

Impact of Westernization on Indian Culture: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

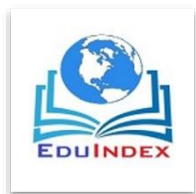
Westernization is not something new. Since colonization and in today's global era, westernization has become endemic of the whole political, social, economic and psychological process. Indian culture has been embracing aspects of foreign cultures over the years. Adoption of western culture in every domain viz industry, technology, politics, economics, lifestyle, law, norms, mores, customs, and traditions has given rise to term known as westernization. Westernization has greatly affected our traditions, customs, family and also our respect and love for others. The concept of joint families is quickly decreasing and everyone wants to remain aloof from others. Nobody bothers about the society and only cares about himself, which is contradictory to elements of Indian culture which teaches us to be a part of each other's happiness and sorrows; to celebrate the joyous moments and share the grief together. Slowly, the value of Indian culture for which we Indians take pride in is vanishing. Western culture is replacing these Indian values. People blindly follow western culture without realizing its consequences. Westernization has given rise to single families. The new generations find themselves isolated in this atmosphere and miss out on the love and care from their grandparents. There is no one at home to take care of the young and inculcate *sanskaar* in them since the grandparents no longer stay with them. The Present Research Paper On “An Impact of Westernization on Indian Culture: An Exploratory Study” is written with an objective to understand and explore the impact of westernisation process on Indian culture and tradition. Research has also tried to gather the perception of people and impact of westernisation through primary data collection.

Key Words— Westernization, Modernisation, .

I. INTRODUCTION

—“Civilization is what we have, culture is what we are.” – Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan I

Indian culture is splendidly known in other parts of the world since the primeval age. Its multi-diverse flavour has been consistently distinctive in its very own way. Good manners, traditions, living and trading patterns etc. are one of the components of Indian culture. Western culture has always shown its impact on Indian society. The influence of western culture progressed in India way back in the 19th century when the British established their colony in the country. Western culture, considered as the most very developed culture in the world because of features like, fascination, dreamy autonomy etc., which are somehow absent in Indian culture. So, we can say that westernisation is not new to India but with recent development like globalisation, advent of technology, liberalisation etc the process has intensified and grabbing all facets of life and culture in India. **Westernization over a span of time has greatly affected our traditions, customs, our family and our respect**



and love for others. Westernization is a process in which societies adopt western cultures in areas such as industry, technology, law, politics, economies and lifestyles, clothing, language etc. It is the social process of absorbing one cultural group into harmony with another. Western culture conveys and promotes the ideas and values of advanced civilization across people of India.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

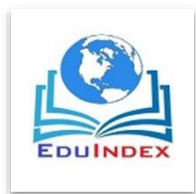
In past Westernisation has fascinated researchers to conduct deep research on the said topic and in recent bloggers also written and expressed their views in relation to the impact of westernisation. Researcher has reviewed the past literature which is compiled below-

Khare(2011) commented that India has witnessed a change not only in economic standards but also in sociocultural factors. The conventional values, norms, and behaviors are being altered into more Westernized and global values. Her research was heading for ascertaining the evolution of Indian society from a collectivist society to an individualist society with focus on individuals’ lifestyles and values. The purpose of the research was to understand the role of collectivist/individualist lifestyle variables on brand meanings by Indian university students. Correlation and multiple regression tests were administered to analyze the data. The findings suggest that Indian youths may appear to endorse Western values, but family traditions, group values, and national traditions play a pivotal role in determining brand meanings.

Aarya, Tripathi(2015) in their research briefed about how westernization has greatly affected our traditions, customs, family and our respect and love for others. They commented that due to westernization we are forgetting our culture and tradition. Study was limited to only Chhattisgarh state.

Joshi(2015)in her article talked that there is no doubt the western culture is flexible and teaches self-dependence, but this does not mean that we should forget our culture and blindly go after the westerners. We should always feel proud that we, the Indians have such a rich cultural heritage which is very rare and should be carried forward and cultivated in the minds of our new blooms who are going to be our future.

Harrell , Ussery , Cramer , Ranjit , Sharma (2015) in their research paper examined the impact that “westernization” may be having on health outcomes and health behaviors among adolescents in Delhi. the impact of “westernization” may not be wholly negative, and that adolescents’ strong sense of ethnic identity may be protective. Interventions designed to promote healthy eating and active living among adolescents in India should be aware of these findings and utilize them where possible when developing new programs or policies in this setting. For example, reinforcing ethnic (i.e., Indian) pride and customs, such as family meals, may help to strengthen values and beliefs supportive of a healthy weight status,



which, in turn, could build a stronger foundation for health and health enhancing behaviors by these adolescents. “Westernization,” or globalization more generally, is a powerful force that will continue to shape adolescents’ lives for many decades to come.

Dutt (2017) the impact of globalization is great on India’s culture. We are exploiting the term globalization in the name of reason, progress and science but we are forgetting that it is our culture that differentiates us from any other country. India has a rich cultural background and pride of its culture is famous in all over world. Globalization has not only inculcated the westernization in India, but conversely the Indian culture has also spread its impact globally

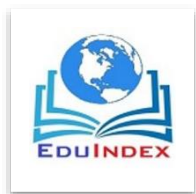
Overgaard(2018)discussed about how India has witnessed a revolution not only in economic standards but also in socio cultural factors. The conventional values, norms, and behaviors are being altered into more Westernized and global values Purchase behavior of Indians has shown drastic change due to westernization. Study was limited to only purchase and sale of branded products.

Kshirsagar(2018) describes about how Indian have changed the lifestyles and communication language from traditional to western. As per the study conducted in the article author claims that western culture is affecting the mostly the youth crowd.

Felix, Thomas , Jenifer (2013) commented that over the years the civilizations of the world have adopted many of the West’s styles and ways of life. This “Westernization” has started a downward spiral in destroying the cultural diversity of the world. Westernization has caused many people to reject their traditional style of clothing and alter their daily life to conform to the styles of the Western part of the world. They in this research paper attempted to study the impact of westernization on Culturally Rich Indian by using Fuzzy Relational Maps (FRMs).

Prakesh (2018) Indian culture is considered as one of the oldest and richest culture and western culture is considered as the most advanced culture in the world. Both are different types of culture and followed in different part of the world. Both the cultures differ from each other in the traditional mindset, however, in today’s world both the cultures are coming to a mix. But the most common and genuine fear among conservative Indians (specially the elders) is that the widespread of westernization amongst Indians. They suspect that Western goods, clothes, foods, festivals, style, language, and moreover Western thought is spreading and shows negative impact across the populace. The purpose of this paper is to look at the many reasons that cause such fears and analyze them by comparing with reality and discuss about the impact of westernization.

From literature review it can be seen that research has been conducted in varied domains in relation to impact on culture, tradition, social existence, food etc. There is huge scope for researcher to explore and analyze impact of westernization in more deeper and descriptive manner.



III. EMERGENCE OF WESTERNIZATION AND ITS IMPACT

The concept of westernization has its roots in sociology and its where much discussed in political as well as in economics. First this term was invented and used by renowned sociologist M.N Srinivas. He defined this term for all those changes that affected all Indians during British rule (after establishment of Pax Britannica) and which accelerated later. Thus it refers to “the change brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, the term subsuming changes occurring at different levels...technology, institutions, knowledge, and values.” M.N Srinivas (1966).In other words westernization can be defined as assimilation of western culture. The social process of becoming familiar with or converting to the customs and practices of Western civilization.

Westernization changed the society and culture of India significantly. It produced: Humanitarianism • Secularism • Equalitarianism • Rationality • Attack on untouchability starting from British colonial era. Among all changes bought Rationality and humanitarianism may be called the hallmark of Westernization. In some contexts Westernization led to rejection of the tradition while in others it led to mixing or combination of traditions and Western influences.

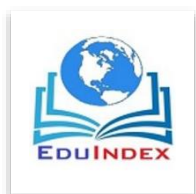
The western impact has brought about “a new great tradition of modernisation”. According to

Y. Singh impact of westernisation can be seen on varied culture and tradition. It can be thought to be made up of the following: *celebration of festivals and religious practices, clothing, foods, arts, traditional sciences, language, and lifestyle*. Certainly, this has posed the dilemma of conflict between the indigenous tradition and the western tradition on Indian soil. A fusion between the two has occurred, mainly in regard to the elite sections of Indian society. Today, ‘globalisation’ has far more impact on Indian society. In fact, India is in the process of becoming a global market/centre of economic and professional activities.

It has been observed by by Y. Singh (1973) that Westernisation has created the following changes since the early days -

- (1) The growth of a universalistic legal superstructure,
- (2) Expansion of education,
- (3) Urbanisation and industrialisation,
- (4) Increased network of communication, and
- (5) Growth of nationalism and politicisation of the society.

The above stated elements contributed to modernisation throughout the country. The judiciary, law courts, legislations (for prohibiting child marriage, infanticide and sati, etc.), law commissions and several other legal innovations relating to rules of marriage, family, divorce, adoption, inheritance, minorities, land rights, trade, commerce, industries, labour, etc., were enacted. Common and genuine fear among



conservative Indians (specially the elders) is that the extensive westernization amongst Indians is leading to the gradual decline and eventual ruins of Indian culture and tradition. They suspect that Western goods, clothes, foods, festivals, style, language, and moreover Western thought is spreading across the populace.

Westernization is ruining the traditional clothing of the Indian culture. For example, in India, the traditional dressing is sari, dhoti and kurta however, today there are lots of people wearing more of a western clothing like jeans, tee-shirts and girls are wearing short skirts tops etc. The western culture is impacting on the Indian festivals in many ways too. All Indians greatly celebrate their festivals every year and enjoy them very much. Today, large numbers of people in India are not celebrating their own festivals like Holi or Diwali, but instead, they are celebrating more of western festivals like Halloween etc. Westernization has changed many peoples lifestyles. Now, there is no particular lifestyle that is Indian. Most things have changed like respect to the young ones and elders, importance of a family, marriage making, clothing, festivals, foods, names, languages and even getting a plastic surgery to look more western. People are changing themselves and are trying to adapt like western people. Westernization is also reducing the equality of lifestyles in India. In the Indian culture, in order to visit a temple, you must have the right clothing although, it is shocking to see that today, there are many teenagers who are dressing as modern people e.g stylish haircuts, jeans, tee-shirts etc., when entering a temple. In the Indian culture, people had respect for the young and elders however, since the western culture has arrived, the respect had gone and now the behaviours of many people have changed.

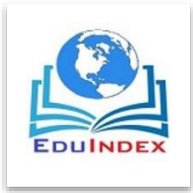
IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is an exploratory kind of research where both the primary data as well as the secondary data has been utilized to fulfill the objectives of the study. The primary data has been collected through self structured questionnaires which were administered to 82 respondents from varied demographic profile. which were conveniently selected statistical representation of the findings in the study. Respondents were personally interviewed just to capture the views regarding the impact of westernisation. The questionnaire consisted of information about the socio economic and demographic background of the respondent. It comprised of close ended question related to taste and preference, about changing tradition regarding festival celebration, dressing attire, relationship between generation gaps etc. Google forms were used to send questionnaire as well as to make tables of purpose of analysis. The scope of study limited to Pune. Secondary data has been collected through books, magazines, journals, google etc.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic Analysis-

Table: Demographic Parameters under study



Sno	Parameter	Options	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Gender	Male	48	58.5
		Female	34	41.5
2	Family type	Joint	21	25.6
		Nuclear	61	74.4

On the basis of the above stated table-

- The respondent consisted of male fraternity with 58.5% followed by Females.
- Respondents considered for survey lived in nuclear family system and Joint family only 25.6%. This can be considered the result of westernization which has brought the culture of modernization and development

1. The impact of westernization on Indian culture: :

Statistics
Westernization has impacted our Indian culture

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

Westernization has impacted our Indian culture

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	44	53.7	53.7	53.7
	Disagree	1	1.2	1.2	54.9
	Neutral	15	18.3	18.3	73.2
	Strongly Agree	22	26.8	26.8	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

2. Need of westernization for development of our nation

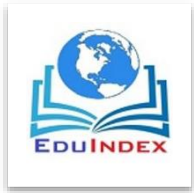
Statistics
Westernization is necessary for development of our nation.

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

Westernization is necessary for development of our nation.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		1	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Agree	29	35.4	35.4	36.6
	Disagree	15	18.3	18.3	54.9
	Neutral	27	32.9	32.9	87.8
	Strongly Agree	6	7.3	7.3	95.1
	Strongly Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

3. Westernization is affecting our traditions, customs culture and our respect for elders



Statistics

Westernization is affecting our traditions, customs, culture and our respect for elders

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

Westernization is affecting our traditions, customs, culture and our respect for elders					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	30	36.6	36.6	36.6
	Disagree	4	4.9	4.9	41.5
	Neutral	18	22.0	22.0	63.4
	Strongly Agree	27	32.9	32.9	96.3
	Strongly Disagree	2	2.4	2.4	98.8
	Yes	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

4. Westernization of India Good or Bad

Statistics

Is the westernization of Indian culture good or bad?

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

Is the westernization of Indian culture good or bad?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bad	35	42.7	42.7	42.7
	Good	47	57.3	57.3	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

5. Music preference to check the influence of westernization

Statistics

What music do you prefer?

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

What music do you prefer?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Classical	48	58.5	58.5	58.5
	Western	34	41.5	41.5	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

6. Use of English language

Statistics

How frequently you use English language?

N	Valid	82
	Missing	0

How frequently you use English language?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Least Frequently	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
	Less Frequently	9	11.0	11.0	13.4
	More Frequently	23	28.0	28.0	41.5
	Most Frequently	13	15.9	15.9	57.3
	Neutral	35	42.7	42.7	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

VI. DATA INTERPRETATION

- On the basis of survey carried out the data interpreted is that there is an impact of westernization on Indian culture. Westernisation is influencing our tradition, customs and overall culture.

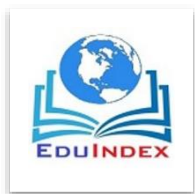
Think India Journal

ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-20

National Conference on

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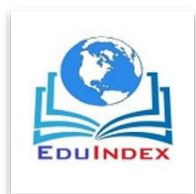
- Westernization has changed our culture and way of living and respondents feel that it has impacted our Indian culture in myriad way of life.
- Respondents have mixed feeling about westernization Majority people thing westernization is good for them.
- Respondents have view that somewhere westernization has contributed towards the development to the country over a period of time by bringing positive changes in form of education, technological development etc.
- Our Indian tradition and culture is so deep rooted that today also people stick to the classical music with moving inclination of young people towards western music.
- English language is also gripping the population of India .today using English as mode of communication in professional as well as at home is considered. May be mother language remain in everybody’s heart but then also usage of English language has increase as an impact of westernization.
- Due to westernization Indian festivals are not celebrated with the same fervor and enthusiasm as they were celebrated once ago.

VII. CONCLUSION

Westernization in India is not something new but it has pervaded our culture for very long and is ongoing today also. Indian culture has been taking on aspect of foreign cultures over the years. Westernization has not only posed threat to our culture, tradition, customs but on other hand it has also bought with it what we see modern and developed India. Today we are living in a global era with the borders becoming hazier and world is becoming one. In this scenario impact of westernisation is becoming more intense and will be inevitable. But our Indian culture is so deep rooted and cherished that it cannot be changed. Our Intrinsic value will remain same. We will adapt and accommodate but will not change

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