, heteronormative society's regulation of family life, intimacy, and sexual orientation (Duggan, 2012) is problematic. The struggles and challenges of LGBTQA+ society are still prevalent. In a society that considers desire/sex a disgrace (Butler, 2002; Warner, 1991), confronting one's desire is traumatic. Furthermore, confronting desire in a homophobic world is much appalling, as homosexuality is considered a taboo (Berliner, 1987; Butler, 2002). However, desire is vital in every organism, giving reason to believe much-needed research might result in a sensitized and receptive society. This paper suggests the need for an all-inclusive society that could appreciate and accept diverse sexualities.

CONCLUSION

Jacques Lacan's *objet petit a* and *jouissance* discusses the various intricacies of desire. These concepts amalgamate complexities of desire, helplessness, confusion, identity crisis, guilt, and rage that revolve around desire and its difficulty of attainment.

Lacan's *objet petit a*, cause of desire, sketches the perpetual search for the lost object, and *jouissance* discusses the presence and fulfillment of enjoyment, which can also be dangerous. The pursuit of the attainment of desire is such that it may go beyond the contentment of the normal physiological needs of an individual. The attainment of desire and excessive desire fails with continuous unsuccessful attempts, due to which seeking desire (especially homoerotic desire) may be unhealthy and dangerous. Seeking desire also becomes detrimental as such a need or a want may result in unexpected and unpleasant outcomes. Rahul's attraction and desire to be with Atif destroy his world. Rahul loses his sense of self and struggles to understand his sexuality and desire. His attempt to attain homoerotic desire constantly fails as he faces multiple challenges and hurdles. Pooja's heteronormative cultural and religious beliefs question Rahul's sexual orientation and affairs. Ajay's disgust toward his father is evident in his anger and denial. Ajay's reaction to knowing his father's sexual orientation proves him to be a product of the dominant heteronormative society. Also, Ajay's physical assault on Atif proves his phobia of LGBTQA+ society. Also, Rahul's desires result in Atif's, his wife and his son's deaths. The heteronormative world represented by Pooja and Ajay proves the resistance caused by mainstream society to the unattainability of *objet petit a* and thereby rejecting Rahul's sexual orientation and desires.

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