

From Aspiration To Disillusionment: Satire As Narrative Strategy in Aravind Adiga's Select Novels

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Abstract

Aravind Adiga analyses contemporary Indian society and its prominent facets, such as economic liberalisation and urban development, in a kaleidoscopic way in his novels. Existing literature has predominantly examined the themes of his novels, such as capitalism, class inequality, corruption, subaltern resistance, realism, and moral ambiguity. A little attention has been paid to the narrative strategy of using satire to highlight the major concerns of his novels. This paper investigates satire as a significant narrative strategy in *The White Tiger* (2008), *Last Man in Tower* (2011), and *Selection Day* (2016). The research argues that Adiga employs satire as a narrative mode through which the aspirations of individuals and communities are simultaneously represented and interrogated. Adiga exposes the contradictions, social mobility, urban prosperity, and personal achievement in post-liberalised India through irony, dark humour, caricature and satirical narration. A comparative textual approach is made along with satire theory and narratological perspectives to examine Adiga's three novels. The study helps to understand the intricate relationship between aspirations and disillusionment. It encompasses Balram's entrepreneurial aspirations, the material prosperity of Vishram society residents and the sporting success in Adiga's novels. The present study argues for the role of satire in deconstructing the idealised vision of success as well as the emotional cost associated with the process of achieving success.

Keywords: Satire, Narrative Strategy, Aspiration, Disillusionment, Social Mobility, Post-Liberalisation India.

Introduction

India has transformed significantly in the 21st century. This transformation primarily encompasses its culture, social life and economic sectors majorly. The recent development of market-driven policies, technological advancement, industrialisation and global integration provides many new opportunities for social mobility. Like the two sides of a coin, the developments intensify the inequalities and competition among the people to a great extent. People started exploring many possibilities to become successful in the socio-cultural life. Aspiration becomes a catalyst to shape the individual ambitions, family expectations, professional achievements, and cultural identities. In all of these, the aspiration for social mobility often collided with systematic barriers and moral compromises. Contemporary Indian English fiction discovers the existing contradictions within India's developing narrative. Aravind Adiga is a pioneer who has established himself as a powerful chronicler of contemporary Indian society. *The White Tiger* brought him the Man Booker prize in 2008 for his literary competence. His narratives consistently interrogate the issues of class division, urban expansion, corruption, social mobility, and the consequences of economic growth in contemporary India. Adiga exposes the tensions under the rhetoric of development and prosperity.

Adiga's fiction is distinguished by his extensive use of satire. The use of Satire has helped him to expose the social absurdities, institutional failures, and human follies through irony and humour. The application of satire in literature dates back to the classical satires of Horace and Juvenal. They employed satire to challenge the dominant structures of power and question the accepted norms of their time. In the present literature, satire highlights the contradictions within societies that promise progress while multiplying injustice and inequality. Adiga inherits this tradition from the wizards of literature but customises it according to the realities of 21st century India. Adiga's satire is both comic and critical. Rather, it functions as a complex narrative strategy that enables readers to recognise the gap between aspiration and reality. This pattern is evident in three of his selected novels, which together explore different manifestations of aspiration in contemporary India.

In *The White Tiger*, Balram Halwai aspires to come out of his state of poverty and attains the financial proliferation. His journey from Laxmangarh village to become an entrepreneur in Bengaluru highlights the promise of social upliftment that is frequently connected with liberalised India. At the same time, the narrative simultaneously

exposes the corruption, violence, and ethical compromises that Balram makes to become an entrepreneur. In *Last Man in Tower*, the fragmentation of Vishram society happens due to the growing pursuit of material prosperity that breaks their communal bonds and ethical values. Similarly, in *Selection Day* Adiga examines India's cricket culture, which promises a pathway to gain fame, wealth, and social recognition. Adiga draws an analogy between aspirations and external pressures to highlight the conflicts between personal identity and imposed ambition. Adiga employs satire in all of his novels to expose the fragile fundamentals of contemporary success narratives and invites readers to reconsider the relationship between ambition, morality, and progress in post-liberalised India.

Theoretical Framework: Satire, Narratology and the Culture of Aspiration

Satire is a literary mode that exposes individual follies, social contradictions, and institutional failures through irony, humour, exaggeration, and ridicule. According to M. H. Abrams, satire may be defined as "the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking toward it attitudes of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation." (Abrams and Harpham 353). This definition corresponds to Adiga's fiction as his novels combine humour with social criticism. Northrop Frye further argues that satire emerges from the tension between social ideals and social realities. A true satire invites readers' awareness in realising the shortfall of values and promises which societies profess to uphold. This perspective provides a useful framework for understanding Adiga's representation of post-liberalised India. His works of fiction deal with standards of economic leverage, urban redevelopment, middle-class aspiration and rosy social promises. This helps him to bring out the contradictions, exclusions and ethical compromises before the readers. Thus, he employs satire as a narrative strategy to measure the distance between aspiration and reality. The present study approaches satire as a narrative strategy. Narrative strategy is defined as a method through which plots are organised, perspectives are constructed, and hence meanings are produced. In Adiga's fiction, satire influences characterisation, symbolism, plot development, narrative voice, and reader response. It shapes the entire structure of interpretation rather than appearing only in occasional humorous moments. Adiga's novels can be understood in the light of narrative form and thematic content.

Narratology provides the necessary components for the analysis of an author's works. Gérard Genette emphasises that meaning in fiction depends not only on events themselves but also on the manner in which those events are narrated. According to him, meaning is produced through the Narrative voice, perspective, focalisation, and temporal organisation. Adiga's social criticism cannot be researched in isolation without a proper analysis of his narrative techniques. The effectiveness of his satire significantly depends on the aspects of how his stories are told and how perspectives are managed. One of the most useful narratological concepts for this study is Wayne C. Booth's notion of the unreliable narrator. Booth argues that narrators do not always provide transparent or fully trustworthy accounts of reality. Their perspectives may be limited, self-serving, and contradictory, but it requires readers to interpret the events critically. This concept is especially relevant to the central character, Balram Halwai, in *The White Tiger*. He exposes social corruption and, at the same time, questions the prevailing ethics of contemporary India. Adiga's narrative produces a complex satirical effect in which readers are invited to question both the narrator and the society which he talks about.

Adiga stages aspiration as the final element of such a framework. In contemporary societies, aspiration is often associated with social mobility, economic prosperity, and self-realisation. Post-liberalisation India has witnessed the increase of aspirational culture through education, consumerism, and market-driven values. Individuals are increasingly invigorated to view success as both achievable and desirable. In the course of novels, aspirations encounter systematic inequalities and social pressures which further complicate their realisation. As a result, aspiration becomes both a motivating force and a potential source of frustration and disillusionment. Drawing upon the above theoretical perspectives, this study argues that Adiga employs satire as a narrative strategy to interrogate the culture of aspiration in contemporary India. Adiga reveals the contradictions embedded within dominant narratives of success through the use of irony, symbolic inversion, narrative voice, and satirical characterisation. Adiga's novels characterise the movement from aspiration to disillusionment. Thus, this helps him to interpret and challenge contemporary realities.

I. The White Tiger: Satirising Entrepreneurial Aspiration

The White Tiger offers an arena to examine aspiration in post-liberalisation India. For most readers, the novel deals with the conventional success story of Balram Halwai. This aligns with the popular belief that determination and hard work can overcome systemic barriers. Adiga, as a pioneer, deliberately subverts this expectation through the use of satire. The novel exposes the contradictions, inequalities, and moral compromises embedded within the culture of aspiration that drives the protagonist's entrepreneurial success. Adiga transforms the simple narrative of upward mobility into a satirical assessment of contemporary India. He uses Balram's provocative narrative voice, satire and dark humour as tools to do so.

Balram's life is shaped by his aspiration. His intelligence is recognised by a school inspector who addressed him as a 'white tiger'. The word 'white tiger' signifies a rare creature that appears "only once in a generation". Despite his exceptional abilities, Balram is forced to leave school and work in a tea shop because of his family's poverty. Society acknowledges talent but denies the conditions necessary for its development. The contradictions create irony in the novel. Adiga satirises the myth of meritocracy that promises narratives of economic proliferation. 'White Tiger' symbolises individual exclusivity and a powerful criticism of the society that perpetuates inequalities and curbs social mobility.

The satirical dimension of aspiration becomes more prominent through Balram's observations of contemporary Indian society. One of the most frequently cited dialogues in the novel occurs when he declares: "Please understand, Your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness" (The White Tiger 14). The statement is reductive, but its satirical force demands reflection. The 'India of Light' symbolises technological advancement and economic prosperity. And the 'India of Darkness' represents poverty, neglect, and exclusion. Adiga uses such binary oppositions to expose the uneven distribution of opportunities that curbs India's economic success. The very statements challenge the existing narratives of development. This proves aspiration is not experienced equally across social classes. The promise of success remains inaccessible to the underprivileged living in the 'Darkness'.

Adiga satirises the social institutions responsible for individual well-being and development. Education, democracy, and entrepreneurship serve as a means to success in modern societies. Adiga demonstrates the failures of such institutions in fulfilling their promises. The village school is characterised by corruption and negligence. Political leaders exploit prevailing democratic rhetoric through dishonest means. Economic opportunities exist, but access to them controlled by the privilege and powerful hands. Balram's narrative voice exposes these contradictions through humour and irony apart from direct socio-political commentary. This results in a form of satire that encourages readers to examine the credibility of institutions that profess to support equality while perpetuating inequality.

The most powerful satirical metaphor in the novel is 'Rooster Coop'. Balram famously acknowledges that "the greatest thing to come out of this country in the ten thousand years of its history is the Rooster Coop" (The White Tiger 173). At first look the metaphor appears absurd. Human beings are directly compared to chickens, which wait calmly for slaughter. The simple metaphor shows profound criticism of the existing social hierarchy in contemporary India. Balram serves as a servant and remains trapped because he fears the consequences of rebellion for himself and his family. The 'Rooster Coop' thus symbolises a system of internalised obedience that sustains exploitation. It reveals the boundaries of aspirational discourse. Individuals may dream of success, but their aspirations remain constrained by social structures and hierarchies which are designed to sustain existing power relations. Adiga demonstrates the inequality in economic conditions as well as in psychological and cultural mechanisms in his narrative.

In the course of the novel, Balram becomes a chauffeur and works for Ashok in New Delhi. There, he encounters himself directly among the wealthy and elite. He is surrounded by educated, modern, and progressive individuals. Initially, he has a high regard for them, but gradually, he discovers moral hypocrisy and corruption in their actions. Adiga uses satire to reveal the inconsistency between the appearance and the reality of the elites. The wealthy speak the language of democracy and social responsibility while benefiting from systems through exploitation. This irony is key to the novel's criticism of aspirational culture. The wealthy represent the success that Balram desires, but their actions show the lack of ethics behind that success. Thus, this link aspiration to disillusionment.

Balram fulfils his aspiration by killing his boss and ultimately takes a large sum of money. In traditional success narratives, upward mobility is achieved through hard work, perseverance, and moral integrity. Here, Adiga deliberately reverses this tradition. Balram's success is only possible through violence and imposture. This inversion represents one of the novel's most significant satirical strategies. Adiga allows his protagonist to achieve

the entrepreneurial dream through criminal means. And this helps Adiga to expose the contradictions embedded within narratives of economic advancement. Success comes at the expense of degrading moral values. Balram's declaration, "I am tomorrow" (The White Tiger 4), encapsulates the ambiguity of his transformation. Balram identifies himself as a representative of a new India driven by ambition, innovation, and self-reliance. The acknowledgement is deeply ironic. The future he represents has emerged through deception, violence, and moral erosion. The statement functions both as a celebration and an assessment of entrepreneurial aspiration. Adiga refuses to offer a simple moral judgment. Instead, he compels readers to confront the unpalatable reality that fosters success within unequal systems.

Narrative voice plays a crucial role in producing this satirical effect. Adiga uses first-person narration in *The White Tiger* to demonstrate wit, self-consciousness, and its provocative nature. Balram addresses the Chinese Premier directly, transforming his life story into a commentary on globalisation and development. His humour often emerges in moments of suffering and injustice, and this creates a tension between amusement and discomfort. Readers are encouraged to laugh, but the laughter is repeatedly interrupted by awareness of deeper socio-cultural maladies. Adiga uses this narrative strategy to portray satire not merely as a mode of entertainment, but as an instrument of critical reflection. Thus, *The White Tiger* demonstrates the transformation of aspiration to disillusionment. Balram achieves the success he desires, but his journey reveals the ethical and social costs of upward mobility. Adiga does not reject aspiration itself, but he interrogates the system that produces and exploits aspirational desires. Satire thus functions as the primary narrative strategy through which aspiration is transformed into disillusionment.

II. Last Man in Tower: Satire and the Illusion of Urban Prosperity

Adiga shifts his attention from individual aspirations to the community's aspirations of the urban middle class in *Last Man in Tower*. The novel examines the effects of rapid urban redevelopment in Vishram Society, Mumbai. The centre of the narrative is a lucrative redevelopment proposal by the wealthy property developer Dharmen Shah and its impact on the lives of residents. It appears to be an opportunity in the beginning, but it gradually exposes the fragility of moral values and social solidarity. Adiga highlights how the pursuit of financial benefits can transform ordinary individuals into murderers. Adiga employs irony, characterisation, and social satire to bring the oddities of contemporary social life. The novel further enriches his critique of aspirational culture by analysing how dreams of financial security often culminate in ethical disillusionment.

The residents of Vishram Society are very much respectable, law-abiding, and community-oriented citizens in the beginning. They take pride in their shared identity, mutual trust and neighbourly relationships. However, the redevelopment offers introduces a new set of aspirations before them. The promise of larger apartments, financial compensation and upgraded social status creates a strong desire among them. This further breaks their mutual bonds. Adiga's satire takes birth from the contrast between appearance and reality. The same residents who once were morally bound together later became opportunistic and individualistic. This discrepancy generates a form of situational irony that propagates throughout the novel. Individuals who once valued community gradually prioritise personal gain. The satire does not lie in depicting the villains but in exposing the common man's nature of moral compromise.

Shah serves as one of the novel's most significant satirical figures. Being a real-estate developer, he advocates the aggressive logic of contemporary capitalism. Shah identifies redevelopment as an inevitable and desirable process. He only believes in economic growth, so his persuasive rhetoric reflects the larger discourse of urban development. The irony lies in the fact that redevelopment promises renovation while at the same time destroying the very community that it promises to improve. The residents become gradually obsessed with calculations of profit and compensation. People move from shared conversation to personal financial profits. Adiga satirises the commodification of social life. Human relationships are gradually evaluated according to economic criteria. Thus, urban development demands ethical compromises and the disintegration of shared values.

Masterji is the sole resident who opposes the redevelopment project and has a unique position within this satirical framework. He refuses to accept the financial offer from the property dealer. He values and prioritises his association with Vishram Society as it holds his personal memory, belonging, and community for him. Masterji's resistance makes him isolated from his fellow residents. He becomes an obstacle for others in this redevelopment project. The respect he once earned is now of no use because of his ideology. Adiga satirises the so-called aspirations of residents who see the project as a means to get financial prosperity. The irony is reflective as the

community forces grow weak, and residents become irrational and unethical. Adiga exposes the ethical contradictions beneath the aspirational urban culture through the shifting of moral values in the residents of Vishram society.

'Vishram Society' is a locus of satire in the novel, *Last Man in Tower*. The word 'Vishram' signifies rest or peace, and it suggests stability and communal harmony. But the society turns out to be a site of conflict, distrust, and betrayal. The symbolic contrast between the name and meaning strengthens the novel's critique of urban modernity. The society becomes vulnerable to the corrosive effects of economic aspirations. At first, their desire for redevelopment seems reasonable. People genuinely hope to improve their lives and secure a better future for their families. Their growing aspirations gradually shift towards the destructive side. Their changing behaviours are presented satirically. The ethical consideration no longer exists, and that disintegrates their sense of belongingness. They did not even hesitate to murder for Masterji for their aspirations. Thus, the novel illustrates how aspiration can transform into moral blindness. Adiga's satire unveils the glossy narratives of urban prosperity. Financial prosperity undoubtedly has improved materialistic growth, but it does not necessarily produce ethical and social progress. Adiga transforms the redevelopment narrative into a broader critique of urban culture through satire and humour. The novel challenges the social order that prioritises prosperity as a primary measure of value. Adiga uses satire to reveal the hidden costs of urban ambition and expose the fragile moral fundamentals upon which dreams of progress are often built.

II. Selection Day: Satire and Manufactured Dreams

Aravind Adiga shifts his focus from financial and urban prosperity to the commercial world of professional cricket in *Selection Day*. Adiga uses aspiration, identity, and social mobility in contemporary India, especially in the game of cricket. Adiga highlights the growing cricket culture in India, which creates rosy dreams for millions to become like Sachin Tendulkar. Cricket turns out to be a jackpot that promises success, fame, and social recognition. Adiga examines how aspiration is manufactured and commodified within a society that prioritise achievement. that is increasingly obsessed with achievement. Aspirations emerge primarily from economic circumstances in two of his earlier discussed novels. However, the novel *Selection Day* explores aspirations imposed upon individuals by families, institutions, and social expectations. The result is a powerful satirical critique of an Indian society where personal ambition transforms into a collective obsession.

The novel revolves around Mohan Kumar and his two sons, Radha and Manju. Mohan's aspirations are to see both his sons as professional cricketers. He views cricket as a magic carpet to obtain wealth, fame, and social mobility. Thus, he believes the success in the sport will transcend their family. The narrative of the novels moves around Mohan's relentless pursuit of his dreams. Adiga satirises the mounting tendency of imposing parental ambition on children and expecting them to fulfil their dreams and desires. He imposes strict routines, controls nearly every aspect of his sons' lives, and prescribes cricket as the only medicine for all social and economic problems. His actions produce a comic effect in the novel, and ultimately, the humour produced exposes deeper social concerns. Mohan is beyond an eccentric parent as he represents a broader cultural phenomenon in which success is imagined as the ultimate measure of human value. Adiga uses satire to reveal how aspirational culture can transform hope into obsession.

The novel demonstrates how cricket occupies a unique position in India's collective imagination. It is not limited to sports only; it provides an opportunity and becomes a national aspiration. Young athletes are encouraged to believe that exceptional talent can lead to financial security and social mobility. This shows the growing aspect of the broader meritocratic ideology that gained importance in post-liberalisation India. As per the ideology, success is presented as the reward for talent, effort, and perseverance. Adiga subjects this belief to sustained satirical study. The character of Manju Kumar occupies a central position in this critique. Manju gradually begins to question his father's assumptions that define his life. He possesses remarkable cricketing talent and is hovering through the uncertainty regarding his identity and future. His aspirations are made beyond the boundaries established by his father. This tension between imposed ambition and personal self-discovery becomes one of the novel's most significant plots.

Adiga employs irony to highlight the contradiction between external success and internal contentment. Manju's success point keeps changing after achieving goals one after one. This made him uncertain as he is not aware about what he truly wants. The narrative, therefore challenges conventional success stories in which achievement produces happiness and self-realisation. Adiga reveals the psychological costs associated with aspirational culture

through the portrayal of Manju. Success gives recognition and opportunity to many. Sometimes the same success becomes the reason for confusion, alienation, and emotional distress. Adiga satirises the commercialisation of sport. Cricket operates with the support of coaches, sponsors, media figures, and sports clubs that commercialise talent. Young players become subject of commodity, and their worth is measured in accordance with their performance. The language of opportunity and success in the sporting system also has exploitative dimensions. Adiga exposes these dimensions and contradictions through ironic situations and satirical characterisation.

The title of the novel, 'Selection Day', has symbolic significance. In cricket, selection represents recognition, validation, and entry into a higher level of competition. Adiga talks about selection that symbolises social approval and cultural acceptance. Individuals are constantly evaluated and judged according to external standards set by society. Adiga's satire exposes the anxiety produced by such systems of evaluation. Selection becomes a metaphor for the broader human desire for recognition in a highly competitive society. Adiga examines the internal consequences of aspiration and the conduct in which individuals are continuously measured and questioned. Adiga transforms cricket into a metaphor for the aspirations of post-liberalised India. He uses irony, characterisation, and symbolism in his novels to do so. The novel authenticates that aspirations of success are often manufactured by families, institutions, and cultural expectations. Adiga employs satire as the narrative strategy to expose these processes. Selection Day shows the tension between ambition and identity, achievement, and disappointment. Through this, Adiga criticise the society that focuses on competition, performance, and the endless chase for success.

Comparative Discussion: From Aspiration to Disillusionment

A comparative reading of *The White Tiger*, *Last Man in Tower*, and *Selection Day* reveals a progressive continuity in Aravind Adiga's vision. The three novels differ significantly in their setting, characterisation, and narrative structure, but they are united by a common concern related to aspiration and its consequences. Adiga continuously uses satire to expose the contradictions in contemporary India's culture. Adiga has taken different social environments and narrative techniques to evaluate the changing facets of aspirations. Coming to the word aspiration, it further forms of moral, social, and psychological disillusionment. The most striking similarity among the three novels is their portrayal of aspiration as a product of social constructs rather than a personal desire. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's entrepreneurial ambitions emerge from a binary society that prioritise to social mobility and materialistic success. In *Last Man in Tower*, the residents of Vishram Society are driven by aspirations for financial prosperity. In *Selection Day*, cricket provides the opportunity that promises fame and social recognition. In each of his novels, aspiration is not simply an individual choice but a product of larger social, economic, and cultural discourse.

The nature of aspiration keeps changing across his three novels. *The White Tiger* focuses primarily on the economic aspirations of Balram, who seeks freedom from poverty. He believes that financial success can bring him respect and independence. *Last Man in Tower*, Adiga shifts his attention to collective aspirations associated with urban development and middle-class aspirations. Here, the resident's desire for financial prosperity drives the narrative. *Selection Day* further extends the concept of aspiration in creating identity and recognition in society. Adiga's shows how the complexities of contemporary Indian life shift aspirations from financial stability to social goals. Adiga challenges the traditional assumption that narratives present success as the natural reward for talent and hard work. Balram achieves entrepreneurial success through violence and betrayal. The residents of Vishram Society achieve financial gain at the cost of genocide and communal harmony. In *Selection Day*, the pursuit of sporting success generates anxiety, confusion, and conflicts. Thus, Adiga portrays a different side of success marked by contradictions and tensions.

Adiga uses satire as a powerful instrument to demonstrate contradictions of contemporary India. In *The White Tiger*, satire functions mostly through Balram's ironic narrative voice. Adiga uses witty observations, provocative metaphors, and dark humour to transform social criticism into a compelling narrative experience. Adiga employs a broader narrative perspective to satirise collective behaviour in *Last Man in Tower*. The irony emerges not from a single narrator but from the gap between the residents' self-perception and their actual code of conduct. In *Selection Day*, satire becomes more subtle and psychological. Adiga examines the internal consequences of aspiration and the pressures created by family, society and institutions. The relationship between aspiration and morality constitutes another recurring pattern in Adiga's novels. Aspirations produce ethical dilemmas that

challenge conventional notions of right and wrong. Balram's desire for freedom ultimately leads him to commit murder. The residents of Vishram Society gradually abandon their ethical principles in pursuit of financial gain. Mohan Kumar's aspirations for his sons transform parental care into a strict form of control. Adiga suggests that aspirations are never morally neutral, but they influence decisions, relationships, and identities.

One of the peculiar characteristics of Adiga's satire is its refusal to divide society into simple categories in terms of heroes and villains. Balram is both victim and perpetrator. The residents of Vishram Society are neither entirely corrupt nor entirely innocent. Mohan Kumar's ambitions emerge from a genuine concern for his children, even if they become dominant. This moral complexity distinguishes Adiga's satire from purely disapproving forms of social criticism. He exposes broader systems of values and expectations that shape human behaviour rather than attacking the individual. The concept of disillusionment occupies a central position in his narratives. Disillusionment emerges because aspirations are fulfilled in unexpected ways. Balram achieves economic success but loses moral innocence. The residents of Vishram society obtain economic growth, but sacrifice communal trust and integrity. Manju gets opportunities for progress but faces uncertainty regarding his identity. Hence, Adiga proves that the fulfilment of aspiration becomes the source of disillusionment.

Thus, Adiga's novels serve a coherent criticism of contemporary India and its progressive mindset. Each of his novels analyses a different social context. There is something common to all these, as they reveal similar tensions between aspiration and reality. Satire unifies these diverse contexts and enables Adiga to expose the contradictions hidden beneath the language of success and progress. Ultimately, the comparative analysis confirms that satire occupies a central place in Adiga's narrative world. Adiga uses satire more than a stylistic device through which Adiga interrogates contemporary aspirations and exposes the disillusionments that accompany them. These satires transform individual stories into global discourse on power, ambition, morality, and the changing dynamics of post-liberalised India.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the present paper acknowledges the function of satire as an excellent narrative strategy in Aravind Adiga's fictional narratives. Satire shows how aspirations are made, interrogated, and further disrupted in his narrative. Adiga uses satire as a lens to expose the existing contradictions of contemporary society. He uses irony, dark humour, satirical characterisation, and narrative complexity to achieve desired result. This helps him to show the dark side beneath the narrative of success. Adiga portrays the subjective prosperity of Balram alongside the loss of moral and emotional values through social satire and irony in *The White Tiger*. Adiga uses the redevelopment narrative as a lens to showcase the fragile human relationship and the disintegration of moral values in *Last Man in Tower*. And in *Selection Day*, Adiga employs subtle satire to expose the psychological consequences of a society that determines the individual's worth primarily through performance and recognition. Adiga's fiction highlights that success is never a cakewalk, as contemporary culture often portrays it. He interrogates ethics, identity, power, and social responsibility behind the economic success of individuals and the community. Adiga transforms satire into a sophisticated narrative strategy to compel readers to reconsider the values that influence modern aspirations and validate the human consequences that sometimes remain buried under the language of success. Hence, Adiga's novels stand as powerful works of social criticism and profound reflections on the hopes, aspirations, and disillusionments of post-liberalised India.

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