



# Effects of Socioeconomic Situation in Aravind Adiga's "The White Tiger"

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## Abstract

The White Tiger, Aravind Adiga's Booker Prize-winning book, paints a realistic portrait of Indian society. The narrative exhibits naturalism, revealing the socioeconomic condition's effects on individuals, the presence of the "rooster coop" idea, the master-slave dynamic, and the scientific portrayal of the characters. The harmful impacts of social evils are presented by the author in a realistic manner. This essay aims to investigate how impersonal modern society is perceived to be, as well as India's socioeconomic situation and its detrimental effects on the populace. Balram Halwai, the main character, is seen to undergo a change in personality because he is tired of witnessing the poor being oppressed, the rise in crime, and the corruption. Like Balram, the negative transformation demonstrates the depth of societal evils and attitude in the modern human race. Balram's psychology has been negatively impacted by the socioeconomic situation, which shows that he needs decent advice and company. Balram joins crime and corruption and falls into the hands of societal ills. It is demonstrated that adopting the erroneous ways of living has grown to be simple in the present era.

Keywords: Corruption, Oppression, Socio-Economic Change, Realistic.

The socioeconomic structure is depicted in depth in Aravind Adiga's writings together with themes of poverty-related realism. The White Tiger, a book, was awarded the 40th Booker Prize in 2008. The narrator's persona, Balram Halwai, is defined in a way that reveals the development of man and his evolving ideas. Aravind Adiga illuminates aspects of nature. The subject of this essay is revealing Balram Halwai's evolving character. Balram Halwai's characteristics changed as a result of the entrenched oppressive and corrupt attitudes of specific groups of people. Balram speaks of both life and light in the dark. He alludes to daytime prosperity and nighttime destitution and the sad lives of the underprivileged. The work is written in the form of letters. Balram Halwai writes letters to Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao in which he describes his life. In his letters, Balram shares all the details of his life, no secrets are kept hidden. Balram was affected negatively by his poverty because he was the son of a lowly rickshaw driver. People can be divided into two groups based on the stark differences in lifestyles between the wealthy and the poor. The novel exposes several ways in which humans might be inhuman.

The goal of naturalism is to present reality in an impersonal way. One of the key characteristics of naturalism is the portrayal of the fictitious character in a realistic manner. Aravind Adiga creates fictional characters, yet he writes about them as if they were real people, and their lives seem to be a great match for genuine modern lives. He draws attention to social ills such the tyranny of the poor, corruption, payback of bribes, the institution of slavery, and the exploitation of slaves. Aravind Adiga portrays today's troubling topics in a critical manner. He gives voice to his critical ideas and exposes the people's inner sentiments.

The concepts of "darkness" and "light," which represent relative poverty and wealth, are described throughout the book. The lives of the rich are described as "light," while the lives of the poor are described as "dark." The routes used to move people from darkness to light are revealed to be quite thorny. These tracks were brittle because of the flawed system and the enormous inequality. Giving bribes has made it simple to cover up illicit activity. Corruption is now pervasive. The realistic portrayal of life reflects the reality of modern civilization.

However, due to the irrational nature of societal situations, Balram muses over how to resolve the issues in his life and society. He rejects the idea of becoming someone's property. His views alter his current social standing; even while they help him flourish in life, as he chooses a life of crime and corruption, they lose all moral value in the eyes of the rest of the world. Balram has a distinct past and present. He seemed to be working hard to alter his course for the better. The question remains, though, what does Balram accomplish in his later years? What type of change is acceptable in society? Balram, however, was able to make the transition from darkness to light, but the light he attained via crime and corruption was worthless.

The instances of corruption in India are presented by Aravind Adiga. Pinky Madam, Mr. Ashok's wife, kills a child by running him over with her car. When the bribe is presented to specific officers, Pinky madam promptly leaves that situation. Aravind Adiga continues by claiming that there was a second plot in place to release Pinky madam from this situation. Balram was instructed to inform the police that he was driving the automobile that struck the youngster by his boss, Mr. Ashok. There was where everything was handled prior to the bribe. The child's life has lost all meaning. Mr. Ashok's reasoning that the deceased youngster was homeless and hence no harm was done appears to go against ethical principles.

Balram has observed the politician by accepting a bribe from Mr. Ashok to get a coal tax exemption. This type of tax fraud and corruption progressively influenced Balram to accept bribes. Balram further noted that his teacher did not instruct the pupils during the roughly six-month period in which she was not paid. Aravind Adiga also discusses fraud in the medical industry.

A dishonest system caused Balram's father to pass away. Due to his absence from the hospital, the doctor had bribed higher officials with a large sum of money to acquire that position. He might have felt that he didn't need to carry out his duty as a doctor if he had paid cash for this work. Aravind Adiga exposes the service industry's business mindset. Services are typically provided on a non-profit basis, but due to people's crooked, avaricious, and inhumane mindset, this sector has evolved into one that is profit-driven. Writes Arvind Adiga,

*"There was no doctor in the hospital. After we bribed him ten rupees, the ward boy said that a doctor might come in the evening."* (TWT, p. 48).

The idea of refusing to complete a task because a bribe was offered for it looks unnatural and inhuman. When he gets a fix, the ward kid also says this. The moral standards were shattered, and society's atmosphere was harmed by the corrupt people's hollowness. Arvind Adiga fiercely denounces the barbaric actions of such terrible individuals.

Aravind Adiga discusses how votes are purchased in order to win an election. Democracy suffered because of this dishonest method of purchasing votes. Ironically, Aravind Adiga refers to the corrupt politician as a "Great

Socialist". By revealing the truth, politicians' hypocrisy is exposed. Here, a story about helping those who are poor is shared. Aravind Adiga uses realism to portray how corrupt politicians exploit the poor while making it appear as though they are doing so in their favor.

The author uses pictures of a white tiger in his writing. Balram visits the zoo with Dharam and notices the caged white tiger there. Here, Aravind Adiga depicts the boss of Balram, Mr. Ashok, and the tiger sharing a similar look. Balram feels as though he is looking into his boss Mr. Ashok's eyes as he gazes into the white tiger's eyes. This demonstrates how Mr. Ashok's fear of the tiger may be seen in his eyes. Mr. Ashok must be terrified because Balram is his employee and he is Balram's supervisor.

Balram's thinking has been negatively damaged by this type of corruption, the exploitation of those with modest salaries, and the dishonesty of the politicians. His ideas began to shift, and he began to consider using corruption to his benefit. For financial gain, he murders Mr. Ashok, his employer. He acquires wealth. In the book, Aravind Adiga describes how Balram began paying bribes to various police officials in order to get away with criminal activity and effectively perform his many tasks. This kind of negative shift in Balram's ideas demonstrates the depth of the social ills, which swiftly have a negative effect on people. Balram does not regret carrying out wrongdoing, albeit he views them as rational actions.

As a result, this book explores Balram's search for freedom and desire to pass from darkness into light. However, he felt inferior to everyone because of his lack of privilege. He develops an inferiority complex as a result of how society treats him. *"All I want is that one of my sons—at least one should live like a man," he declares.*(TWT, p. 30).

He desired to be treated with respect. But achieving his goal required effort on his part. However, Balram's accomplishments, the satisfaction of his desire for light in his life, and, lastly, Balram's acceptance of a bad conduct as rational suggest that Balram's compromise with moral and ethical principles has a negative impact on his life.

Aravind Adiga, however, critiques this risky compromise. He has demonstrated how this worldview fosters corruption and other social ills.

Here, it is clear that Aravind Adiga wishes to prevent the turning of poverty into wealth, which happens when human values are compromised. Aravind Adiga appreciates the riches attained through hard effort. The detrimental effects of Balram's socioeconomic situation demonstrate the spread of societal ills.

People's socioeconomic circumstances have an effect on them. However, it matters how people react to the current situation. The White Tiger demonstrates how individuals like Balram succumb to hardships and choose the wrong paths in life rather than confronting the issues caused by unfavorable socioeconomic circumstances. Balram embraces these improper paths to success in his life rather than speaking out or fighting against escalating corruption. By having a breakdown and killing Mr. Ashok, Balram does not feel any remorse in his heart but instead justifies his bad deed. Negativity is dangerous. The message of the book is that wealth attained through wrongdoing has no value in the world. The entire world is destroyed. Money acquired in honorable, moral, and ethical ways might last for a very long time.

## References:

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