

Moral Ambiguity and Emotional Realism in *This Love That Feels Right*

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Abstract:

Contemporary Indian English fiction often explores the complexities of love, morality, and emotional decision-making in a rapidly changing social environment. Ravinder Singh's novel *This Love That Feels Right* presents a sensitive portrayal of modern relationships shaped by emotional vulnerability, ethical dilemmas, and urban isolation. This paper examines the themes of moral ambiguity and emotional realism in the novel, focusing on how characters navigate love outside traditional moral frameworks. It highlights how the novel reflects shifting attitudes toward relationships in contemporary Indian society, where emotional truth often conflicts with social norms. Through the character of Naina and the unnamed narrator, Singh constructs a narrative that challenges conventional notions of right and wrong in love. The study argues that the novel portrays love not as a fixed moral category but as a fluid emotional experience influenced by personal history, psychological need, and social environment.

Keywords:Emotional realism, moral ambiguity, modern relationships, Indian English fiction, Ravinder Singh, urban love, psychological conflict, contemporary society

Introduction

Indian society has undergone significant transformation due to globalization, urbanization, and technological advancement. These changes have deeply influenced interpersonal relationships, especially romantic love. Traditional moral frameworks that once governed relationships are increasingly being questioned by younger generations who prioritize emotional compatibility over social approval.

This Love That Feels Right by Ravinder Singh reflects this shift by presenting a story that is deeply rooted in emotional complexity rather than conventional morality. The novel explores how individuals make difficult emotional choices in situations where love does not conform to socially accepted norms. The narrative focuses on characters who experience

love as both healing and disruptive. It challenges the idea that relationships can always be categorized as right or wrong. Instead, it presents love as a subjective emotional truth shaped by personal experience, trauma, and psychological need.

This paper analyzes how the novel represents moral ambiguity and emotional realism in modern relationships. It explores themes such as emotional conflict, social judgment, psychological vulnerability, and the breakdown of traditional moral boundaries in love.

Moral Ambiguity in Modern Relationships

One of the central themes of the novel is moral ambiguity in love. The characters in *This Love That Feels Right* often find themselves in emotionally complicated situations where clear moral judgments are impossible. The narrator's emotional involvement with Naina raises questions about fidelity, emotional responsibility, and personal happiness. However, the novel does not present these issues in a strictly moralistic manner. Instead, it emphasizes emotional truth over social rules.

Singh suggests that modern relationships cannot always be evaluated through traditional ethical frameworks. Emotional needs often conflict with societal expectations, creating situations where individuals must choose between personal happiness and social acceptance. The moral ambiguity in the novel reflects the complexity of contemporary life, where relationships are shaped by psychological depth rather than rigid moral codes. This allows the narrative to present love as a deeply human experience rather than a socially regulated institution.

Emotional Realism and Psychological Depth

Emotional realism is a defining feature of the novel. Singh portrays characters who are emotionally vulnerable, confused, and deeply human in their responses to love and loss. The emotional journey of the narrator reflects psychological realism, where feelings are not idealized but presented in their raw and imperfect form. Love is shown as a mixture of hope, insecurity, attachment, and fear.

Naina's character represents emotional authenticity. Her responses to love are shaped by her personal experiences and emotional scars. She is neither idealized nor condemned; instead, she is portrayed as a complex individual navigating emotional uncertainty. The novel emphasizes that emotional decisions are often irrational and influenced by past trauma, loneliness, and desire for connection. This psychological realism makes the narrative relatable to contemporary readers who experience similar emotional conflicts.

Urban Society and Emotional Isolation

The novel reflects the emotional landscape of urban India, where individuals often experience loneliness despite being surrounded by connectivity and social interaction. Urban life in *This Love That Feels Right* is characterized by emotional detachment, busy lifestyles, and fragmented relationships. Characters struggle to maintain meaningful emotional bonds

in an environment that prioritizes career and personal success. This urban isolation becomes a driving force behind emotional dependency in relationships. Love becomes a source of emotional stability in an otherwise disconnected world. Singh highlights how modern urban society creates conditions where individuals seek emotional fulfillment in relationships that may not always align with social norms. This further contributes to moral ambiguity in love.

Conflict Between Social Norms and Emotional Truth

A key tension in the novel is the conflict between societal expectations and emotional truth. Characters are constantly aware of how their relationships are perceived by society, yet they are unable to fully suppress their emotional desires. The narrator's internal conflict reflects this struggle. While social norms define certain actions as unacceptable, emotional experiences often challenge these definitions. The novel suggests that emotional truth cannot always be controlled by moral or social frameworks. Love operates in a space beyond rigid definitions, where feelings often override logic and social approval. This conflict highlights the gap between traditional Indian moral values and modern emotional realities, making the novel a reflection of transitional cultural identity.

Character Study: Naina as a Symbol of Emotional Complexity

Naina represents emotional depth and complexity in the novel. She is not portrayed as a conventional romantic heroine but as a realistic individual shaped by emotional experiences. Her actions often reflect emotional survival rather than moral calculation. She embodies the struggles of modern women who navigate love in a society that judges female emotional independence differently from male behaviour. Through Naina, Singh challenges stereotypes about female characters in Indian fiction. She is neither idealized nor simplified; instead, she represents emotional authenticity and human vulnerability. Her character contributes significantly to the novel's exploration of moral ambiguity by showing that emotional decisions are rarely black and white.

Narrative Technique and Emotional Engagement

Singh's narrative style plays an important role in creating emotional realism. The first-person narration allows readers to experience the emotional intensity of the protagonist directly. The simplicity of language enhances emotional accessibility, making the narrative feel personal and relatable. The storytelling avoids exaggerated drama and instead focuses on subtle emotional shifts. This narrative technique strengthens the theme of emotional realism by presenting love as an internal experience rather than an external spectacle. The fragmented emotional progression of the story mirrors real-life relationships, where clarity is often absent and emotions evolve unpredictably.

Conclusion

This Love That Feels Right by Ravinder Singh offers a nuanced exploration of moral ambiguity and emotional realism in contemporary Indian relationships. The novel challenges traditional moral frameworks by presenting love as a deeply subjective emotional experience. Through characters like Naina and the narrator, Singh highlights the complexity of modern relationships shaped by emotional vulnerability, urban isolation, and social

expectations. The novel demonstrates that love cannot always be defined by rigid moral categories, as emotional truth often exists beyond societal judgment.

Ultimately, the novel reflects the realities of contemporary urban India, where individuals struggle to balance emotional authenticity with social norms. It presents love as a fluid, complex, and deeply human experience, making it a significant contribution to modern Indian English fiction.

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