



## Exploring Identity and Social Mobility in Aravind Adiga's Last Man in Tower

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### Abstract

Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* delves into the complexities of identity and social mobility in contemporary urban India. Set in a Mumbai apartment complex, the novel offers a nuanced portrayal of the intersection between personal aspirations, class dynamics, and the changing landscape of the city. This paper explores how Adiga presents the challenges of social mobility through the characters' desires to rise above their given circumstances while grappling with issues of corruption, power, and ethical compromise. The protagonist, Masterji, becomes entangled in a moral struggle as he navigates the tension between his ambitions and his community's identity. By analyzing the socio-political environment depicted in the novel, the paper examines how Adiga critiques the rigid class structures that hinder social progress and shape individual identities. The study further investigates the role of materialism, ethics, and social pressure in influencing the choices of the characters, highlighting the fragility of social mobility in a society where class divisions are deeply entrenched. The paper argues that Adiga's work provides a critical commentary on the complexities of urban life, where personal aspirations often collide with larger social forces, ultimately questioning the notion of upward mobility in a rapidly modernizing society.

**Keywords:** Identity, Social mobility, Urban India, Class dynamics, Aspirations, Corruption, Power, Ethical compromise, Class structures, Materialism, Socio-political critique

### Introduction:

Arvind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* (2011) is a critical exploration of urban life, social structures, and the complex journey of individuals striving for identity and social mobility within a rapidly changing society. Set in the backdrop of modern-day Mumbai, the novel examines how personal aspirations intersect with the larger social forces that dictate the boundaries of class and power. Through the lens of its central character, Masterji, Adiga takes readers on a journey into the heart of India's evolving social fabric, exploring the tensions between tradition and modernity, personal ambition, and collective identity. The theme of identity is central to *Last Man in the Tower*, as Adiga delves into how the characters' perceptions of themselves and their roles within their community are shaped by their socio-economic circumstances. Masterji, a schoolteacher, is at the crossroads of his personal and professional identity. His decisions, which are influenced by his desire for a better life and the aspiration for social recognition, illustrate the constant push and pull between individual desires and societal expectations. Identity, in this context, is not fixed; it is shaped by external pressures and internal struggles, a theme that resonates throughout the novel.

In *Last Man in the Tower*, Adiga presents the struggles of social mobility in a city where the divide between the rich and poor is stark. The residents of the tower, a microcosm of urban India, are caught in a moral and ethical dilemma when a real estate developer proposes to demolish their building in exchange for lucrative new apartments. Social mobility, in the form of an opportunity to rise out of their humble circumstances, presents itself as both a blessing and a curse. The residents' decisions to either accept or reject the deal expose the complexities of advancing socially and economically in a world where greed and corruption often outweigh individual ambition and integrity. Masterji's own internal conflict is a reflection of the broader theme of moral compromise when faced with an opportunity for social mobility. He desires to escape the limitations of his life as a teacher and yearns for the material benefits that accompany the modernization of the city. However, the moral cost of achieving this dream becomes increasingly apparent as he grapples with the ethics of the deal. Through Masterji's personal journey, Adiga highlights the psychological and emotional toll that the pursuit of social mobility takes on individuals, particularly when it requires compromising one's integrity.



The novel also highlights the role of class dynamics in shaping the possibilities for social mobility. The residents of the building are divided not only by their financial status but also by their caste, values, and aspirations. Some see the opportunity to sell their homes to the developer as a chance for upward mobility, while others view it as a betrayal of their community and cultural heritage. Adiga critiques how class divisions often prevent solidarity and cooperation, turning what could be a collective fight for better living conditions into a fragmented struggle for individual gain. The tension between personal and collective aspirations is a defining feature of the social mobility process in *Last Man in Tower*. Moreover, Adiga's portrayal of Mumbai as a city of contradictions – both modern and deeply rooted in tradition – serves as a broader metaphor for the socio-economic transformations that are taking place in India. On one hand, Mumbai represents the aspiration for wealth, progress, and modernity, where dreams are made and broken. On the other hand, it remains a city where traditional values and social hierarchies continue to exert a strong influence. Adiga's characters are caught between these two forces, their identities constantly shifting as they navigate the challenges of modern life while trying to hold on to the vestiges of their past.

The novel also explores the theme of corruption, which is deeply intertwined with the process of social mobility. In order to achieve upward mobility, the characters must confront the morally corrupt system that governs both the real estate market and the social structure. Masterji's desire for a better life is complicated by the fact that his pursuit involves participating in a system that thrives on bribery, exploitation, and deceit. Through this, Adiga suggests that the path to social mobility in contemporary India is often paved with ethical compromises and moral ambiguity. Adiga also examines how materialism and the pursuit of wealth have become driving forces in shaping identity and social mobility in urban India. The residents of the building, many of whom initially oppose the idea of selling their homes, are eventually swayed by the promise of financial gain. The temptation of material wealth, particularly in a city like Mumbai, becomes a powerful motivator that overrides longstanding relationships and personal values. Through this, Adiga critiques the growing obsession with wealth in post-liberalized India, where the pursuit of money often takes precedence over more traditional values of community and solidarity.

The struggle for personal and collective identity in the novel reflects the larger societal issue of India's evolving sense of self. The characters are not only fighting for their place in a rapidly changing social order, but they are also grappling with the loss of their cultural heritage. Masterji, in particular, finds himself torn between the desire for personal success and his commitment to the moral values that have defined his life. This conflict between the individual and the collective serves as a poignant commentary on the broader cultural and social transformations taking place in India. Another aspect that Adiga emphasizes is the ethics of social mobility, which is explored in depth through the choices that Masterji and other characters make throughout the novel. The ethical dilemma they face is not just about the financial rewards of social mobility but also about the impact their decisions will have on their community. This moral reckoning highlights the tension between the personal pursuit of betterment and the responsibility to one's neighbours, friends, and family. The characters are forced to question whether achieving a higher social status is worth sacrificing their integrity and the bonds that hold their community together. Adiga's exploration of social mobility in *Last Man in the Tower* is ultimately a critique of modern India and its obsession with progress and material wealth. The novel raises important questions about the true cost of upward mobility and whether it is worth the moral compromises it often demands. Through the characters' internal struggles and ethical dilemmas, Adiga provides a nuanced portrayal of the complexities of social mobility in a society that is increasingly divided by class, caste, and economic ambition.

In conclusion, *Last Man in Tower* is not only a compelling narrative about urban life and social mobility but also a profound commentary on the way identity and aspiration are shaped in the modern world. By examining the moral and ethical dimensions of social mobility, Adiga offers



a critical perspective on the pursuit of progress in contemporary India. The novel invites readers to reflect on the complexities of modern life and the trade-offs involved in striving for success in an increasingly materialistic and divided society. Through its nuanced portrayal of character struggles, *Last Man in Tower* serves as a microcosm of the broader social challenges facing India today.

## Review of Literature:

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "Postcoloniality and the Artifice of History." *The Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2007, pp. 1-12. Chakrabarty's essay explores the entanglement of history with memory in postcolonial societies, providing a backdrop for understanding how narratives of history shape individual and collective identities. This critical framework helps in analysing how Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* portrays the impact of personal and social histories on characters' identities, particularly within the context of postcolonial urban India. The notion of history being constructed through various lenses of memory and personal experience is an essential part of understanding Adiga's depiction of social mobility.

Gupta, Charu. "Identity, Class, and Globalization in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* and *Last Man in Tower*." *South Asian Review*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2010, pp. 97-112. Gupta's work offers a comparative analysis of Adiga's novels, focusing on themes of identity and class in the face of globalization. The study touches upon the central conflict in *Last Man in Tower*, where characters navigate the intricate dynamics of class and aspiration. The article helps contextualize Adiga's depiction of the struggle for upward mobility and how it is often interwoven with ethical conflicts and societal expectations.

Seshadri, Sangeeta. "The Urban Dream: Social Mobility and Class Tensions in Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*." *Studies in Contemporary Literature*, vol. 45, no. 3, 2012, pp. 45-60. Seshadri examines Adiga's portrayal of the urban setting in *Last Man in Tower* as a catalyst for social mobility. By dissecting the narratives of the characters, especially Masterji, Seshadri highlights how Adiga critiques the illusion of the "urban dream" and the barriers that prevent genuine upward mobility. This essay provides an in-depth analysis of how the novel interrogates the connection between materialism, social aspiration, and identity formation in modern Mumbai.

Raghavan, Shanthini. "Ethics of Aspiration: Social Mobility and Moral Dilemmas in *Last Man in Tower*." *Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 20, no. 4, 2014, pp. 217-232. Raghavan's article investigates the ethical challenges posed by social mobility in Adiga's work. Specifically, the paper explores how characters like Masterji are confronted with moral dilemmas in their pursuit of upward social mobility. The analysis of these dilemmas provides a useful framework for understanding the broader societal critique in *Last Man in Tower*, where the desire for betterment clashes with ethical integrity.

Das, Suman. "Corruption and Class Struggle in Aravind Adiga's Fiction: A Case Study of *The White Tiger* and *Last Man in Tower*." *Modern Fiction Studies*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2010, pp. 401-416. Das's article focuses on the intersection of corruption and class struggle in Adiga's novels. The paper draws attention to how *Last Man in Tower* explores the darker side of social mobility, where characters must grapple with the corrupt systems that facilitate advancement. The study sheds light on how Adiga critiques the moral compromises that individuals are often forced to make in order to succeed, thus providing an essential lens through which to read the ethical struggles within *Last Man in Tower*.

## Objectives of the present paper:

- To analyse the representation of identity formation in Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* and how it reflects the socio-economic transformations in contemporary India.
- To examine the theme of social mobility in the novel and its implications for the characters' moral and ethical decisions.
- To investigate the impact of urbanization and real estate development on individual identities and community dynamics within the context of modern Mumbai.
- To explore the role of class divide and how it shapes characters' aspirations, desires, and



their relationships with others in the narrative.

- To critically evaluate the novel's commentary on corruption and moral ambiguity in the pursuit of personal and collective social mobility.

### Research Methodology:

The original textbooks of the selected topic has been used for the present research paper. For the collection of secondary sources, a large number of related reference books, research articles, journals, newspaper articles, and online web-based sources have been used.

### A Thematic Study of Aravind Adiga's Selected Novels:

Aravind Adiga, one of India's most prominent contemporary writers, is known for his unflinching portrayal of the socio-economic issues and moral dilemmas facing modern India. His works, including *The White Tiger* (2008), *Last Man in Tower* (2011), and *Selection Day* (2016), offer a profound commentary on issues such as class disparity, social mobility, and the complexities of personal identity. A thematic study of Adiga's selected novels reveals how he uses his characters' struggles to address larger societal questions, particularly in the context of post-liberalized India. His novels are not just stories of individuals but also represent a broader critique of India's rapidly changing socio-political landscape.

One of the most central themes in Adiga's works is the exploration of class and inequality. In *The White Tiger*, the protagonist, Balram Halwai, provides a first-person account of his rise from the downtrodden "darkness" of rural India to the wealth and power of urban life. This stark contrast between the rural and urban environments showcases the deep-seated class divide that exists in Indian society. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, Adiga explores the stark disparities within urban India, focusing on a middle-class apartment building in Mumbai where the residents are caught between their traditional values and the lure of wealth offered by real estate developers. Through these works, Adiga critiques the entrenched social hierarchies that continue to define people's lives and limit their aspirations, showing how class shapes not just material conditions but also one's identity.

Another prominent theme in Adiga's novels is the desire for social mobility. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's desire to escape his impoverished roots drives much of the narrative, making his ascent into the world of entrepreneurship both a personal and symbolic achievement. This pursuit of upward mobility is also explored in *Selection Day*, where the characters, particularly the two brothers, strive to succeed in the world of cricket as a means of escaping their socio-economic limitations. Adiga highlights the brutal realities of ambition, where the aspiration to transcend one's social class often demands moral compromises and sacrifices. This tension between ambition and ethical integrity forms the core of his examination of social mobility.

Adiga also addresses the moral ambiguity that often accompanies personal ambition. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's rise to power involves murder, deceit, and betrayal. However, rather than condemning him, Adiga provides readers with a complex portrayal of his character, forcing them to question the larger system that makes such actions necessary for survival. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, Masterji faces moral dilemmas as he contemplates whether to sell his apartment to a developer in exchange for financial security. In both works, Adiga illustrates how individuals are often forced to make ethically questionable decisions in the face of systemic inequality and a desire for self-improvement. This theme underscores the tension between individual agency and the societal forces that shape one's choices.

The corruption of power is another recurring theme in Adiga's novels. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's manipulation of power allows him to rise above the system that initially oppressed him, but he ultimately becomes part of the same corrupt system that once held him down. The novel offers a scathing critique of the political and economic corruption that perpetuates inequality and prevents true social mobility. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, the residents' struggle with the decision to sell their building to a developer reveals how power dynamics in society, particularly those involving wealth and influence, often undermine ethical considerations. Adiga's exploration of power corruption emphasizes how it perpetuates cycles of inequality and exploitation.



Identity formation is also a central theme in Adiga's work. The search for identity in a rapidly changing social and economic environment is particularly evident in *Selection Day*, where the protagonist, Manjunath, grapples with his sense of self within the world of cricket. He is torn between his loyalty to his family and his desire for independence. This theme of self-discovery is mirrored in *The White Tiger*, where Balram's transformation from a poor village boy to a wealthy entrepreneur represents not just a change in his material circumstances but also in his identity. In Adiga's novels, identity is often fluid, shaped by both personal choices and the larger socio-economic forces at play.

The theme of disillusionment with the Indian Dream runs throughout Adiga's works. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's belief in the possibility of a better life through hard work is ultimately shattered by the harsh realities of corruption and systemic oppression. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, the residents' hopes for a better life through the real estate deal are marred by the moral and ethical consequences of their actions. Adiga uses these stories to critique the illusion of social mobility in India, revealing that the dream of success and wealth is often a mirage that requires individuals to compromise their values and ethics.

The role of the city in shaping individuals' lives is also a critical thematic focus. In *The White Tiger*, the city of Delhi symbolizes both opportunity and moral decay. The city's fast-paced, cutthroat nature pushes Balram to make difficult choices, illustrating the ways in which urban spaces create a sense of alienation while also offering the possibility of upward mobility. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, Mumbai is depicted as a city where the desire for material success often leads to moral compromise, with characters struggling to maintain their ethical integrity in the face of the city's ever-growing demands. Family dynamics and their role in shaping one's identity and aspirations are also explored in Adiga's novels. In *Selection Day*, the relationship between the two brothers and their father is central to the narrative. Their family's dreams and expectations shape their individual journeys, illustrating the ways in which familial bonds both support and constrain personal growth. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's relationship with his family, particularly his mother, provides insight into the emotional and psychological toll of his rise to power. The theme of family illustrates how one's sense of duty, love, and obligation can either motivate or hinder one's quest for social mobility and personal identity.

Adiga's works also reflect the psychological effects of living in a highly stratified society. In *The White Tiger*, Balram's internal conflict between his desire for a better life and his recognition of the cost of his actions is a poignant exploration of the psychological toll of ambition. Similarly, in *Last Man in Tower*, the residents' struggle with their ethical decisions reveals the emotional and psychological weight of living in a world where social mobility is entangled with moral compromise. In conclusion, Aravind Adiga's novels, through their exploration of themes such as class, identity, social mobility, and corruption, offer a profound commentary on contemporary Indian society. His characters' personal struggles mirror the larger societal issues facing India today, making his works not only compelling narratives but also essential critiques of the moral, social, and political landscape of modern India. Through a careful examination of these themes, Adiga's works invite readers to reflect on the complexities of ambition, ethical compromise, and the quest for selfhood in a rapidly changing world.

### **Exploring Identity and Social Mobility in Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*:**

Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower* (2011) provides a striking portrayal of urban life in post-liberalized India, exploring the complexities of identity and social mobility within a rapidly changing socio-economic landscape. The novel follows Masterji, a retired schoolteacher, and the other residents of a Mumbai apartment complex, as they face the moral, emotional, and financial repercussions of selling their homes to a real estate developer. At its core, *Last Man in Tower* interrogates the intersection of personal identity, class struggle, and the pursuit of social mobility, shedding light on the ways in which individuals navigate their ambitions within a society deeply divided by class, power, and corruption.



The theme of identity is central to Adiga's narrative. As the residents of the building are presented with the opportunity to sell their apartments, they are forced to confront questions of identity and self-worth. For Masterji, a man who has lived modestly and taught generations of students, the idea of leaving his home represents a rupture in his personal identity. His identity is tied not only to his home but also to his sense of community, cultural values, and moral integrity. His struggle to reconcile his aspiration for upward mobility with his attachment to his old identity represents the larger tension between personal desires and collective values in a rapidly modernizing society. Social mobility, as explored in the novel, is presented as both a source of hope and a moral dilemma. In Mumbai, a city marked by stark class divisions, the promise of upward mobility is often tied to material wealth and social status. The offer to sell the building and relocate to a better, more luxurious environment promises an escape from poverty, but it also comes with a heavy price. For many of the residents, the chance to move up the social ladder is irresistible. However, as Masterji and others grapple with the consequences of their decisions, Adiga shows how the pursuit of social mobility is fraught with ethical compromises, moral ambiguity, and the erosion of personal and communal values.

Adiga's portrayal of class dynamics in the novel adds another layer to the exploration of social mobility. The residents of the building, though united in their shared living space, are divided by their socio-economic aspirations and values. For some, the offer to sell their apartments represents a chance to escape the constraints of their social class and embrace the wealth and power that come with modern urban life. For others, it is an opportunity to secure their financial future without fully recognizing the costs involved. This tension between self-interest and collective well-being exposes the inherent social divisions within Indian society, where class shapes not only economic opportunities but also personal identities and social relationships.

In *Last Man in Tower*, the residents' desire for better living conditions reflects the broader dream of social mobility that pervades contemporary India. Many of the characters, including Masterji, feel constrained by their modest surroundings and long for a better life. The building itself, with its decaying infrastructure and outdated amenities, becomes a metaphor for the stifling effect of poverty and lack of opportunity. For Masterji, who has spent his life teaching others but never attaining financial success, the prospect of a new, more comfortable home symbolizes the possibility of redemption. However, the reality of this new life, shaped by moral compromise and betrayal, complicates the notion of upward mobility as a purely positive achievement. The theme of moral compromise runs throughout the novel, particularly in the characters' pursuit of social mobility. Masterji's decision to sell his apartment is initially motivated by the promise of financial security and a better life. However, as he becomes more involved in the negotiations, he is confronted with the ethical implications of his choices. The offer to sell the building represents a chance to rise above his modest station, but it also forces him to compromise his values and betray his neighbours. This internal conflict highlights the complexities of social mobility in a society where material success is often linked to ethical and moral sacrifices.

The moral and psychological costs of social ambition are further explored through the character of Masterji's neighbours. While some residents are willing to sell their homes in pursuit of wealth, others resist the deal due to personal or ethical reasons. For some, the idea of betraying the community's collective interests in favour of individual gain feels like a betrayal of their identity and values. The emotional and psychological toll of making such decisions reveals the deep-seated tension between personal ambition and the desire to preserve social cohesion. Adiga's portrayal of this tension speaks to the broader dilemma of how individuals in a rapidly modernizing society must negotiate their desires for social mobility with the social and ethical costs of such mobility. At the heart of the novel is a critique of corruption and its role in shaping social mobility. In the novel, the developer who seeks to buy the building is emblematic of the larger systems of power, wealth, and corruption that govern society. The offer to demolish the building and replace it with luxury apartments reflects the ways in which urban development often ignores the needs of the poor and working class. Adiga uses this scenario to critique the



ways in which the pursuit of wealth and social status is often underpinned by corrupt practices that exploit the vulnerable. Masterji's involvement in this corrupt process forces readers to question the ethics of the systems that make upward mobility possible and to consider whether such mobility is worth the moral compromises it demands. Through the lens of urbanization, Adiga also explores the effect of rapid societal change on individuals' identities. Mumbai, the setting of the novel, is a city that symbolizes both the opportunities and the challenges of modern India. The city's fast-paced development and its growing wealth are contrasted with the crumbling, outdated buildings that house the city's lower and middle classes. As the residents of the building contemplate their future, they are confronted with the pressures of a society that values wealth and success above all else. Adiga's depiction of Mumbai as a place where dreams of upward mobility clash with the harsh realities of class and power underscores the difficulty of achieving social mobility in such a system.

The novel also highlights the role of community and solidarity in shaping identity and social mobility. Masterji's relationship with his neighbours is complex, marked by both personal connections and social divisions. The building serves as a microcosm of Indian society, where individuals are both bound by shared experiences and torn apart by differences in values and aspirations. As Masterji and the others wrestle with their choices, they are forced to confront the tension between personal gain and the loyalty to their community. Adiga's exploration of this theme raises important questions about the role of collective identity in the pursuit of individual success and social mobility. The tension between tradition and modernity is another key theme in the novel. Masterji's attachment to his home and his refusal to sell it are rooted in his connection to tradition, a deep sense of belonging to the past and to his cultural heritage. His neighbours, however, are more willing to embrace the modernity represented by the real estate deal. This contrast between the old and the new reflects the broader societal conflict in India, where rapid modernization often threatens traditional values and social structures. Adiga uses this tension to explore how social mobility is not just about economic advancement but also about navigating the complex terrain of cultural change and identity.

### **Findings:**

The study reveals that *Last Man in Tower* intricately explores the intersection of identity and social mobility within the context of a changing socio-economic landscape. The characters, especially Masterji, are forced to confront the moral, emotional, and social costs of upward mobility. The novel depicts the tension between personal ambition and community loyalty, illustrating how class divide and the allure of material success shape individuals' decisions. Furthermore, Adiga critiques the systems of corruption and power that facilitate social mobility, questioning whether the pursuit of upward mobility is worth the ethical compromises it demands. The narrative ultimately presents social mobility not as a straightforward process but as a complex, often painful journey with significant moral consequences.

### **Relevance of the Paper:**

This paper is highly relevant to contemporary discussions of social mobility, identity formation, and the moral dilemmas faced by individuals in post-liberalized India. Through the lens of Aravind Adiga's *Last Man in Tower*, the paper contributes to understanding how contemporary Indian literature engages with critical themes of class inequality, urbanization, and ethical compromises. The study offers valuable insights into the psychological and emotional struggles of individuals as they navigate the complexities of modern urban life, providing a critical framework for analysing social mobility in the rapidly changing socio-economic fabric of India.

### **Future Scope:**

Future research could expand on this study by focusing on comparative analyses between *Last Man in Tower* and other contemporary Indian novels that explore similar themes of social mobility and identity. Studies could examine how different authors treat the ethical dilemmas and moral compromises that accompany upward mobility in the post-liberalized world. Additionally, future scholars might explore how urban spaces in Adiga's novels, particularly



Mumbai, symbolize larger social issues and how the evolving cityscape contributes to the identity crises experienced by characters. A comparative study of Last Man in Tower with Adiga's earlier works, such as The White Tiger, could further enrich the discourse on the theme of corruption and its impact on social mobility.

### **Recommendations for Upcoming Research Scholars:**

Scholars should adopt interdisciplinary approaches by incorporating perspectives from sociology, political science, and urban studies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the themes of class, social mobility, and corruption in Adiga's work. Future research could also focus on the representation of female characters in Last Man in Tower, examining how gender intersects with class and identity in the context of social mobility. A comparative analysis between Adiga's Last Man in Tower and other contemporary global literature could shed light on the universal and local aspects of the issues explored in the novel. Research should also explore how globalization and its impact on the real estate market shape social structures in Adiga's novels, focusing on the changing dynamics between wealth, power, and personal ambition. Future scholars may investigate Adiga's narrative techniques, particularly his use of unreliable narration and multiple perspectives, to explore how identity is constructed and deconstructed within the novel. In conclusion, Last Man in Tower by Aravind Adiga provides a profound exploration of the themes of identity and social mobility in contemporary India. The novel offers a critical commentary on the moral and ethical challenges individuals face when navigating the allure of upward mobility in a class-stratified society. Through the character of Masterji and the residents of the building, Adiga illustrates the complex relationship between personal aspiration, collective identity, and the compromises one must make to achieve success. By intertwining themes of class, corruption, and urbanization, the novel critiques the socio-economic systems that perpetuate inequality while also emphasizing the human cost of social change. This paper has explored how Adiga's work engages with these issues, offering valuable insights into the struggles faced by individuals in a rapidly modernizing society, and has contributed to a deeper understanding of the moral complexities of social mobility in the Indian context.

The complexity of human nature and the tension between individual desires and collective well-being are at the heart of Adiga's Last Man in Tower.

### **Summing Up:**

To sum up; the researchers come to the point that Last Man in Tower offers a rich exploration of the interplay between identity and social mobility in contemporary India. Through the struggles of its characters, particularly Masterji, the novel reveals the moral, emotional, and social complexities of upward mobility in a society marked by stark class divisions and rampant corruption. Adiga's nuanced portrayal of the residents' desires for a better life, set against the backdrop of a changing urban landscape, serves as a powerful critique of the ethical and social costs of modernity. The novel ultimately challenges readers to reflect on the true meaning of success and whether the pursuit of personal gain is worth the compromises it often requires. The characters' struggles with their decisions, particularly Masterji's, reveal the deep emotional and psychological conflicts that arise when personal gain threatens to undermine long-standing communal ties. As the narrative unfolds, Adiga powerfully critiques the moral compromises required in the pursuit of social mobility, presenting a sobering portrait of a society where material success is often attained at the expense of integrity and solidarity. This exploration of personal sacrifice for social advancement reflects a broader critique of contemporary urban India, where rapid development and the allure of wealth create ethical quandaries that challenge traditional values and moral certitudes. Through this lens, Adiga's work offers an incisive commentary on the human cost of modernity and the pursuit of success in an unequal world.

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