

Breaking The Stigma: A Study of Bipolar Disorder in Preethi Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It*

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 13

Special Issue: 2

Month: March

Year: 2026

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Citation:

B, Roja, and Pankayar Chelvi S. "Breaking The Stigma: A Study of Bipolar Disorder in Preethi Shenoy's *Life Is What You Make It*." *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 13, no. S2, 2026, pp. 8–10.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v13iS2-Mar.10221>

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Abstract

The study named "Breaking the Stigma: An Analysis of Bipolar Disorder in Preeti Shenoy's *Life is What You Make It*" explores how the narrative depicts the challenges of mental health, especially bipolar disorder, through the experiences of its main character, Ankita Sharma. The story highlights the emotional and psychological challenges faced by those with bipolar disease while also stressing the value of friends, family, and medical support in the recovery process. Through Ankita's personal battle with social expectations, the author emphasizes the value of empathy, comprehension, and timely help. The research highlights how literature can serve as an impactful tool to lessen stigma related to mental health and foster hope in readers. In the end, the novel emphasizes that mental illness does not determine a person's fate, and with perseverance and assistance, life can truly be shaped by one's efforts.

Keywords: Bipolar Disorder, Perseverance, Emphasising, Foster, Social Expectations.

The stigma attached to psychological problems is increasingly being addressed by authors, making mental health a central theme in modern literature. Preeti Shenoy tells the moving story of Ankita Sharma, a young lady battling bipolar disease while juggling her own goals and the demands of society, in her book *Life is What You Make It*. This research aims to examine how Shenoy depicts bipolar disorder, the obstacles posed by stigma, and the significance of resilience in conquering mental illness.

The goals of this research are diverse, focusing on a comprehensive analysis of Preeti Shenoy's depiction of bipolar disorder in her book "Life is What You Make It". This study intends to evaluate how the author sensitively and authentically represents the complexities of Ankita's mental health challenges, illuminating the nuances of living with bipolar disorder. Additionally, by examining how societal expectations and demands exacerbate Ankita's distress and influence her path to recovery, this study aims to investigate the impact of social stigma on her experience. Additionally, this study will show the critical impact that Ankita's family, relationships, and medical

intervention played in her rehabilitation, emphasizing the importance of a supportive environment in overcoming mental health challenges. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the novel's contribution to raising mental health awareness, dispelling myths, and encouraging compassion and understanding for those who suffer from bipolar disorder.

Ankita's mental health issues are sensitively and authentically depicted. Her mood swings, depressive episodes, and intervals of intense energy are consistent with the clinical signs of bipolar illness. Shenoy depicts these traits as essential components of her character's complex reality rather than merely as flaws. The story blatantly reflects Indian society's propensity to handle mental illness with shame and quiet. The cultural tendency to avoid having candid discussions about psychological diseases is reflected in Ankita's initial refusal to accept her condition and her family's hesitation. Her distress is increased by this stigma, making it more difficult for her to get help.

Ankita's road to recovery serves as a reminder of the value of support systems. Even though she is constrained by society norms, her healing process is ultimately aided by her loved ones' acceptance. Shenoy emphasizes that psychological assistance is just as vital as medical care. The story emphasizes that a person's destiny is not determined by their mental disorder. Ankita rebuilds her life with the help of counselling, medicine, and her own fortitude. This transformation captures the key idea, which is that one's actions truly shape one's life.

Ankita's increasing self-awareness emerges as a vital element in her recovery, allowing her to identify her symptoms and seek assistance. Shenoy urges readers to get a deeper understanding of their own feelings and behaviours by highlighting the significance of self-awareness in managing mental health through Ankita's experience. Ankita's story highlights the value of professional support and therapy in bipolar disease management, underscoring the need to consult a specialist. Ankita's contacts with her therapist and Shenoy's portrayal of therapy sessions highlight the value of expert assistance in dealing with mental health issues. By depicting bipolar disease as a treatable condition that requires support and therapy, Shenoy challenges common notions that mental illness equals to weakness.

Shenoy humanizes the experience of having bipolar disease by highlighting Ankita's struggles and triumphs, which challenges readers' preconceived notions. Throughout the story, Ankita's struggles and triumphs are beautifully depicted. Shenoy's depiction of Ankita's experiences emphasizes how crucial it is to provide a safe space where people feel comfortable talking about their mental health concerns. Ankita's interactions highlight the value of a strong support network by demonstrating the impact of encouraging and nonjudgmental connections on mental health rehabilitation.

"Life is What You Make It" is a depiction of bipolar disease has important ramifications for mental health awareness. Shenoy gives a realistic and accessible account of dealing with mental illness through Ankita's narrative. The intricacies of mental health and the significance of empathy and support can be better understood by readers thanks to this portrayal. Preeti Shenoy's *Life is What You Make It* is a significant story that challenges the stigma around mental health, going beyond being just a love story or a young romance. Shenoy is essential in shattering preconceptions and promoting empathy and understanding by depicting the facts of bipolar disease in an accessible way. In the end, the book encourages readers to acknowledge treatment, acceptance, and resilience as crucial elements in conquering psychological obstacles.

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