

## **Synopsis**

### **A Comparative Study of Select Indian Booker Prize Recipients**

A Comparative study in the broad sense leads to a more comprehensive and deep understanding of the works chosen for study and their authors. The main objective of the study is to interact between literatures written in various countries in different languages. The idea is further elaborated and the meaning for comparison widened and it says even a single literary course may be illuminated by comparative insights. Etymologically Comparative Literature means “any literary work that compares.” In this backdrop such a comparison could be in terms of structure, style or the philosophic vision. A Comparative study of a novel will help in the thematic analysis of the work, its narrative techniques, its uniqueness and its diverse nature. The different perspectives of the works and its authors will be explored in detail. In this research work three Indian Booker Prize Recipients and their works are taken for study. India which is known for its unity in diversity is being closely observed by the writers and they have brought forth a vivid picture of the country and its people.

India with its diverse culture and heritage is unique in the world. It has a rich past and is proud of its ancient civilization. The country is well known for its classical literature. The researcher intends to explore new avenues in Indian writing in English, which has a good repository, reflecting Indian ethos. The advent of the British initiated creative artists to write in English and were acknowledged world over. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was the first Indian writer of the novel in English. Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Noble Prize in Literature and Indians started writing in English expressing in an alien tongue. The writers are competent in

both English and their mother tongue. The native writings are abundant in India and a comparative study on those works can also be done.

The real journey of the Indian English Novel began with Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, and Mulk Raj Anand. The trios had their own style and theme to enrich people at the time of independence. Revival of novels in India began after the 1970s. The novels of this period slowly unveiled the grotesque mythical realities of India. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children* fascinated the readers and it was awarded the Booker Prize for its unification of Indian History with language. Indian reality is the predominant and recurrent theme of several young budding novelists. Eminent writers like Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Sheth, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shobha De, V. S. Naipaul, Chetan Bhagat, Shashi Tharoor, Kamala Markandeya, Bharathi Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, etc have contributed much to Indian Writing in English. Their novels are based on current events and recent social problems.

India is a land which has adopted itself to both natural changes and also the changes brought about by foreign rule. Its glorious historical past was shackled by the colonial rule which went on for several years. People who remind us about the past honour that are won by notable achievements have passed away. Even then the multi-cultural and multi-religious panorama of the nation continues because of the overflowing population. Indian culture has been reshaped by tremendous alteration after the Independence. The style of the writers also has changed according to the rhythm of the new trends of the society. The novelists are definitely be talented in the way they write, the language they use, the style in which they present, the metaphors they choose to narrate and the narrative techniques they deploy are commendable in nature.

In recent days Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga drew the attention of the world by winning the Booker Prize and made Indians feel proud by their literary achievement. Their novels are intensely readable; each of them is an extraordinary example for imaginative and narrative aspects. The stories have highly thought provoking ideas and issues. These prize winning books are in every case both ambitious and approachable. Contemporary political, social and economical condition of our nation is portrayed in these novels. The researcher plans to do a Comparative Study of the novels of Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga, who have won the prestigious Booker Prize.

“A Comparative Study of Select Indian Booker Prize Recipients” enhances the comparison of themes and forms of the novels written by the Booker Prize Recipients. An in-depth study of their work is done in detail in this work to bring out the similarities and dissimilarities in their novel. It will open a new avenue about the tactics they have used to please both the Indian and the foreign readers. Booker Prize is the most coveted British literary award. It is given to distinguished writers who belong to Commonwealth nation till 2016. America is also included after the year 2016. The eminence of the writers from various countries are recognized and rewarded with the Booker award. The prize received by the recipients gives them lot of fame and money. In addition they bring laurels to the nations to which they belong.

The first chapter will be the introductory chapter. It would trace the history of Indian Writing in English and the growth of novel in Indian Literature after the 1960s. The elevation of the Booker Prize recipients in the literary world after receiving the awards will also be analyzed. The Booker Prize is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original full length novel, written in English language, by a citizen of either the Commonwealth of Nation or Ireland. It was first awarded in the 1969. After 2016 the American writers were also included and are given

prizes along with the other nations. The selection process for the winner of the prize is made by an advisory committee chosen by the Booker Prize Foundation. This committee selects judges from amongst leading critics, writers, academics and notable public figures. The winner is usually announced at a ceremony in London's Guildhall.

The second chapter titled "The Battle of the Binaries" will deal with the socio-political issues in *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy, *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai and *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga. These works are extremely innovative and unique in quality. They focus on the role of politics in the society at major level and at home at the minor level are explicit in their works of the authors chosen for study. In addition to this class, caste religion, changing human relationship and the subjugation of the poor will be analysed. The major binary opposition is the long time war between the haves and the have-nots. The disparity in the social status of the people is the main cause for rifts in the society. The rich people are only minorities in a highly populated country like India but the middle-class and the poor are the dominant ones. The rich under estimate the poor and suppress them in the name of caste, class, and power.

In the recent times politics is also favorable for the people with money. In a democratic country where the voice of the public plays a vital role is mostly unheard. The rich live a comfortable life while the poor get adapted to the social changes and feels satisfied by what they get. In the novels of Arundhati Roy and Aravind Adiga the changing political scenario and its effects on the common people is narrated beautifully. The familial politics and its reflection on the under-privileged is the theme of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. The author has taken real care to bring out the problems of the dalits in Kerala because of their social status. The character of Velutha touches the hearts of the readers in many ways.

In Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, politics of different kind is exposed. The Gorkhas demanding for a separate State and the unrest that is prevalent at the time of insurgency is particularly focused in the novel. During the 1980s the people who were not satisfied by the division made between the States started fighting for a separate land. Being a majority in a place when other people suppress them even the youngsters join the GNLFF movement to fight for their right. Unlike the two novels *The God of Small Things* and *The Inheritance of Loss* Aravind Adiga has portrayed the politics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that is totally corrupt. In *The White Tiger* the protagonist is a cold blooded murderer who kills his master and loots the money he has to bribe the politicians. Balram the protagonist works as a driver for a big landlord's son in New Delhi. The landlord bribes the politicians in Delhi to run his coal mines successfully. Balram who is very ambitious to live a rich life kills his innocent master and settles in Bangalore as an entrepreneur. He changes his name as Ashok Sharma after becoming a businessman in Bangalore. Corruption becomes the root cause for murder, illegal business, and the subjugation of the poor. Government hospitals that are asylums for the poor are also functioning like a business centre without mercy.

The three Booker Prize recipients have stick to the current political situation in Postcolonial India. Their personal experience in day to day life has reflected in their works. Real life situations are elaborated in a meticulous way in their fictions.

The third chapter titled "Fissures and Fusions" will portray the socio-cultural aspects in the novels chosen for study. They will mainly focus about multiculturalism, modernity, bitter experiences, impact of globalization, the game of possession, gender bias, radical discrimination, colonial neurosis, post-colonial chaos and despair ethno-racial and historical relationship between people from different cultures and backgrounds. The Booker Prize recipients have deep

interest in India – the India of after the 1960s and have honestly represented the mixed image of India.

The changing cultural trend was mainly due to the effects of colonization for a long time and after independence the people are caught between two worlds. The impact of the West is widely observed in every individual's life in India. Decolonization of the people's mind is difficult because Indians have slowly forgotten the rich tradition and cultural legacy of the nation. Migration to Western countries in the pretext of education and greener pastures are the reason for this. In Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* Baby Kochamma is sent to USA for studies and Chacko the brother of Ammu goes to London to pursue his studies in Oxford University. In *The Inheritance of Loss* Jemubhai the retired judge goes to London to take up his degree on Law. Due to the impact of Western education he gets converted into a mimic man as Homi K. Bhabha says and lives as an Anglophile throughout his life. He could bear the innocence of his desi wife and her Indian manners.

In *The White Tiger* Mr. Ashok who is the landlord's son gets educated in America and marries a woman against the wish of his family. He gets settled in New Delhi to bribe the politicians on behalf of his father's coal mine business in the village. The common features like going to parties in the late night and visiting malls are part of his lifestyle in Delhi. Obviously all the three writers chosen for study have closely reflected the food habits, dressing, and manners of the people in their novels.

The researcher shall expose in the fourth chapter the socio-economic conditions discussed in the novels. The chapter is titled as "Transforming India". Money plays a vital role in shaping the characters and it leads to the tragedy of them. They consciously present multiple

perspectives on the common people in the society and their fragmented identities. Ammu in *The God of Small Things* is deprived of respect as she is depending on her maternal parents for her livelihood. She is unable to provide a decent living to her children, and meets a tragic death towards the end of the novel. Her brother Chacko enjoys the privileges of the man and naturally he is the inheritor of his family properties. Though Ammu does equal work in her mother's pickle factory, she is provided only food and shelter. Similarly Sai in *The Inheritance of Loss* settles with her maternal grandfather after the death of her parents in an accident.

In Kalimpong she stays with the retired judge and his cook. She loses her identity and lives a mundane life with two aging men. She spends a humiliated life without a meaningful future. The male protagonist of the novel Gyan lives in utmost poverty. The family educates him with the hope that he will take care of them after his studies. But Gyan joins the GNLFF movement and finds for the cause of his community. The cook and his immigrant son Biju are epitomes of poverty. The cook has a big dream about his son's future. All the expectations of Biju's father don't get fulfilled in his life. The protagonist in *The White Tiger* starts his living as a driver and becomes an entrepreneur after murdering his innocent owner for the sake of money. He never regrets for what he has done to his employer. He hails from a very poor family in the village called Dhanbad. He works in a teashop for the loan which his family has taken from the landlords in the village. His keen observation of his surroundings and intelligence helps to move on to the next stage as a driver. His only aim in life is to break the so-called Rooster Coop that binds the poor man in India from further progress. His way to climb the ladder of success is not commendable. He takes the wrong path and becomes an entrepreneur in Bangalore. He is totally deprived of morality and takes pride in his own success. The deterioration of moral values in the modern society is explicit from his character.

The fifth chapter the concluding one will sum up the four chapters and the researcher's findings will also be discussed. The common factors between these authors, their biographies, are to be dealt in detail in the introductory chapter of this research work. For the uninitiated reader it is a matter of curiosity to see what prompted the jury in the first place to choose these novels in preference to the short-listed works. This aspect will also be focused in the research work. These novelists have an earnest effort to bring the marginalized ones to the centre and have tried to give the human dregs of society's periphery a voice and a name. The researcher plans to unravel the secret behind the success of these writers.



**Key Words:** Politics, Culture, Economy, Globalization, Modernity, Hybridity, Postcolonial trauma, Identity crisis, Poverty, Subjugation of Women, Cultural Neurosis, Moral degradation, Comparison, Binary Opposition, Fissures, Fusion, Transformation, Mimicry, Caste, Class, Regionalism, Loss of human values, political upheaval, unemployment, economic depression, racialism, discriminatory policy, immigration and colonization.