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Impact of Westernisation on Indian Culture in Ravinder Singh's *Can Love happen twice?*

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Abstract

Impact of Westernisation on Indian Culture in Ravinder Singh's *Can Love happen twice?* Indian culture is a mix of diversities in customs, rituals, traditions, language, etc., that vary from region to region within the country. It is one of the oldest and a combination of various cultures. On the other hand, Western Culture is quite advanced and open. The effect of Western Culture is greatly seen in our customs, traditions, social and moral behaviour, and our love and respect for others. Ravinder Singh is a Bestselling Indian author. *Can Love happen twice?* is his second book. Ravin had a tragic love story in the past, wherein his first girlfriend, Khushi, had lost her life just before their engagement. To escape the pain, Ravin writes a book named *I too had a Love Story in* which he brings Khushi and her memories alive, which is a hit. In his second novel, Ravin goes to Belgium for an official purpose; there, Simar enters his life to ignite the second love story of his life. The way Ravin adopts Belgium and how he enjoys every moment shows that he is determined to live better and move ahead from his dark past life experiences. Soon, the love story of Ravin and Simar takes place in Belgium, Brussels.

Ravinder Singh has beautifully portrayed the city, its culture and the most beautiful locations in *Can Love happen twice*? Chandigarh is another part of this novel where the story begins and ends. Like Brussels, Ravinder Singh has shown various emotions attached to his city. Ravinder Singh in *Can Love happen twice?* Visits foreign countries, Belgium, respectively, for official purposes, but never desired to settle in a foreign country. When Ravin returns to India from Belgium, he is filled with joy that he is back in his own country, but he never knows the twist of his upcoming determined fate. The paper focuses on how Ravinder Singh, in the novel *Can Love happen twice?* Portrays how one adapts to Western culture for the sake of work, later for a love relationship, and in the end, explores the value of his traditions. Ravin breaks up his love relationship. The current paper shows how Western culture varies from our Indian Culture in the eyes of Ravinder Singh.

Keywords

Cultural differences, Social Norms, Lifestyle, Westernisation, Adaptation, Traditional values

Introduction

Can Love happen twice? is a Novel written by Bestselling Indian Author Ravinder Singh. It is a sequel to his first novel, named *"I too had a Love Story"* (2008). The book explores the themes of love, loss, and second chances in relationships. Ravinder Singh was born on February 4 1982, in Kolkata. Aside from being a writer, Ravinder wore multiple hats – a software engineer, marketing expert, entrepreneur, and digital creator. Despite his Punjabi roots, he spent a significant part of his

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teenage years in eastern India. Writing became his solace after losing his girlfriend, and he poured his love story into his first book, "I Too Had a Love Story," published in 2008. During the book launch, he expressed this sentiment. *"After the unfortunate incident, I was looking for a reason to live. And I started to pen down the moments I had been through. I can't deny that. I had to go back in time, close my eyes, and relive the moments, tears rolled down, and I wrote the words.*" Publishing his debut autobiographical novel, *"I Too Had a Love Story,* presented challenges for Ravinder Singh. Initially released by Srishti Publishers in 2008, it garnered a positive reader response. In 2012, Penguin India republished the book. Transitioning from the IT sector, Ravinder embraced full-time writing in 2013. His subsequent novels include *"Can Love happen twice?"* (2011), *"Your Dreams Are Mine Now"* (2014), and *"The Belated Bachelor Party"* (2019). Ravinder Singh's writing style is often known for its simplicity and emotional depth, which makes the readers explore their own personal experiences in life. Most of Ravinder Singh's readers are youth and Adults. Ravinder Singh inspires his readers through his personal life experiences and never fails to connect with his readers by the hook of a relatable approach. Ravinder Singh's books have been best sellers in India, which made him a prominent figure in contemporary Indian Literature. Ravinder Singh's writing often reflects Indian culture, especially about the middle-class Indian Families and their lifestyle. His books portray the complexities of Indian Family structures, values, and the significance of love and relationships. Can *Love happen twice?* Ravinder Singh primarily focuses on his own personal love story, and it also provides an understanding of the dynamics of modern Indian families and the influence of cultural norms on relationships. This Research paper analyses the Influence of Westernisation on Indian culture as depicted in the second novel of Ravinder Singh's, *Can Love happen twice?* This novel is set in the contemporary environment; Ravinder Singh's novel unravels the subtle interplay between love, Tradition, and Western cultural influences. Ravinder Singh's duel with Tradition and contemporary ideals epitomises the struggle of many modern Indians as they navigate the complex landscape of global cultural trends. One cannot ignore the significant influence westernisation has on the world, especially cultures steeped in Tradition like India. *Can Love happen twice?* Captures the disjuncture, the simmering tension between the two contrasting cultures until they culminate in a vivid rendition of modernisation's impact on traditional societies. Ravinder Singh had a sad background with his first girlfriend, Khushi, who passed away shortly before they were engaged. In an attempt to escape the suffering, Ravinder Singh published his debut novel, *I Too Had a Love Story*, in which he revives Khushi's memories. In his second novel, *Can Love happen twice?* Ravin goes to Belgium on an official purpose; Simar joins his life there and starts his second love tale. Ravin's adoption of Belgium and his joyful embrace of each moment demonstrate his will to improve his life and get past his difficult previous experiences. Brussels, Belgium, will soon play host to Ravin and Simar's love tale. In *Can Love happen twice?* Ravinder Singh captures the city, its people, and some of the most breathtaking settings with exquisite detail. Another section of this book where the tale starts and concludes is Chandigarh. Like Brussels, Ravinder Singh has shown various emotions attached to his city. Ravinder Singh in *Can Love happen twice?* Visits foreign countries, Belgium, for official purposes, but never desired to settle in Foreign. When Ravin returns to India from Belgium, he is filled with

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Approach

According to the Russian psychologist and creator of sociocultural theory, Vygotsky (1978), social and cultural contact is the foundation of human development and learning. To put it another way, people's mental powers are influenced by their social interactions and the societies in which they live. The main classification of sociocultural theory is as a developmental theory. It focuses on how individuals' behaviours evolve, especially during the stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. The idea, which is especially well-respected in the field of applied linguistics, seeks to explain higher-order thinking, language, and cognitive processes that are not immediately evident and have implications for education in general.

An area of psychology that is always evolving examines how culture shapes an individual's development: sociocultural theory. Not only may this idea be used in socialising and play contexts, but it has gained more traction since the 1990s1. The higher-order functions of the brain are developed, according to psychologist Lev Vygotsky, through peer pressure, parents, and society as a whole. Vygotsky thought that cultural variations arise because social interaction is necessary for human development. Sociocultural theory posits the significance of social interactions in psychological development. It asserts that human learning is fundamentally a social endeavour, influenced by interactions with those deemed "more proficient." This perspective highlights the influential role of mentor-like figures, such as parents and teachers, in directing psychological growth. Participating in cultural events and engaging with social groups can occasionally aid in expressing personal ideals and opinions. While sociocultural theory acknowledges the impact of social attitudes on learning, it primarily focuses on how peers and mentors shape individual learning.

This theory originates from the work of psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who attributed the development of higher-order functions to parents, caregivers, peers, and overall culture. Vygotsky emphasised the role of social interaction in learning, contending that information is integrated at the individual level following interaction. He proposed that children are born with basic biological constraints on their minds, and each culture provides "tools of intellectual adaptation." These tools, like memory strategies or rote memorisation, enable children to adapt their abilities to the culture they inhabit. Vygotsky's ideas, initially overshadowed by contemporaries like Freud and Piaget due to his early death and suppression of his work, have gained prominence in areas like child development, cognitive psychology, and education as his work became more widely known.

Sociocultural theory delves into the impact of social interactions on personal development. When applied to Ravinder Singh's *Can Love happen twice?* The novel entails scrutinising how societal influences, cultural norms, and interpersonal connections influence the emotional evolution and comprehension of love for the characters. By dissecting the character’s interactions within socio-cultural dynamics, the readers gain profound insights into the intricate nature of love. This

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analysis unveils the wider influence of social factors, unveiling their role in shaping personal relationships depicted in the novel. In addition, the clash between the main characters Ravin and Simar can be analysed through a socio-cultural perspective, which reveals that their interactions are influenced by societal norms, cultural expectations, and the broader social environment. Ravin's behaviours and expectations, which were rooted in his upbringing and cultural background, are different from Simar's character due to her unique set of influences of Western culture and modern Indian Family values. The conflict between them can be attributed to these variations in their socio-cultural backgrounds, and shaping their perceptions of love and relationships. Sociocultural theory, which underscores how individuals learn and develop through social interactions, provides a framework for understanding the source of their conflict. The conflict between Ravin and Simar may reflect the cultural influences that have shaped their beliefs and behaviours. The novel serves as a platform to delve into how societal expectations and cultural intricacies contribute to the intricacies of their relationship, within a socio-cultural context.

Can Love happen twice? Serves as an insightful representation of the Western impact on Modern India. The novel lucidly portrays facets of Westernisation impacting language preferences, lifestyles, and perceptions of relationships, suggesting a paradigm shift in the urban Indian psyche. Even as the allure of Western modernity captivates the newer generations, the deep-rooted traditional Indian ethos in them continues to stir a poignant cultural tension, which is a paradox that acts as the essence of a globalising society. *Can Love happen twice?* Exhibits radical lifestyle changes under the influence of Westernisation. A salient theme brought through the novel is the appeal of Western fashion, food, and recreational choices among youngsters. The novel portrays westernisation as a force that disrupts traditional Indian relationships. The protagonist, after experiencing heartbreak, tries to find solace in a new relationship. However, the influence of Westernisation is evident in the way relationships are depicted. The emphasis on individual happiness and personal fulfilment, rather than the collective well-being of the family or community, is a departure from traditional Indian values. This shift can be seen as a reflection of the impact of Western ideals of love and romance on Indian culture. Ravin and Simar in *Can Love happen twice?* Opt to live in a relationship. Living in a relationship is less conventional in Indian societies, and they handle breakups with relative acceptance rather than acute despair. Indeed, Contemporary Indian Literature bears evidence of a significant shift in societal attitudes towards love and relationships influenced by the western countries.

Furthermore, the novel promotes individualism as a consequence of Westernisation. The protagonist's pursuit of personal happiness and self-fulfillment precedes societal expectations and obligations. This emphasis on individual desires, while empowering in some ways, can also be seen as a departure from the collectivist nature of Indian culture, which places importance on family, community, and duty. Westernisation is often depicted as a liberating force that challenges the constraints of traditional Indian society. However, this way of portrayal overlooks the complexities and contradictions within Indian culture.

Thesis Statement

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Westernisation has a profound influence on cultures worldwide, including India's. The current Research Paper aims to analyse the impact of Westernisation on Indian Culture through Ravinder Singh's novel *Can Love happen twice?*

Discussion

The influence of Westernisation is represented in *Can Love happen twice?* Which covers an array of aspects, including shifts in language, lifestyle changes, and a newfound perspective on Love and Relationships. Ravinder Singh portrayed the liberal modern approach towards love relationships, which is predominantly influenced by. Transformation of Relationships is obvious in *Can Love happen twice?* The Protagonist, Ravin, experiences a shift in romantic relationships, which was influenced by westernisation. Traditional arranged marriages, once prevalent in Indian culture, have given way to more individualistic and love-based relationships. The concept of dating is prevalent in Western societies and has become more accepted, leading to a change in the dynamics of romantic relationships in India. Changing Gender Roles, Westernisation has led to reevaluating gender roles in Indian Society. Women are now more empowered, seeking education and pursuing careers outside the traditional domestic sphere. This shift and Independence of Women's challenges traditional patriarchal norms and promotes gender equality. On the other hand, Ravinder Singh in *Can Love happen twice?* Reflects this change as Female characters like Simar assert their independence and strive for personal growth. Simar is the significant character in *Can Love happen twice*? Simar is an Indian girl, but she prefers to follow a contemporary and westernised lifestyle. Simar's role is often associated with Western culture, which reflects the cosmopolitan outlook. Simar's character serves as a tool to explore the clash of values and lifestyle between Traditional Indian culture and the modern Indian family. This dynamic adds complexity to the story's narrative, and it also reflects the changing cultural landscape in India and the challenges faced by individuals like the protagonist Ravin, navigating between Indian and Western culture.

Westernisation has also affected the concept of love and relationships in Indian culture. The novel *Can Love happen twice?* Explores the idea of modern relationships, where individuals are more open to casual dating, live-in relationships, and break-ups. Ravin's journey of finding his second love after a tragic loss of his first girlfriend, Khushi, highlights the changing dynamics of love influenced by Western ideas. Traditional Indian attire is increasingly being replaced by Western clothing, especially among the younger generation. This transformation reflects a desire to align with global fashion trends and adopt a more modern and cosmopolitan lifestyle. The novel portrays a character like Simar, who is an Indian but embraces Western fashion, highlighting Westernisation's influence on Indian Culture. Further, Western Culture has also created an Impact on Language and Communication in India. The English language has become a symbol of Westernisation and is widely spoken in India. As a result, the use of English has increased in various aspects of every aspect of Indian society, including Education, Media, Business, etc. This shift has both positive and negative effects, as it facilitates communication on a global scale but also threatens the preservation of Regional Languages and Cultural diversity. In addition, westernisation

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has brought about a rise in consumerism and materialistic values in Indian Society. The novel *Can Love happen twice?* Depicts characters like Simar, who priorities material possessions and wealth and often equates that with happiness and success. This value shift can lead to a loss of traditional Indian virtues such as contentment, spirituality, and simplicity.

Conclusion

India's rich cultural heritage weaves together diverse customs, rituals, traditions, and languages, each unique to various regions. With roots in ancient practices, it draws inspiration from a multitude of sources. In contrast, Western culture stands out for its emphasis on progress and openness, leaving an imprint on our customs, traditions, social conduct, moral values, and our overall approach of empathy and respect towards others. The impact of Western influence is palpable across various facets of our cultural landscape. The entire paper focuses on how Ravinder Singh, in the novel *Can Love happen twice?* Portrays how one gets adapted to the Western culture for the sake of work, later for a love relationship and in the end, explores the value of his traditions. Ravin breaks up his love relationship. The current paper shows how Western culture varies from our Indian Culture in the eyes of Ravinder Singh. Ravinder Singh's *Can Love happen twice?* Explores the profound impact of Westernisation on Indian Culture. In the Novel, *Can Love happen twice?* Western influence manifests a shift in generational thinking, family dynamics, and societal norms while fostering identity crises and cultural conflict. Ravinder Singh makes an adept exploration of the ongoing tensions between Tradition and change, a testament to the multifaceted and dynamic nature of Indian society on the brink of intense modernisation. The impact of Westernisation on Indian Culture is portrayed in Ravinder Singh's *Can Love happen twice?* is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. While it has brought about significant changes in relationships, gender roles, fashion, language, and values, it is essential to approach these transformations analytically, considering both positive and negative consequences. The complex wave of tradition and modernity presents a unique tapestry that signifies the depth of Indian Culture. However, with the advent of Western influence, this vibrant cultural difference appears to be undergoing a significant transformation, prompting an intense debate over the perceived benefits and drawbacks. As India continues to navigate its cultural evolution, it is crucial to strike a balance between embracing global influences and preserving the rich heritage and traditions that define Indian Culture.

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