



Simulacrum of Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS in the Indian Hindi Queer Movie *My Brother Nikhil*: A Panoramic Surveillance

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Article Info

Volume 6, Issue 1, 2024
Received: 15 May 2024
Accepted: 15 June 2024
doi:10.48047/AFJBS.6.1.2024.349-362

Abstract

This research paper attempts to scrutinise the essence of depiction of 'Biological Disease HIV+ AIDS' mirrored in a sample Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ motion picture. The sample film selected for this research is the Indian Hindi language Gay moving image *My Brother Nikhil* (2005) directed by Onir. The qualitative data have been collected through the application of content analysis and critical review technique followed by the analysis of the data. Finally, it has been discovered from this investigation that the cinema *My Brother Nikhil* exhibits the psycho-biological and socio-cultural taboo and sufferings caused by HIV+ AIDS Biological Disease. The protagonist of the film Nikhil has been forcefully quarantined in a dirty room having violated universal human rights by Goa police for being HIV positive, from which he is rescued by his elder sister and boy friend having encountered legal battle in court. The findings of this post-mortem contribute to the arena of Biological Sciences in general as well as Medical Sciences, Nursing, Pharmacology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Zoology, Immunology, HIV+ AIDS, Gender Studies, Queer & Sexuality Studies, Gay Studies, Sociology, Law and Juridical Studies, Human Rights, Film Studies, Journalism & Mass Communication and several other homologous disciplines in specific.

Keywords: Biological Malady, HIV+ AIDS, Indian Hindi Cinema, LGBTQ+, Gay Cinema, *My Brother Nikhil*

Introduction: This research paper entitled “Simulacrum of Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS in the Indian Hindi Queer Movie *My Brother Nikhil: A Panoramic Surveillance*” is a serious endeavour to explore the modus operandi of rendition of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ in the Indian Hindi Gay movie *My Brother Nikhil* released in 2005 and directed by Onir. The term ‘Simulacrum’ substitutes the word Representation whereas the term ‘Biological Malady’ implies a Physical Disease. Then, the abbreviation ‘HIV+’ is Human Immunodeficiency Virus Positive as well as the acronym AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. Likewise, ‘Queer’ is an umbrella term which encapsulates Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning, Pansexual, Asexual and Plus according to Gender Studies. Finally, ‘Panoramic Surveillance’ stands for Wide Angle Critical and Analytical Study.

Several Heteronormative movies have already been produced both in the oriental countries of the east and the occidental nations of the west in both *Bollywood* and Hollywood based on this theme of ‘Biological Malady’ or ‘Physical Disease’. Even a new genre of films has emerged named ‘Diseased Cinema’ in which various diseases are represented and focused as the central thematic concern. The book entitled *Diseased Cinema: Plagues, Pandemics and Zombies in American Movies* (2023) composed by the authors Robert Alpert, Merle Eisenberg and Lee Mordechai describes the subject matter of the depiction of the ailments like Plagues, Pandemics and Zombies covered in the Hollywood motion pictures of the United States of America. But, any serious experimentation is yet to be executed pertaining to the echo of ‘Physical Disease’ in Indian Hindi language LGBTQ+ cinema except this research paper. It has been unearthed that this sample Indian Hindi Gay film *My Brother Nikhil* has demonstrated HIV+ AIDS disease as the ‘Biological Malady’ or ‘Physical Disease’ or ‘Medical Condition of Health’. This study diagnoses the manner of illustration of Biological Illness called HIV+ AIDS in this sample film concerned. Some American English Hollywood LGBTQ+ motions pictures handling the disease HIV+ AIDS are *Philadelphia* (1993), *Dallas Buyers Club* (2013) etc.

“Throughout the years, film has played a significant part in shedding light on the HIV/AIDS epidemic, challenging misconceptions and stigma through personal stories and education.” ---
(Burgess T., 2023)

Thesis Statement: This research paper entitled “Simulacrum of Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS in the Indian Hindi Queer Movie *My Brother Nikhil: A Panoramic Surveillance*” is a mild attempt to explore and dissect the trend of depiction of the issue of ‘Biological Disease named HIV+ AIDS’ in the Indian *Bollywood* Gay motion picture *My Brother Nikhil* released in 2005, which has been directed by Onir and produced in Hindi language. This investigation not only focuses the manner of illustration of the disease ‘HIV Positive AIDS’ as a ‘Biological Medical Condition’ in all Indian LGBTQ+ cinema as well as other Indian Gay movies, rather it engulfs the Hindi language Gay motion picture entitled *My Brother Nikhil* released in 2005, which has been directed by Onir from India as well.

Moreover, this is an absolutely qualitative research without the application of any Statistical tools for data analysis. The technique of content analysis and critical review has been implemented for qualitative data collection in this research, followed by data analysis in descriptive method. The theoretical framework has been supported by Sexuality Theory engulfed in ‘Kinsey Sexuality Scale’ postulated by American Biologist Prof. Alfred Charles Kinsey and his team during the anatomisation of the data collected from the sample movie concerned, which is followed by the discussion section. Finally, this research paper is summed up with conclusion section.

Materials and Methods:

Research Problem Statement: The accurate issue or problem addressed through this research is the sporadic depiction of ‘Biological Disease’ in Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ cinema. ‘Biological Malady’ indicates any Physical Disease under Medical Condition of Health. Though, the theme of ‘Physical

Disease' has been well represented in an elephantine quantity of global straight cinema, specifically the American English motion pictures of Hollywood, yet the issue of 'Biological Malady' has rarely been exposed in the Hindi language LGBTQ+ silver screens of India till date except extremely few. Hence, the poor quantity of Indian Hindi Queer movies exploring the theme of 'Physical Disorder due to Medical Condition' is the exact problem of this investigation in general. Moreover, the lack of coverage and verification of the existence and fashion of representation of HIV+ AIDS Biological Disease specially in the Indian Hindi Gay movie *My Brother Nikhil* is the specific problem pertaining to this study.

Literature Survey: This literature review has been conducted regarding the research topic "Simulacrum of Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS in the Indian Hindi Queer Movie *My Brother Nikhil: A Panoramic Surveillance*". This topic tries to investigate *My Brother Nikhil*, the Indian Hindi Gay movie directed by Onir which is released in 2005. The nature of representation of the theme of 'Biological Malady' in general and HIV+ AIDS in particular has been studied in the movie through the application of the technique of content analysis and critical review. Sexuality Theory under 'Kinsey Sexuality Scale' advocated by American Biologist Prof. Alfred Charles Kinsey and his research team has also been applied while analysing the sample motion picture as theoretical apparatus. This literature survey has been pursued in various books along with articles and research papers published in several journals and news papers.

The book entitled *Representations of Illness in Literature and Film* (2010) composed by Bennett Kravitz explains the unique aspect of disease that the characters suffering from any disorder were ignored and pushed to the margin during early periods in literature and cinema. But, at present, the characters having any biological deformity are given priority as the protagonist and are made the pivot of attraction in literature and moving images with heteronormative elements. Authors Robert Alpert, Merle Eisenberg, Lee Mordechai describe in their book *Diseased Cinema: Plagues, Pandemics and Zombies in American Movies* (2023) that a new genre has emerged called 'Diseased Cinema', which reviews the movies through the perspectives of historically significant cinema, remaking of films and franchises. The research paper entitled "Exploring Disease Representation in Movies" published in 2019, volume 34, pages 2351-2354 in *Journal of General Internal Medicine* which has been written by Antonio Perciaccante MD, Philippe Charlier MD, Alessia Coralli BSN, Saudamini Deo PhD, Otto Appenzeller MD & Raffaella Bianucci PhD discusses that the most represented diseases in Oscar nominated movies are the psychiatric ones (21.9%), followed by neurological ones (13.3%), alcohol addiction (13.3%), and infectious diseases (13.3%).

Dr. Umang Gupta in his book *Portrayal of physical and mental illness in Indian Cinema: A thematic analysis* narrates that most of the films in *Bollywood* and other Indian cine industries illustrate biological and psychological diseases in their motion pictures. The journal named *Clinical Infectious Diseases* publishes in the volume 37, issue 7 in October, 2003, pages 939-942 an article "Infectious Diseases in Cinema: Virus Hunters and Killer Microbes" composed by Georgios Pappas, Savvas Seitaridis, Nikolaos Akritidis, Epaminondas Tsianos, which discloses that the infectious diseases are rooted from bioterrorism, laboratory accidents and space etc. have been represented in the world straight cinema which is the basis for public concept on infectious diseases.

Authors Enrique Garcia Sanchez and Jose E. Garcia Sanchez in their research paper entitled "Rare diseases in cinema" (2005) published in the journal *J Med Mor (JMM)* address the issue of uncommon biological maladies depicted in world cinema. *Madness at the Movies: Understanding Mental Illness through Film* (2023) is another book by James Charney which delves into the inner psyche of the characters in the heterosexual cinema to explore psychological disorders. Qijun Han and Daniel R. Curtis discover in their paper "Social Responses to Epidemics Depicted by Cinema" that films illustrate two ways that epidemics can affect societies: fear leading to a breakdown in sociability and fear stimulating preservation of tightly held social norms. A Master Degree dissertation "The

Representation of Mental Illness in Contemporary Cinema” by Anete Paula Vesere in 2020 explores psychological diseases in the modern films released recently. The book *Cinema, MD: A History of Medicine on Screen* by Eelco F.M. Wijdicks portrays the transformation regarding physicians, nurses, and medical institutions over the years.

To conclude, this survey of literature unmasks that some of the previous researches focus that the characters having any biological deformity are given priority as the protagonist along with an emerging genre called ‘Diseased Cinema’. The most frequently covered diseases in heterosexual cinema are psychiatric, neurological, alcohol addiction and infectious diseases. The infectious diseases are rooted from bioterrorism, laboratory accidents and space etc. It further delves into the inner psyche of the characters in the heterosexual cinema to explore psychological disorders including the transformation regarding physicians, nurses, and medical institutions over the years. But, none among them has ever explored and researched the representation of ‘Biological Malady’ in Indian Hindi Queer cinema. Further, no research has been detected pertaining to the exploration of the Biological Disease HIV+ AIDS echoed in the Indian Hindi Gay motion picture entitled *My Brother Nikhil* (2005) directed by Onir till date anywhere during this review of literature.

Research Gap / Rationale / Justification for the Topic: The relevant research gap detected based on the detailed literature survey conducted is that though some researches regarding the depiction of ‘Biological Ailment’ in many heterosexual movies have been conducted, yet, the issue of the representation of ‘Biological Disease’ in Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ cinema has rarely been pursued as evidenced during this literature review. Further, the trend of portrayal of the ‘Biological Disease called HIV+ AIDS’ in *My Brother Nikhil* (2005), the Indian Hindi language Gay motion picture of *Bollywood* has never been explored at all till date. Hence, it is genuinely justified to inquire the fashion of reflection of the theme of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ in the Indian Hindi Gay moving image *My Brother Nikhil* (2005).

Significance of the Research: The following significances are embodied in this research:

a) This research contributes in the arousal of socio-cultural awareness among the public regarding the causes, problems, complications, danger and remedial measures associated with the disease HIV+ AIDS in order to adopt precaution to minimise morbidity rate.

b) It further creates global consciousness pertaining to the violation of human rights along with the hellish life of the LGBTQ+ community in India, which will contribute to the rescue and survival of this endangered sexo-romantic minority group, eradicating homophobia and socio-cultural stigma.

c) The investigative study conducted pertaining to the reflection of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ in the sample text Indian Hindi Gay motion picture *My Brother Nikhil* uncovers a number of avant-garde ingredients about the issue concerned, which enriches the warehouse of overall Indian heteronormative cinema in general and Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ cinema in specific.

Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Relevance and Scope of the Research: This research paper is a synthesis of multiple approaches, having its scope to be supremely interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary. It encapsulates a spectrum of relevant subjects such as Biological Sciences, Medical Sciences, Nursing, Pharmacology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Zoology, Immunology, HIV+ AIDS, Gender Studies, Queer & Sexuality Studies, Gay Studies, Sociology, Law and Juridical Studies, Human Rights, Film Studies, Hindi Film Industry of *Bollywood*, Cinematic Literature, Journalism & Mass Communication, Cultural Studies, Indology, South Asian Studies, Asian Studies, Oriental Studies, Area Studies etc. along with several other homologous disciplines.

Research Objectives: The paramount objectives of this research paper are as the following:

a) To explore the nature of depiction of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ in Indian Hindi Queer cinema.

b) To diagnose the fashion of illustration of 'Physical Ailment HIV+ AIDS' in Indian Hindi Gay motion pictures.

c) To conduct a critical investigative analysis of the trend of representation of 'Biological Disease HIV+ AIDS' in the Indian Hindi Gay movie *My Brother Nikhil* (2005).

Research Questions: The following research questions are formulated pertaining to this research paper:

a) How is 'Physical Disease HIV+ AIDS' mirrored in Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ motion pictures?

b) How is 'Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS' echoed in Indian Hindi Gay moving images?

c) How is 'Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS' represented in the Indian Hindi Gay silver screen *My Brother Nikhil* (2005)?

Research Hypotheses: The following hypotheses have been postulated regarding this research:

a) The issue of 'Biological Disease' has been manifested in very few Indian Hindi Heterosexual Cinema.

b) The matter of 'Physical Disorder' has been unveiled in extremely few Indian Hindi Queer Motion Pictures.

c) The theme of 'Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS' has not been sculptured in any Indian Hindi Gay Movies except the film *My Brother Nikhil*.

Research Methodology: The following research methodology has been utilised during the entire procedure of this exploration.

a) Sample Selection Method: The sample selection method applied in this research is Controlled Quota Sampling Method. The first quota is Indian cinema at the initial level. The second quota applied in the advanced level is Hindi language movie produced in *Bollywood*. The third quota encompasses the genre of LGBTQ+ cinema in which the selected sample text is a Gay motion picture. The concept of 'Biological Disease called HIV+ AIDS' must be available in the selected sample text Queer movie leading to Controlled Quota Sampling Method.

b) Sample: All total one sample text Third Gender movie has been selected, explored and dissected in this research. The selected sample LGBTQ+ motion picture is an Indian Hindi language Gay film *My Brother Nikhil* directed by Onir and released in 2005. This sample text Rainbow movie has been selected based on the criterion of the adequate availability of the element of 'Biological Disorder based on Ill Medical Condition of Health caused by HIV+ AIDS' in the picture concerned.

Sample Movie: Onir. (2005). *My Brother Nikhil*. Four Front Films. India, Hindi.

c) Design: This is a completely qualitative research based on the analysis of the representation of 'Physical Disorder due to the Ailment HIV+ AIDS' in the sample text Homosexual film concerned. The independent variable of this research is the existence of the element of 'Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS' in the very sample movie. And the dependent variable of the research is the findings pertaining to the portrayal of the element of 'Bodily Illness caused by HIV+ AIDS' in the concerned sample Sexo-romantic Minority motion picture *My Brother Nikhil*.

d) Data Collection: The data are collected through the procedure of content analysis and critical review of the sample Queer film *My Brother Nikhil*.

e) Data Analysis: Data collection is followed by qualitative data analysis in this research work without the use of any Statistical weapons.

f) Results: Results or findings are detected having analysed the collected data.

g) Discussion: Detail discussion of the findings follows the results section.

h) Conclusion: Finally, relevant conclusion sums up this research paper.

Theoretical Framework: Sexuality Theory based on 'Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale' or 'Kinsey Sexuality Scale' postulated by American Biologist and Professor of Zoology, Entomology and Sexology Dr. Alfred Charles Kinsey, the father of sexual revolution, has been applied as the prism of theoretical tool in order to investigate the issue of the reflection of 'Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS' in

the concerned sample film. Dr. Alfred Charles Kinsey composed two books in collaboration with Dr. Wardell Pomeroy and Dr. Clyde Martin. One book is entitled *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) as well as another is named to be *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953). As a result of his research, he invented and advocated the theory of 'Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale', popularly known as 'Kinsey Scale' or 'Kinsey Sexuality Scale'. Kinsey (1998) set the hypothesis that sexuality is fluid and it is subject to change over time. He interviewed and assessed more than 8000 samples of human beings regarding their sexo-romantic feelings, experiences and responses at a given moment in order to describe, determine and label their sexual orientation, based on 7 point rating scale or categories.

As per the notion by Prof. Kinsey's 'Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale' or 'Kinsey Sexuality Scale' or 'Kinsey 7 Point Rating Sexuality Scale', the rating 0 indicates exclusively heterosexual or straight. The rating 1 implies predominantly heterosexual & only incidentally homosexual (bisexual). Rating 2 stands for predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual (bisexual). The rating 3 determines equally heterosexual and homosexual (bisexual). The rating 4 refers to predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual (bisexual). Rating 5 hints predominantly homosexual and only incidentally heterosexual (bisexual). The rating 6 defines exclusively homosexual. And the rating 7 or X means no socio-sexual contacts or reactions (asexual). As a whole, Kinsey (1998) declares that the rating 0 implies completely heterosexual or straight. Ratings between 1 and 5 indicate bisexual or capable of both. The rating 6 determines pure homosexual. And the rating 7 or X stands for asexual or lack of sexual desire. **(Kinsey et al, 1998)**

Research Delimitations: This study is limited up to the content analysis and critical review of the representation of 'Biological Disease HIV+ AIDS' in the sample Indian Hindi Gay silver screen *My Brother Nikhil* only. It does not engulf any other issues other than the representation of 'Physical Disorder based on HIV+ AIDS' in this very sample movie or in any other films.

Fundamental Concepts of Queer / LGBTQ+: The discipline Gender & Sexuality Studies has been sub-divided as Feminist Studies, Mens Studies and Queer & LGBTQ+ Studies. The concept of Sex is biological and body related whereas the idea of Gender is psycho-social entity which is associated with mind and society. There are four basic kinds of Sexuality such as Heterosexuality, Bisexuality, Homosexuality and Asexuality. The abbreviation LGBTQ+ is the various types of Sexo-romantic Orientations as per the norms of Queer & LGBTQ+ Studies.

a) L-Lesbian: A Lesbian individual has a female body or sexual organs and female mind or gender identity, who feels psycho-physical attraction and love towards other individuals having female body or sexual organs and female mind or gender identity. In simple terms, Lesbianism is the love between two females or girls.

b) G-Gay: A Gay or Homosexual possesses a male body or sexual identity and male heart or gender entity, who is romantically & bodily interested in other male bodies or physical organs and male hearts or genders. In simple terms, Gay is the attraction between two males or boys.

c) B-Bisexual: The concept Bisexual is divided to be Male Bisexual and Female Bisexual. A Male Bisexual is a person having male body and male heart, who is sexo-romantically interested in other male physiques and male minds as well as other female bodies and female hearts equally. In other words, a boy loves both boy and girl equally. On the other hand, a Female Bisexual is such a person with female sexual organs and female feelings, who is mentally & bodily attracted towards other female bodies and female hearts as well as other male sexes and male genders in equal sense. In simple words, a girl loves both boy and girl equally.

d) T-Transgender / Transsexual: Transgender is sub-divided into Transman and Transwoman. A Transman is an individual with a female body and a male mind whereas a Transwoman is a person having a male physique and a female heart. The mind or heart does not support the body or physical organs in case of Transgender people and remain opposite. The Transgender people who change their

sexual organs through medical surgery and acquire a matching body desired by their heart are labeled as Transsexual.

e) **Q-Queer / Questioning:** Queer is an umbrella term engulfing all the categories of Sexo-romantic Orientations. The term Questioning implies such a person who remains confused regarding own sexual orientation and keeps Questioning own gender identity.

Further, there are three basic types of Sexo-romantic Roles as per Queer & LGBTQ+ Studies such as Top / Butch, Bottom / Femme and Versatile. Top implies husband role, Bottom stands for wife role as well as Versatile indicates both husband and wife roles in turns.

Genetic Root of Biological Sex & Psycho-social Gender: The body or sexual organs or biological sex of an individual is determined by genetic factors. Normally, a male body is consisted of 46 chromosomes in each cell, including an X chromosome and a Y chromosome, as $X+Y=XY$. Likewise, a female body is formed with 46 chromosomes in each cell, including two X chromosomes, as $X+X=XX$. The Y chromosome is dominant in a male body and the X chromosome is dominant in a female body. A male body possesses higher levels of testosterone, whereas a female body contains higher levels of estrogen and progesterone.

Some biological males are born with two or three X chromosomes, as $X+X+Y=XXY$ or $X+X+X+Y=XXXY$ having 47 or 48 chromosomes in each cell. This is known as 47, XXY Syndrome or Klinefelter Syndrome (KS). It occurs in 1 out of every 500 to 1,000 biological males.

Again, some biological males are born with one X chromosome and two Y chromosomes, as $X+Y+Y=XYY$ having 47 chromosomes in each cell. This condition is also known as Jacob's Syndrome, XYY Karyotype, or YY Syndrome. According to the National Institutes of Health based in America, XYY Syndrome occurs in 1 out of every 1,000 biological males.

On the other hand, some biological females are born with a Y chromosome along with X chromosome in each cell. Moreover, some individuals are born with a mixture of female and male organs, who are termed as intersex or she-male. Hence, a 'Third Gender' exists, besides male and female genders.

Queer or LGBTQ+ Cinema: Queer or LGBTQ+ Cinema is the category of movies in which the central figures or protagonists belong to any of the types of the Sexo-romantic Orientations such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender / Transsexual, Intersex / She-Male / Eunuch, Queer / Questioning, Pansexual / Omnisexual, Asexual, Sexually Fluid and Plus.

Fundamental Concept of HIV+ AIDS: The abbreviation HIV+ implies Human Immunodeficiency Virus Positive as well as the acronym AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. Untreated HIV Positive patients develop the most advanced stage of the disease called AIDS after 8 to 10 years. HIV+ weakens the immune system of the body to fight with any disease and the infected patients get an easy prey of other diseases.

"HIV is spread from the body fluids of an infected person, including blood, breast milk, semen and vaginal fluids. It is not spread by kisses, hugs or sharing food. It can also spread from a mother to her baby." --- (World Health Organisation)

The signs and symptoms of HIV+ are influenza-like illness such as fever, headache, rash, sore throat etc. Moreover, swollen lymph nodes, weight loss, fever, diarrhea, cough etc. may also occur. Though, no cure has been invented for HIV+ AIDS, yet some preventive treatments are available to slow down the process. Some such measures include antiretroviral drugs (ARVs), including oral PrEP and long acting products, dapivirine vaginal rings, injectable long acting cabotegravir etc.

Brief Summary of the Indian Hindi Gay Movie *My Brother Nikhil* (2005): "*My Brother Nikhil* directed by debutant Onir loosely based on the life of one of the first victims of AIDS in the Indian state of Goa in the 1980s, it recalls the severe social stigma that surrounds the disease. Nikhil is a state champion swimmer who is cast out by his parents, arrested and put into solitary confinement in a dirty sanitarium under the law of the country at the time. It is only with the help of his sister and gay partner

that he fights the law, creating awareness and public sympathy for his cause in the process.” --- (Pandve H.T., 2023)

The Indian Hindi Gay motion picture of *Bollywood My Brother Nikhil* (2005) directed by Onir sings the pathetic saga and sufferings of a Gay HIV+ AIDS patient named Nikhil Kapoor (Actor Sanjay Suri) in Goa, India between 1986 and 1994. Nikhil is a Punjabi Gay Bottom job holder young man along with being a successful swimmer as well, having his strict and over controlling father Navin Kapoor (Actor Victor Banerjee), ultra modern mother Anita Rosario Kapoor (Actress Lilette Dubey) with Portuguese origin and extremely caring elder sister Anamika Kapoor (Actress Juhi Chawla) who is a school teacher. On the other hand, Nigel D’Costa (Actor Purab Kohli) is the Gay Top boy friend of Nikhil who happens to be a research scholar in Institute of Oceanography located in Goa, whose Goan parents reside in Dubai. Nikhil’s parents try to fix his wedding with Leena Gomes (Actress Dipannita Sharma) who too keeps attaching and annoying him frequently.

Suddenly, the swimming team doctor Dr. Mukherjee detects that Nikhil is infected with HIV positive, as a consequence of which he has been abandoned by all his swimming mates, friends, neighbours, Leena, father and even his mother who get him out of their house. His entire family has been avoided by the common public of Goa both in the public and private places. As a result of which Nikhil’s parents shift to Bombay in order to get rid of the stigma associated with the disease HIV+ AIDS. During such a critical crisis Nikhil’s elder sister Anamika, her boy friend Sam Fernandes (Actor Gautam Kapoor) and Nikhil’s boy friend Nigel keep supporting him who has been sheltered at Nigel’s home. As per Goa Public Health Act, Goa police arrest Nikhil and put him in an extremely dirty and deserted isolation centre like an animal with inhuman treatment, from where a lady Advocate rescues him through legal battle in the court. All the people maintaining contact with Nikhil have been forced to undergo HIV test resulting HIV negative.

Nikhil starts residing with his boy friend Nigel who nurses him with care. Nikhil loses his job and starts teaching music to children along with practicing painting. Nigel, Anamika and Sam establish an NGO named ‘People Positive’ supporting the HIV+ patients including Nikhil who wins the support of his school principal as well. In the mean time, Anamika engages in court marriage with Sam and Nikhil has been embraced by his parents again. Gradually, Nikhil’s HIV+ progresses to AIDS as a consequence of which he breaths his last at the lap of his Gay Top lover Nigel in a dawn. Their homosexual relationship is known to Anamika and Sam only, without the knowledge of their parents. Nikhil’s parents start considering Nigel as their own son after the demise of Nikhil due to HIV+ AIDS. The entire story has been narrated in the fashion of several flash back sequences from the perspective of Anamika, the elder sister of Nikhil for which it has been entitled as *‘My Brother Nikhil’*.

Results:

Representation of Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS in the Indian Hindi Gay Movie *My Brother Nikhil* (2005): “Raising awareness about the lives of people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS without sounding preachy is a tall task that a handful of Indian filmmakers have managed to pull off. On World AIDS Day, we take a look at five films and one anthology that have dealt with the subject with great sensitivity and set a benchmark.” --- (Niyogi A., 2022)

The theme of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ or ‘Physical Disease HIV+ AIDS’ has been perfectly manifested in the Hindi language Indian Gay motion picture entitled *My Brother Nikhil* (2005) directed by Onir. The ‘Biological Malady’ mirrored in this movie is ‘HIV Positive AIDS’. The protagonist of the moving image Nikhil Kapoor, a Gay Bottom state level swimming champion suffers from HIV positive and finally becomes a prey of AIDS leading to his demise.

a) HIV+ AIDS as ‘GRID’ & ‘Gay Plague’: “When Aids came to international attention following the first reports in the US media in mid-1981, it was identified as a disease affecting

homosexual men, initially named GRID – Gay-related immune deficiency – and would be ghettoised as a ‘gay plague’ for most of the 1980s.” --- (McCallum S., 2021)

The protagonist of this movie *My Brother Nikhil* is a victim of HIV positive AIDS. He is surrounded by beautiful and glamorous girls all the time in the club as an impact of his being the state level swimming champion. But, the fact is that Nikhil has never displayed his genuine romantic interest in girls at all. He remains absent minded even if in the company of attractive females. Nikhil’s close female friend Leena, who studied in the United States of America truly loves him from their childhood and kisses him forcefully at his residence. But, Nikhil feels uneasy with Leena’s romantic intimacy and tries to avoid her company. Nikhil’s parents force him to marry Leena. But, he rejects Leena’s wedding proposal as well. All these incidents clearly prove that Nikhil is not at all interested in biologically female bodies and psychologically female hearts.

As per the Sexuality Theory based on ‘Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale’, popularly known as ‘Kinsey Scale’ or ‘Kinsey 7 Point Sexuality Scale’ postulated and advocated by Dr. Alfred Charles Kinsey in collaboration with Dr. Wardell Pomeroy and Dr. Clyde Martin, the rating scale point of Nikhil is 6, which indicates exclusive homosexuality. Hence, Nikhil is a completely Gay character according to ‘Kinsey 7 Point Sexuality Scale’. Further, it may be predicted that he plays the Bottom or wife role in their homosexual love relationship with his boy friend Nigel. As a result of his homosexuality, some constables of Goa police confuse that Nikhil might have contacted HIV positive through his sexual intimacy with boys, as they misunderstand that HIV positive is a homosexual disease.

b) First Detection of HIV+ Disease: Dr. Mukherjee, the swimming team doctor enquires Nikhil about his medical history all of a sudden. The doctor asks Nikhil regarding any taking of blood by him, any unsafe sex may be with any prostitute, any intravenous medicine after his recent food poisoning etc. To which Nikhil lies that he engaged in sex with girl friends a few times. Nikhil receives a hint that there is some problem in his blood. But, the disease is not confirmed at first keeping the viewers in suspense.

c) Gradual Disclosure of HIV+ Disease: Without disclosing his HIV positive disease, the swimming instructor advises Nikhil to take a break. He is not selected to join a swimming event in Calcutta even if he is in good form. The fellow swimmers get out of the swimming pool in fear of getting infected as soon as Nikhil jumps in the water. Besides, the waiter of the club canteen informs Nikhil’s parents to leave the canteen immediately as a result of the stigma attached with HIV+ AIDS. All in Goa know that Nikhil is HIV positive except him and his family.

d) Rejection of HIV+ Patient by Public and Parents: Nikhil’s father beats him severely leading to bleeding for being HIV positive, which has been informed by the waiter of the club canteen. As a consequence of his HIV infection, his parents disown him along with getting him out of the home in extreme disgust.

e) Shelter of HIV+ Patient at his Gay Boy Friend’s Place: Nikhil takes shelter at Nigel's home where he does medical dressing of Nikhil's bleeding lips. But Nigel is not infected even if he touches Nikhil's contaminated blood as Nigel is not wounded. This proves that HIV can transmit through wounded skins.

Moreover, Nigel has never been discovered in the romantic company with any girls throughout the moving image at all, even if he is a handsome looking boy. He happens to be the boy friend of Nikhil, who suffers from sexo-romantic jealousy due to Leena’s love interest in Nikhil. Nigel keeps quarrelling with Nikhil for his double standard life. Nikhil is neither able to prohibit Leena from kissing him, nor is he able to deny his over controlling father’s proposal of Nikhil’s marriage with Leena. As a consequence of which, a romantic fight occurs between the homosexual partners out of insecurity.

Based on all these evidences, it has been confirmed that the ‘Kinsey Rating Scale Point’ of Nigel is also 6, which determines him to be a pure homosexual man as per the norms indicated by ‘Heterosexual-Homosexual Rating Scale’ prescribed by Dr. Alfred Charles Kinsey, Dr. Wardell Pomeroy and Dr. Clyde Martin in their book entitled *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948). Besides, Nigel is predicted to be a Gay Top partner with Nikhil. Finally, Nikhil is compelled to seek shelter at his Gay boy friend Nigel’s home as he has been got out of his family by his parents.

f) Arrest of HIV+ Patient by Police: Goa police arrest Nikhil for being HIV positive according to Goa Public Health Act. Police enquire him the list of girls with whom he enjoyed physical intimacy as a benefit of being a state level swimming champion earlier. He is not allowed to touch any furniture at the police station including the landline telephone. Nikhil is sent to a govt. hospital for medical check-up escorted by four police constables so that he cannot escape. The police constables are scared of Nikhil as their lives are also in danger of getting infected. They torture him psychologically that he should be shot by gun to death as he enjoyed his sexual life with girls or may be with boys and wasting the govt. fund at present.

g) Humiliation of HIV+ Patient by Medical Staff of Hospital: The nurses and doctors at the hospital behave with Nikhil as if he is an untouchable or animal. They pass insulting negative comments regarding the character and sexual life of Nikhil. They opine that this disease was never found in Goa earlier except in Nikhil. Further, all the other patients in the hospital are scared due to HIV phobia.

“As a result, the earliest representations of AIDS in television news programs focused almost exclusively on gay men, and shortly thereafter intravenous drug users, as “guilty villains” in the emergent AIDS crisis, with a visual emphasis on emaciated individuals covered with Kaposi’s sarcoma lesions.” --- (Hart Kylo-Patrick R., 2019)

h) Quarantine of HIV+ Patient: The Goa administration along with the doctors quarantine Nikhil in a sanitarium like a criminal, which is an old unhygienic and extremely dirty hospital room without any safe drinking water facility deserted for the last two years with mouse and other creatures. He drinks some water from the dirty tap out of thirst and vomits immediately. The entire scenario of quarantine is extremely hellish, clearly violating universal human rights.

“One of the most disturbing episodes in the film was lifted from real life. Just as Nikhil is quarantined in the film, the first Indian to be diagnosed with H.I.V., a young man in Goa named Dominic D'Souza, was similarly confined and isolated in the late 1980's. In other words, as Mr. Suri noted, "it took 15 years" to represent that indignity on screen.” --- (Sengupta S., 2005)

i) Difficulty in Self Acceptance of HIV+ Disease by Victim Patient: Nikhil does not gather his courage to accept his horrible condition of being a HIV positive patient and does not dare to inform about his disease to his Gay Top boy friend Nigel either. It is only Anamika that informs Nigel about Nikhil’s contamination of HIV virus. She further admonishes Nigel to undergo a HIV test in Bombay, as Nigel had physical romantic affairs with Nikhil as they are a Gay couple. But, it is not made clear how Anamika comes to know about Nikhil and Nigel's homosexual relationship, whereas she mistakes Leena’s kiss with Nikhil to be a heterosexual romance earlier.

j) Mandatory HIV Test for All in Contact with HIV+ Patient: The Govt. of Goa gets all the people under go compulsory HIV test whosoever is associated with Nikhil. HIV positive has nothing to do with homosexuality as Nikhil’s boy friend Nigel is detected to be HIV negative.

k) Close Female Friend’s Reaction regarding HIV+ Patient: Nikhil's friends criticise that he has ruined the life of Leena, who is also avoided by the public of Goa as she happens to be his so called girl friend, though Nikhil is not at all interested in her romantically. Leena shifts from Goa to Bombay due to public pressure three days after the arrest of Nikhil. She is tested to be HIV negative even though she kissed him, which proves that HIV is not infected through lip kiss.

l) Legal Battle for HIV+ Patient: Anamika, Nigel and Sam hunt for a lawyer with much difficulty to fight the case in support of Nikhil regarding the violation of human rights as he is quarantined in an unhygienic ambience. The lady advocate admonishes that they need public sympathy for Nikhil in order to win the case that any one may be a HIV positive. He is a state swimming champion and not a criminal. Nikhil requests the advocate that she should fight not only for him but for all the HIV positive patients, who have the right to live their life happily, which is also a constitutional right. Finally, Indian Health Organisation gets ready to support Nikhil.

m) Public Awareness Campaign for HIV+ Patient: Anamika, Nigel and Sam engage in public awareness campaign and succeed in gathering public support to some extent. Nikhil's school principal supports the case and most of the people are convinced by him to support Nikhil's pathetic condition. Finally, Nikhil is released from his arrested quarantine after three months.

n) Lack of Freedom and Employment of HIV+ Patient: Nikhil's freedom is so much curtailed that he needs court permission to get out of his house. His employer gets him out from his company job due to his HIV positive medical condition, as the company staff fear Nikhil. But, on the contrary, Nikhil informs his boss that actually Nikhil should fear them as he may be infected from them leading to his death.

o) Public Protest against HIV+ Patient: Some aggressive public destroy the property of Nigel's house and pelt stone at Anamika's residence at night as a protest against HIV positive patient, for which Anamika is compelled to shift to Nigel's place immediately.

p) NGO for HIV+ Patient: Nikhil, Anamika, Nigel and Sam form an NGO named 'People Positive' to support HIV positive patients, by collecting information related to HIV+ AIDS from all over the world. Besides, Nikhil starts to teach music to some children as well along with absorbing in painting.

q) Fear of the Relatives regarding HIV+ Patient's Death: Nikhil's elder sister Anamika gets depressed due to the fear of losing her dearest younger brother Nikhil for being HIV positive. She realises the humiliation Nikhil went through having read his diary after his demise.

r) Death of HIV+ Patient: From mid 1992, Nikhil's health condition deteriorates quickly as his HIV positive progresses to the last stage called AIDS. He has been embraced by his parents again and is shifted to his own residence. All the family members surround him at his last stage of HIV+ AIDS. Then, suddenly one morning, Nikhil dies out of HIV+ AIDS while accompanied by Nigel. After the demise of Nikhil, the rest continue working for their NGO 'People Positive' in support of HIV+ AIDS patients.

s) HIV+ AIDS as an Incurable Disease: The disease reflected in the Indian Hindi Gay film *My Brother Nikhil* is HIV+ AIDS which is not a curable ailment without any remedy.

t) Talented HIV+ Patient: The protagonist Nikhil in the movie *My Brother Nikhil* is a HIV+ AIDS patient. He is a state level swimming champion, creative painter with aesthetic sense and musician who teaches Goan music to children as well.

u) Romantically Engaged HIV+ Patient: In the movie *My Brother Nikhil*, HIV+ patient Gay Bottom protagonist Nikhil is romantically engaged with his Gay Top boy friend Nigel. Besides, Nikhil has always been surrounded by beautiful girls in the club as he has the glamour factor of being the state level swimming champion. Even though he is not at all interested in Leena from romantic perspective, yet Leena keeps on disturbing him with her undesired over attachment and forceful lip kiss.

“The intimacy of *It's a Sin* reminds the viewer that the 1980s is so recent it can barely be considered history, and that AIDS remains an ongoing and often underreported pandemic today.”

--- (Wilson V., 2023)

Discussion: The issue of HIV+ AIDS as a ‘Biological Malady’ has been meticulously explored and screened in the sample motion picture concerned. From the perspective of the achievement of the desired Objectives, all the Objectives have been fulfilled as expected. Then, the first research question of this research paper is “How is ‘Physical Disease HIV+ AIDS’ mirrored in Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ motion pictures?”. The response to the first research question pertaining to this research paper has been discovered that the ‘Physical Disease HIV+ AIDS’ has never been mirrored in any of the Indian Hindi LGBTQ+ motion pictures till date except in the film *My Brother Nikhil*. Next, the second research question is “How is ‘Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS’ echoed in Indian Hindi Gay moving images?”. And the reply to the second research question is that no Indian Hindi Gay moving image has ever encapsulated the issue of ‘Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS’ at all except the movie *My Brother Nikhil*. Finally, the third research question is “How is ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ represented in the Indian Hindi Gay silver screen *My Brother Nikhil* (2005)?”. The answer to the third research question has been found that the element of ‘Biological Malady HIV+ AIDS’ has been epitomised so perfectly and extensively in such an extent in the Gay motion picture *My Brother Nikhil* that the issue of homosexuality between Nikhil and Nigel has been dominated by the canopy of HIV+ AIDS disease, as evidenced in the article written by Sengupta S. (2005) published in The New York Times on April 6, 2005.

“‘It's not advocating anything, it's not propaganda, it's just another love story,” Onir said of his film. “I've had old people coming up to me. They don't say gay. They say '*Unka friendship accha dekha hay.*’” (“Their friendship is well portrayed.”) --- (Sengupta S., 2005)

Further, this research supports the first hypothesis that “The issue of ‘Biological Disease’ has been manifested in very few Indian Hindi Heterosexual Cinema”. Then, the second hypothesis of this study has again been proved to be true that “The matter of ‘Physical Disorder’ has been unveiled in extremely few Indian Hindi Queer Motion Pictures”. The ‘Biological Diseases named Cerebral Palsy and Colon Cancer’ have been focused in the Indian Hindi Lesbian and Female Bisexual movie entitled *Margarita with a Straw* (2014) directed by Shonali Bose. The female protagonist Laila, a Female Bisexual student is a patient of Cerebral Palsy and her Maharashtrian mother Shubhangini encounters demise due to Colon Cancer in this very silver screen. Finally, the third hypothesis “The theme of ‘Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS’ has not been sculptured in any Indian Hindi Gay Movies except the film *My Brother Nikhil*” has also been supported by this investigation. *My Brother Nikhil* is the only Hindi language Gay film in India which engulfs ‘Medical Condition of HIV+ AIDS’.

Conclusion: To sum up, it has been observed through this research that the disease ‘HIV+ AIDS’ as ‘Biological Malady’ has been represented in the Hindi language Indian Gay motion picture entitled *My Brother Nikhil* (2005) which is directed by Onir. Both Nikhil and Nigel possess point 6 as exclusively homosexual, according to ‘Kinsey Sexuality Rating Scale’ by Prof. Alfred Charles Kinsey and his team. The swimming team doctor detects HIV+ infection in the Gay Bottom swimmer protagonist Nikhil at first. The HIV+ patient Nikhil and his family have been avoided by all in Goa. Nikhil has been disowned and got out from his home even by his parents due to his HIV+ infection. Goa police arrest Nikhil for being HIV positive according to Goa Public Health Act and put him in quarantine in a dirty and unhygienic sanitarium like criminals and animals. The Govt. of Goa gets all the people under go compulsory HIV test whosoever is associated with Nikhil resulting all to be HIV negative.

Nikhil's so called girl friend Leena shifts from Goa to Bombay (Mumbai) due to public humiliation and pressure. Nikhil requests a lady advocate to fight the legal battle not only for him but for all the HIV positive patients. Anamika, Nigel and Sam engage in public awareness campaign in support of Nikhil leading to his release from the arrested quarantine after three months. Nikhil lacks freedom and employment having infected with HIV+. The public of Goa protest against HIV+ supporters like Nigel and Anamika by pelting stones to their residences at night. They establish an

NGO named 'People Positive' to support HIV positive patients. Nikhil's parents accept him again and he faces his death at the lap of his Gay Top boy friend Nigel at last, as his HIV+ transforms to the last stage called AIDS. Thus, the issue of Biological Disease called HIV+ AIDS has been so dominantly manifested in the Indian Hindi Gay silver screen *My Brother Nikhil* (2005) through the character of Nikhil Kapoor that even the theme of homosexuality in this very Gay motion picture has been superseded by the subject of HIV+ AIDS to be the central theme. Hence, this film may be labeled to be more a 'Diseased Cinema' rather than a 'Gay Cinema'.

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