



THE ANALYSIS OF TOXICITY, TRADITION AND CINEMATIC IMPACT (KABIR SINGH)

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Abstract

This research paper study Kabir Singh (2019), directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, as a case study in the image of masculinity, body abuse, and romantic relationships in Indian cinema . Through soft textual analysis of this movie, this research explores how the film's story and literary choices reflect and strengthen traditional gender roles, while also judging audience response and challenge cultural analysis. The study puts Kabir Singh in the broader context of Hindi cinema's picture of emotional expression and public discourse surrounding consent as well. Findings show that, while the film achieved considerable commercial big success, its idolization of aggressive male behavior urged divided responses mirroring shifting societal standards in urban India as well.

1. Introduction

This movie Released on June 21, 2019, Kabir Singh became one of Bollywood's highest earning films of the year and A remake of the Telugu film Arjun Reddy (2017), it tells the story of Dr. Kabir Rajdheer Singh. a brilliant but unstable surgeon whose life spirals after his girlfriend name Preeti (preeti sikka) is forced to marry someone else in this film. The film sparked intense and interesting debate, hailed by many fans as a raw and realistic description of love, while critics scolded it for romanticizing abusive behavior and alcohol addiction and many more addiction. This research aims to provide an objective analysis of these conflicting reactions, considering what Kabir Singh reveals about contemporary Indian culture and cinematic conventions

2. Literature Review

2.1 portrait of Masculinity in Indian Cinema

Manhood in Indian cinema has traditionally highlighted strength of manhood, emotional, rule, and honor. There are Many Films like Sholay (1975), Simmba (2018), and even Dabangg (2010) have described male heroes who use aggression to claim moral dominance. However, more recent cinema has begun grilling the emotional weaknesses of male lead (Dutta 2018). Vanga's earlier film, Arjun Reddy, was already criticized for its unapologetic portrayal of male rage (Rao, 2017) so there are many.

2.2 Substance Abuse Narratives

Bollywood hardly hearts narratives on alcohol addiction without give either a moral lesson or comic comfort. So Kabir Singh stands out for portraying a main character who repeatedly drinks to excess in this

movie, faces few real effects beyond emotional breakdown and heart touching story line. judge argue this normalizes self-destruction, while fans claim it offers a raw depiction of heartbreak.

2.3 Consent and Public Discourse

Public talk about Kabir Singh usually focused on its handling of consent and aggression so people are talking , there are some Scenes such as Kabir's public kissing of Preeti and verbal diatribe sparked fire debate: are these romantic gestures or sign of toxic right? Feminist critics called them disturbing, while popular audiences often explained them as cinematic license.

3. Methodology

This study use a descriptive textual analysis of the film's key scenes, supported by an examination of audience and critic responses available in mainstream media,so there are many platform like YouTube debates, and social media commentary. The analysis identifies topical patterns in visuals, dialogues, and narrative advance. A comparative lens is used to assess Kabir Singh in relation to traditional Bollywood examples.

4. Analysis

4.1 Character Arc and breakable Masculinity

Kabir Singh is introduced as a powerhouse top of his class, confident, and controlling. He treats relationships as control seen in how he plans Preeti's life and reacts intensely when his authority is challenged. So His origin into alcoholism, addiction, and self-harm after separation reflects a fragile psyche, yet his recovery is presented through the 'man working his way back' trope. The film never truly interrogates his violence; instead, it frames it within an emotional narrative demanding empathy.

4.2 Substance Abuse as Romantic Symbolism

Alcohol is twisted into the romantic arc as when he gets drunk and exclaims out truths what he did, or when his drunkenness drives him to drastic amounts. This film uses visuals of cigarettes, bottles, Drugs and unsteady speech to dramatize a broken man. Yet there is little narrative condemnation: aside from scolding from family or colleagues, Kabir faces no clinical or social intervention. Instead, drinking becomes another dramatic device rather than a problem to be addressed.

4.3 Romance, Consent, and Cultural Readings

Arguably the film's most controversial elements center on consent. Kabir forcibly kisses Preeti after following her through her wedding crowd. Major sequences where Preeti is still married to another raise ethical concerns. champions argue that the film depicts Kabir's eventual agreement of her autonomy; critics insist it idealizes stalking and coercion.

5. Discussion

The commercial success of Kabir Singh movie over ₹370 crore in India suggests that its depiction of masculine intensity and suicidal passion vibrate with audiences. Urban millennials and Gen Z viewers added difficulty to the debate some saw Kabir's defects as relatable emotional cut, while others were volatile by the film's unrepentant stance on right. The split reception highlight a shifting cultural view. junior Indian audiences are more and more sensitive to issues of consent and emotional wellness as well. In contrast a broad segment still adopt the model of the flawed but passionate hero.

6. Conclusion

Kabir Singh remains a contentious text in the canon of Bollywood cinema a film that combines potent visuals,

heartbreak, and intensity, while coincident upholding doubtful tropes of masculinity, entitlement, and substance normalization. Its impact lies not only in box-office numbers but in forcing public discourse on romanticization of aggression and consent.

Policy Implications

Filmmakers and regulators may need to consider warnings or ratings for romantic dramas that include coercion or substance abuse as key plot drivers. A broader conversation about how cinema shapes relational expectations is essential—especially in societies experiencing rapid cultural change.

References.

1. Dutta, R. (2018). Masculinity on Screen modern Trends in Indian Cinema. *Journal of South Asian Film Studies*.
2. Jain, S. (2019). From Rage to Redemption: Alcoholism in common Hindi Films. *Indian Cinema Review Quarterly*.
3. Rao, P. (2017). Arjun Reddy Controversy: Emotional force or Artistic Freedom? *Cinema Today*.

7. Media Representation and Cultural Impact

The Movie Kabir Singh's cultural impact goes beyond its box office performance all over india, hit into conversations about gender, romance, and media responsibility as well. In the digital age, where media and phone consumption is rapid and social commentary swift, the film became a symbol of deeper societal tensions. There are some Online debates flared on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, Facebook with viewers divided between admiration for the film's emotional depth and criticism of its toxic romantic ideals. Memes, video essays, and opinion pieces advance ingrained the film into popular awareness. A to occur again theme in these debate was whether art reflects society or shapes it well. Critics reasoned that romanticizing abusive behavior can normalize it, mainly among suggestible viewers. Supporters contended that the film simply portrayed an individual's defective journey without advance his actions. In this film The director, Sandeep Reddy Vanga, defended his work carefully, claiming that the intensity of love shown in Kabir Singh is rare in real life and that his film was a realistic depiction of heartbreak. His statements, however, were censure as tone-deaf, particularly his controversial assertion that true love involves the right to 'slap' or 'be slapped' statements that unintentionally reinforced the film's negative explanation.

8. Power Dynamics and Gender Roles

In this film The gender dynamics in Kabir Singh are especially worth examining. Preeti, portrayed as a soft-spoken person, obedient woman, rarely asserts her own desires in film. Her characterization fits within a broader pattern in Bollywood where female power is secondary to male passion. In many pivotal moments, she remains silent to Kabir's decisions reinforcing an imbalanced power dynamic that has drawn criticism from feminist scholars as well. This pattern raises essential questions in our mind about how Indian cinema portrays women in romantic relationships. The portrayal of Preeti feeds into an example where a woman is the 'prize' of a man's journey rather than an independent character with her own goals and personality. When she does make choices such as choosing to marry someone else under parental pressure they are often undone or overridden by Kabir's return in there home. This decrease the narrative weight of her decisions, furthering the idea that male desire should prevail over female choice. While some argue that the film accurately depicts real- world paternal relationships, others believe it misses the good time to challenge these conventions. There are many Films like 'Queen' (2014) or 'Thappad' (2020) have shown that Indian audiences are receptive to narratives that empower female voices and the impact of these film is so great. By contract, Kabir Singh's adherence to traditional gender roles feels regressive to many viewers.

9. Social Responsibility vs Artistic Freedom

So there is Another layer of the discourse around Kabir Singh film involves the balance between artistic freedom and social responsibility. Cinema is an artistic medium, and filmmakers often argue for their right to represent, complex characters because this character is complex. In a society wrestling with issues like domestic violence, alcohol abuse, drugs and toxic masculinity, the manner of depiction matters. Context, results, and framing can make the difference between a admonitory tale and a exalted fantasy. Kabir Singh walks this line dangerously. While the character's pain and mental health struggles are clear, the film's beautification of his rage with dramatic music, slow-motion shots, and emotional climaxes as well may overshadow the harmful effects of his behavior of kabir. Without a strong counter narrative or clear effect, viewers may leave with a skewed perception of what constitutes acceptable romantic behavior.

