

**Deconstructing Masculinity: Non-Heteronormative Challenges to Cultural Conformity  
in *Selection Day* by Aravind Adiga**

A. Remana, Research Scholar, PG & Research Department of English,  
The Standard Fireworks Rajaratnam College for Women, Sivakasi – 626123  
[remhem01@gmail.com](mailto:remhem01@gmail.com)

Dr. B. Siva Priya, Associate Professor, PG & Research Department of English,  
The Standard Fireworks Rajaratnam College for Women, Sivakasi – 626123  
[sivapriyabaskaran@yahoo.co.in](mailto:sivapriyabaskaran@yahoo.co.in)

**Abstract:**

This paper examines how traditional masculinity is deconstructed through non-heteronormative challenges in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day*. Set in Mumbai's cricket scene, the novel reveals how characters defying heteronormative norms challenge entrenched gender expectations. The narrative focuses on Manju, a promising cricketer, whose identity struggles and emerging sexual orientation place him in conflict with societal expectations. It observes the forces at work in the actions of his father, coaches, and friends that enforce tight notions of manhood on Manju. He debates those deep-rooted cultural definitions of "manhood" as he navigates those expectations within the radical competitiveness of sports. This paper uses poststructuralism and queer theory to show how Adiga, in critiquing patriarchal approaches toward strict gender standards, unravels their alienating effects and offers alternative routes for self-expression. Ultimately, *Selection Day* unmasks conventional masculinity by examining possibilities of subversion and provides for a critical reflection on gender identity and cultural norms in contemporary Indian society.

**Keywords:** Masculinity, Non-heteronormative, Cultural norms, Queer Theory, Indian Society

Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day* is a novel that probes the many dilemmas of young men as they contend with huge expectations from family and society in this new India. The novel's action unfolds against the backdrop of the very competitive cricketing scenario in Mumbai, where cricket acts simultaneously as a metaphor for ambition and a means of working their way around thick issues of masculinity and identity. Such cultural values of masculinity find critical examination in the novel through the experiences of its young protagonists. It brings into focus how cultural norms regarding masculinity are constructed and operated upon, especially from a heteronormative perspective. Adiga scrutinizes inflexible notions of manhood that often coincide with athletic success, economic

achievements, and heterosexual relationships, thus opening insightful perspectives on the social frameworks that perpetuate these ideals. Masculinity tends to follow time-worn, traditional ideals deeply ingrained in the Indian psyche—acts of strength, domination, and responsibility delineate what it means to be a man. The principal obsession for many young men coming from an economically disadvantaged class is cricket, quite often the means of an exit from poverty into fame. However, the pressure beneath such desires is huge; success ceases to be a personal ambition but rather to fulfill family dreams and comply with social demands. The experiences of central characters Manju and Javed reflect this tension as they strive to overcome traditional norms yet create their paths. Manju's struggles with himself, mainly regarding his identity and sexual identity, question the conventional notions of masculinity. There is the stereotypical Indian father figure: ambitious for his son's advancement, determined that cricket is their only ticket to prosperity, and, finally, godmother to their moral sensibility. To Mohan, manliness means success in public life—financial security and sporting triumph. But the more Manju wrestles against these expectations, the more he comes into conflict with the strict codes of masculinity, especially about his feelings for Javed. This resistance states the limitations of traditional masculinity and personal losses of not belonging. Alternatively, Javed is a resistance against these heteronormative values that define manliness in the book. He is unapologetically himself and refuses to take the mainstream paths of sporting success and economic success. Such an action from Javed is in contradiction to the norms of accepted masculine values that have defined the Indian culture. His public dissension of these norms, in addition to his latent queerness, starkly stands out against Manju's quiet struggles and positions Javed right at the forefront of this novel's critique on established gender roles.

This review deconstructs Adiga's use of queer theory to re-examine the text's meaning from the way he deconstructs the notion of masculinity through Manju's and Javed's lives. By applying deconstruction in Jacques Derrida's fashion, a template is created to read into how the novel breaks down the binaristic opposition that frames cultural perceptions of gender and identity. By problematizing this dyadic hook of masculinity and femininity, *Selection Day* opens up a space to rethink traditional masculinity and its attendant constraints. Queer theory, particularly by the writings of Judith Butler, helps explain the counter-hegemonic force of the non-normative identities of Manju and Javed in their subversions against the dominant discourses of heteronormativity.

The concept of queer theory appeared during the last part of the 20th century as a form of reaction to hegemonic structures that perpetuate rigid definitions of gender and

sexuality. Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, as she suggests that gender is not an innate quality but one constituted through the repetition of acts and performances benefits in understanding the tension surrounding Manju's outward adherence to traditional masculinity but his internal desire to break free from these constraints (Butler, 1990). This theoretical thinking explains how Selection Day projects different masculinities in opposition to the prescriptions of society and fosters different strands of self. Manju and Javed's relationship reveals their issues with identity and critiques the larger social identity above and beyond the communities and norms of masculinity. Their experiences call into question the traditional expectations placed on young men, largely in the area of sports, wherein victory hinges upon masculinity and homosexuality. While centering non-heteronormative identities, Adiga demonstrates that even the sturdiest constructions of masculinity are unyielding and point to opportunities for subversion. Both protagonists operate within the cricketing world in contrarian ways that subvert societal norms, and so they are representations of divergent reactions to the weight of conformity and thereby say more about the fluidity of gender and identity in India today.

In the novel Selection Day, by Aravind Adiga, an intricate relationship between conformity to culture and masculinity has been scrutinized in Indian society, where traditional beliefs of gender roles mold people's identity, choices, and life. Masculinity in India is often defined by tough standards that go around the parameters of successful careers, family responsibilities, and hetero norms. These cultural factors affect not only the social status of men but also their identity, especially how people think about them in their family and community. The Kumar brothers, as presented by Adiga in Selection Day, illustrate the aftermath that cultural norms create for these two protagonists as they combine their desires with their expectations regarding their social status and their father's ambitions. Analysing forces at work in the lives of these young men, Adiga seems to point out the tenacity and fragility of traditional masculinity in contemporary India. This paper, through Nanda (1999) and Chopra (2004), explores how the novel represents and criticizes the sociocultural reality regarding Indian masculinity, particularly regarding the expectations within a family, success in career pursuit, and heterosexual gender constructions.

Family is one of the most important elements of Indian culture in constructing an identity for the self, particularly in constructing and defining masculinity. In a majority of societies, especially in India, fulfilling responsibilities assigned by the family, coupled with upholding the dignity and reputation of the family, was considered one of the paramount

values of Indian masculinity. Mohan Kumar represents this relationship in the character Selection Day. One sign of the patriarchal domination of male children is Mohan's compulsive want for his boys to become famous cricket players. His ambitions are imposed on his boys who, in the aggressivity of this encouragement, are chivvied into becoming cricket-good-enough players, regardless of their aspirations. This power of parents reflects a larger social construct in India where the father plays a vital role in defining what young males are supposed to do. The values ingrained in the family, as portrayed in the novel, are quintessentially masculine. His father's aspirations are closely tied to Radha's sense of identity and self-estimation. Because his position in the family has already been decided by Mohan's desires, he cannot express his hobbies and individuality. According to Chopra (2004), Indian masculinity is based on the concepts of power and responsibility in the family system. More often than not, at the expense of their independence, men are supposed to be strong, successful, and leaders. This tension between his need for self-expression and these familial and cultural expectations is repeatedly brought out through the character development of Radha. The ability of the son to fulfill his father's demands essentially hinges on the broader societal expectation that men bring glory, prestige, and status not just for themselves but also for the honor of their families. At the same time, Manju's identity brings out another side of this tension.

While he is entangled with his father's vision for the children, as the younger brother, he is also entangled in family plans, but Manju's rebellion and inner conflict—mostly the newfound preference for science instead of cricket—pushes ahead how crushing these family expectations are. Adiga reveals that Mohan's stranglehold on his sons' life forces them into emotional turmoil and the loss of personal sovereignty, and by so doing, condemns the rigidity of patriarchal gender norms. A significant aspect of the novel *Selection Day* that has helped create a masculine identity is the connection between career success and male identity. Professional success, in this case, pertains to respectable or high-paying professions and sets a boundary for masculinity in Indian society (Chopra, 2004). *Selection Day* views cricket as something more than a game; it is a national pastime and means of social mobility, economic success, and fame. Mohan Kumar believes cricketing success is the ultimate male achievement and awaits that Radha as well as Manju will measure up to this mark. It is in Radha that this pressure is most explicit, as he is groomed from a very early age to be India's greatest cricket player. For his father, society, and for that matter himself, the feeling of manhood is closely tied to his success at cricket. Still, while emphasizing the significant mental bruising this strain causes to Radha, Adiga adds complexity to this story. There is no



space for emotional development or investigation of other aspects of his personality as his identity is boiled down to his performance on the cricket pitch. The tension between personal desire and cultural notions of masculinity is also reflected in Manju's inner dilemma. He is a great cricket player, but science and the academic world are his passions. This deviating from the usual masculine course makes him alienated from his family as well as from himself. The unwillingness of Manju to become the fellow of cricketer Manna demonstrates the compulsion of social appropriation that reinforces masculinity with success in a few professions. Adiga raises a broader Indian social presupposition that men must achieve professional success, especially in glamorous or highly publicized professions, to establish their masculinity through the personage of Manju.

Indian society's heteronormative gender norms, which are so vital in shaping masculinity, serve as the main issue in *Selection Day*—the personal prejudice Adiga harbors against heteronormative gender norms. Traditionally, Indian masculinity has been tied to heterosexuality; deviations from this norm become a sort of stigma and stigmata that lead to the complete isolation of those who defy such norms (Nanda, 1999). The character of Javed is put forth through the character of Manju who serves as a companion and alternative to Manju's inner turmoil against such inflexible ideas of gender and sexuality. Javed is a quintessential example of different masculinity not restricted by society. He promotes Manju to resist the regulation of their existence and publicly rejects the pressure to act by hegemonic conceptions of normalcy. The more laid-back and playful manhood that Javed's character embodies permits emotional vulnerability and non-heteronormative desires. By influencing Manju, a sub-plot unfolds that challenges the traditional build of Indian masculinity when often heterosexuality is considered an essential aspect of masculine identity. Challenging the heteronormative context where Manju was raised, his developing understanding of what he wants especially with regards to sexuality Javed battles in the pursuit of modern India on a greater social level battling through issues of gender and sexuality. This story by Adiga explores freedom from the constraints of traditional masculinity for a definition of fluid identity. The relationship of gender to society has been analyzed for decades by scholars. As such, the poststructuralism and queer theoretical frameworks cannot be undervalued in Analysis of Masculinity in Aravind Adiga's *Selection Day* viewed through Jacques Derrida's deconstruction and Judith Butler's notion of gender performativity. Unpacking the narration of the constitution and deconstruction of gender, this paper tries to prove that the theoretical approaches contribute to clarifying the deep intricacies of masculinity in modern Indian culture.

Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble*, published in 1990, defines that "Gender is not free-floating; it does not exist anew at every performance. A performance of gender takes place within the framework of socially constructed gender norms and conditioning. Butler believes that gender identity has nothing to do with the essence but with repeating gendered actions. Gender performativity is crucial in comprehending the characters' conflicts as they struggle against the manifestations of masculine identity during Selection Day. The main protagonist of the tale is Manju, who is at war with his identity, which prevents him from being conventional masculinity, and his father's expectations of him as a cricket player. According to Butler, gender is not inborn but something constructed through performance. Manju's case is the best example of the conflict between individual will and society's force. Derrida's Deconstruction enriched the study of the character of masculinity portrayed by the novel *Selection Day*.

Deconstructionist Derrida rebuked the binary opposition that constitutes the crux of Western philosophy and the sharp borders between masculinity and gender in *Of Grammatology*. His methodology allows the possibility of studying how these binaries can be destabilized. As Radha embodies both feminine and masculine characteristics, she is a contradictory concept to Manju, as the former would question the concept of set gender. He deconstructs the conventional definition of masculinity in this book to showcase that it is multifaceted with fluidity over the identity thus compelling readers to alter rigid positioning of gender. But at this intersection, Butler and Derrida's theories coalesce to form a rich framework on how *Selection Day* depicts the construction of masculinity through cultural expectations and characters' performance.

Manju's father aptly expresses a patriarchal vision of masculinity, reading strength and competitiveness in sports as defining a 'real man'. However, through his exploration of sexuality and his interest in cricket, Manju undermines the tradition. This challenges Butler's argument that deviations from normative gender identities can effectively deconstruct established hierarchies and be receptive to alternative views of self. The novel also gives an antagonistic observation of the influence of rigid gender on male relationships. Manju and his brother, who possess a more conventionally masculine characteristic, are fighting because both of them are struggling with family expectations. This relation proves the extent to which rigid adherence to traditional masculinity may hinder emotional expression and openness. It also serves as a microcosm. The emotional struggles of these characters serve as metaphors for the limitations of traditional masculinity and align with the queer theory's condemnation of heteronormative settings that typically favor certain gender and sexual identities over

others. Some recent studies explored the meanings deconstruction and queer theory hold within literary contexts. Take, for instance, critics such as J. Jack Halberstam and Lisa Duggan who look at how queer theory fights over the 'normal' lenses through which we understand gender and sex, and instead advocate changeable frames of more fluid and inclusive styles. Through the application of these critical perspectives to *Selection Day*, there will be a better understanding of how Adiga contests against the constraints of masculinity behind the fragile face of his characters' experiences and reveals how interplays between personal identity and societal constructs are fluid. In this essay, through the lens of Derrida's deconstruction and Butler's gender performativity, this essay examines the complexity of masculinity in modern-day India through the prism of exploring gender roles that take place on *Selection Day*.

The character of Manjunath Kumar can now become the nucleus through which tensions between personal identity and societal expectation can be enacted, especially within strict parameters of heteronormative masculinity. Relationships between Manju and important masculine characters in his life, such as his father Mohan Kumar, older brother Radha Kumar, and cricket coach Tommy Sir, bear an influence on internal conflict. All of these relationships also place expectations on Manju about identity, success, and masculinity. Manju's ambivalence over these expectations - as well as told as such through his problematic relationship with cricket - highlights just how he is unable to claim an identity outside of more mainstream definitions of manliness. Manju's father, Mohan Kumar, is a dictatorial figure who forces his sons to be successful enough in their lives. His desire to mold Manju and Radha into cricketing heroes is a form of social pressure that forces him to live up to an idealized, competitive, fit, and prominent notion of masculinity. Cricket is not a game for Mohan; it is the only option for mobility and success for a male in a society with no room for failure. Mohan's aggressive personality comes forth by his constant scolding and manipulating behaviors, as when he is overly rude to Radha upon Radha's losing a match: "Don't act like you've got feelings" (Adiga, 2016, p. 34). Here, Mohan feels that one can play cricket successfully, even win in life, only if he does not have any feelings. It is an archaic, masculine trademark that he carries. This suppression of emotions, Manju particularly finds disturbing as it conflicts with internal struggles regarding his sexual identity. Confused feelings about flamboyant and outspokenly nonconformist Javed Ansari clash harshly with the rigid heteronormative standards of his father. Javed is a representative of a different kind of masculinity, one that symbolizes pliability, with rejection of all social dictates. It is Manju's eager desire to break away from the strait-jacketed traditional masculinity thrust

upon him by his father, brother, and coach that has come out through his blossoming friendship and for that matter attraction for Javed. At one point, Manju contests the rigid norms around him: "Why do I have to choose cricket? Why can't I choose something else?" (Adiga, 2016, p. 162). His skepticism toward cricket as a career mirrors his skepticism toward his assigned role as a heterosexual male. Manju's older brother Radha also is an important part of Manju's identity formation.

Radha initially became the prodigal son, intent on becoming famous via cricket, but when his talent declined, he ultimately fell into disfavor in a humiliating manner. For Manju, the news of Radha's decline brings a message about the potential dangers in defining who he is by mainly using cultural notions of masculinity and success. The competitive nature fueled by their father's favoritism and pressure also aggravates the brothers' internal conflict with Manju. Manju's conflicted feelings toward cricket might be said to be a rejection of the strict gender stereotypes attached to the game and his brother/father's pressure upon him. As Radha says, "Cricket is our birthright.". To deny it is to deny life itself" (Adiga, 2016, p. 123), thereby underlining how cricket becomes an allegory of masculinity and the life choices already determined for it by society. Manju's denial thus presents as a revolutionary gesture of self-definition. The relationship between Manju and Tommy Sir further complicates Manju's struggle with masculinity. Tommy Sir is a figure who coaches and manipulates with promises of heroism in front of the boys he handles. His coaching method emphasizes discipline, aggression, and conformity to the old values of success. The well-coiffed Tony Sir is representative of a cult version of manhood that equates manliness with professional cricketing success. According to this cult version, failure is any kind of deviation from this road towards success. However, even Tommy Sir confesses to Manju's fears and turmoil once in a while, which makes him strive harder because he believes Manju is lazy. There is one key scene where Tommy Sir confronts Manju for being less than his capabilities: "You are letting them down. Your father. Your brother. You know what they've sacrificed for you" (Adiga, 2016, p.154). This scene epitomizes the mountain of family and societal expectations that Manju carries with him, which complicates his ability to morally explore his desires and identity.

Unlike Manju, however, Javed Ansari is an opposing, disturbing figure who stands against society's expectations. Javed never surrenders to societal heteronormative pressures that he denounces, whereas Manju gives in. Due to his queerness, which not only consists of a rejection of normative masculinity but also of an indistinct sexual identity, Javed is the



destructive force that has caused such havoc in the book. With his words and actions, Javed contests the other characters, especially Manju, from adhering to very narrow definitions of gender perceptions and culture. This paper draws on queer theory to narrate how Javed dismantles normative masculine ideologies and exercises his agency in an oppressive society. Besides probable sexuality around him, Javed is quintessentially queer in his non-conformity with social determinations, particularly cricket-playing and familial responsibilities. In the novel, cricket comes as a symbol of achievement, manliness, and social approval. At the same time, Javed, having possessed talents for it, refused cricket as a profession, which became a symbol of his rejection of normal masculine achievement. He even outright states, "Cricket is just one more prison. You win, you lose, and then you die" (Adiga, 2016, p. 199), leaving a mark of his utter distaste for stereotypical frames that restrict men into promising lanes of the route to success and competition. It has deep roots in self-determination, a form of queer resistance to societal definition. In another way, the queerness of Javed impacts his relationship with Manju by providing a platform for Manju to explore his identity outside the lines that are determined as heteronormative. Javed is the one to boost Manju to shift the course of life that has been prescribed to him. His unflinching queerness inspires Manju's journey of self-discovery and challenges him to think about his sexuality and his desires right alongside his cricketing career. Adiga heightens his experimentation with the theme of identity construction by comparing Manju's more contained search with that of Javed, who is not entirely so.

Success, masculinity, and social expectations could be examined through the powerful metaphor of cricket in *Selection Day* by Aravind Adiga. In this sense, cricket is more than a game because sports success creates flexible structures of conventionally carved masculinity since it opens all doors to social acceptance, status, and advancement in career. Adiga contests these forces' means of shaping and limiting masculine identities through the stories of Radha, Manju, and Javed by illuminating not only the detriments of failure but also the possibility of resistance.

Cricket serves as a metaphorical playground for acting out masculinity on *Selection Day*. In many ways, success on the cricket field presents itself as much about the mastery of athletic prowess as an approbation of society and mobility upward (Roy 2020). Such protagonists as Radha and Manju, who come from very poor backgrounds, are terrorized by their father, Mohan, who sees victory in cricket as the only means through which his family will escape poverty. Such obsessive grooming of the sons for cricketing glory is a reflection of how male merit is firmly associated with material and familial success in Indian society

(Ghosh, 2019). Being a cricket prodigy weighed Radha down with being tough and dominant: ideals largely imposed on young boys in Indian society (Mehta, 2017). However, his deteriorating career spelled that there was more than personal collapse; there was a failure to live up to other societal masculine ideals. Adiga implies that the same strength and resilience in sociocultural expectations from men creates deep emotional and psychological tension when those expectations are not met (Banerjee, 2020). Sporting competition, just like the social ideal of masculinity, thrives on continuous high performance and success. For a sport such as cricket on Selection Day, it becomes an instrument in the expectation of men for societal prowess in life. The boys play not for pleasure but for the sake of fulfilling the expectations placed on them by coaches, scouts, and various family members. This reflects the general pressure laid upon men to become like others who are regarded in society as successful at the cost of their individuality (Chaudhuri, 2018). Failure in cricket is not only perceived as a personal loss but also a failure to sustain a strict social construct of manhood. There is, however, an aura of internal conflict between individual desire and the compulsion to conform to societal expectations. Manju is no exception in this regard, as he is torn between being demanded to be good at cricket and what interests him are academics. This ambivalence is reflective of a more profound battle that many men of Indian society face. His reluctance to truly own cricket is therefore in a sense a quiet form of resistance against the restrictive definitions that gauzy success imposes upon him (Sharma, 2021).

Javed is an apparent rejection of the male traditional ideals. While Radha and Manju have to strain to stay within the folds of societal expectations, Javed walks out of the game as well as the cultural frenzy over cricket (Kumar, 2020). Javed's refusal to step into these constructs reflects a greater rejection of heteronormative expectations. His sexual fluidity and outright, free-spirited derisiveness of norms challenge the dominant narrative of what constitutes masculine success, suggesting freedom and possibly more in the rejection of such rigid definitions (Bose, 2021). More significantly, Javed's relationship with Manju complicates the dynamics of masculinity in the novel. Here, it reveals that conformity is not only a sport-specific aspect of Indian society but that gender and sexuality, for instance, serve to suppress and hide these alternative masculinities outside the mainstream (Sen, 2019). On this premise, Javed's rebellion is a subversive force in the novel to follow the direction that masculinity is not synonymous with acceptance by society or succumbing as one of the best cricketing teams in the world.

Lastly, Adiga employs cricket to not only comment on the forces of traditional masculinity but also to provide space for possible forms of resistance. As Radha collapses,

Manju and Javed find ways to resist and project their disagreement with the present gender roles. The silence of Manju's resistance is complemented by Javed's open rebellion, thus allowing room for the possibility of alternative pathways for male identity (Nair, 2021). Failure arrives in the novel as a means of liberation, signifying the fact that the search for success along this route that society is imparting for them can be destructive while resistance opens space for individuality.

This research consisted of a very critical investigation of how the traditional constructs of masculine identity are deconstructed in *Selection Day* by Aravind Adiga and how alternative, non-heteronormative identities are constructed in the contemporary Indian context. Through his criticism of the strict cultural frames that define masculinity, Adiga not only depicts societal pressures on men but also reveals the subversive potential of resisting these constructs. Cricket is a metaphor throughout the novel, pointing to how the demands on men to perform according to ideals placed upon them by society are carried out; equating success in cricket with success in life, tying athletic success with economic and social mobility, and reinforcing a rigid definition of what it means to be a "successful" man.

Radha, Manju, and Javed, almost all characters in Adiga's novel, are seen as exemplifying the influence of such cultural constructs on individual psyches under one's mental aptitude and the degree of willingness to be molded in conformity. Overall, Radha's fall is particularly poignant as it stands out as a tragic example of how the weight of social expectations can be psychologically devastating. His inability to succeed at cricket represents a failure in so many ways beyond cricket. In the context of Indian society, his inability to live up to the masculine ideal of toughness and resilience set for men is an instance of such failure (Banerjee, 2020). Manju's ambivalence toward cricket and his desire to move in another direction indicate a way of rebuffing these masculine expectations quietly, claiming that there are more urgent interests in individual identity than this monetary value associated with masculinity. In reality, Javed is an out-acceptance of all that is against the heteronormative kind of masculinity. His acceptance and affirmation of hating cricket even when he is such a brilliant one is a revolt against the fascination for cricket and its correlation with patriarchal success as cited by Bose (2021). Through this character, nonheteronormative possibilities opened up in the narrative, thus it presented a very critical deconstruction of how Indian society "marginalizes alternative forms of gender and sexual identity" as cited by Bose (2021). This is because the novel represents the tension between expectations of society and identity through his relationship with Manju as how constructions of masculinity do not only

theorize outcasts from the matrix of patriarchal hegemony but at the same time suppress the practices of non-conforming gender performances (Sen, 2019).

Adiga takes a step beyond deconstructing masculinity in the context of modern Indian literature. *Selection Day* writes within more encompassing poststructuralist and queer theoretical limits by challenging gender stability and challenging oppressive mechanisms that interact with 'traditional' notions of masculinity that continue to reify male power (Kumar, 2020). Here, it is pointed out that the characters selected for discussion, Manju and Javed, challenge the traditionally perceived binary nature of gender roles as they navigate and contest spaces in which one's identity and expression can be fluid. In doing so, Adiga opens up possibilities for performing alternative gender, and this goes with the idea that non-conformity may be more efficacious in delivering alternative modes of self-performance (Roy, 2020).

Further research may explore how *Selection Day* relates to broader concerns of globalization and neoliberalism, not least in the forms that pressure from modern economic systems intensifies pressures for masculine success. Further development of analysis might be a far more nuanced exploration of the novel's engagement with queer identity, and that could happen concerning other contemporary Indian texts that have similar preoccupations. *Selection Day* is a landmark writing within the canon of modern Indian literature because it not only criticizes the traditional constructions of masculinity but also opens up space for a more nuanced understanding of gender and identity in an evolving society.

## References

- Adiga, A. (2016). *Selection Day*. HarperCollins.
- Banerjee, R. (2020). *Masculinity and failure in Selection Day*. *Journal of Indian Studies*, 14(2), 67-80.
- Bose, S. (2021). Non-heteronormative challenges to masculinity in Adiga's *Selection Day*. *Gender Studies Quarterly*, 12(3), 110-125.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Chaudhuri, A. (2018). Sport and societal expectations in Indian literature. *South Asian Literature Review*, 9(1), 23-38.
- Chopra, R. (2004). From violence to support: Men, masculinity, and gender relations in India. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 11(1), 107-116.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/097152150401100105>



- Derrida, J. (1976). *Of grammatology* (G. C. Spivak, Trans.). Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Ghosh, T. (2019). The weight of expectations: Exploring paternal pressure in Selection Day. *Asian Literary Studies*, 7(4), 55-72.
- Kumar, V. (2020). The subversion of masculine ideals in Adiga's Selection Day. *Contemporary Indian Fiction*, 15(2), 88-101.
- Mehta, P. (2017). Performing masculinity: The politics of sport in Indian culture. *Masculinities Journal*, 6(3), 45-60.
- Mukherjee, R. (2021). Cricket as metaphor: Sport and societal mobility in Selection Day. *India Studies Journal*, 22(1), 43-59.
- Nair, S. (2021). The costs of resistance: Cricket, masculinity, and identity in Aravind Adiga's Selection Day. *Indian Narrative Studies*, 11(2), 56-70.
- Nanda, S. (1999). *Neither man nor woman: The hijras of India*. Wadsworth Publishing.
- Roy, A. (2020). Social mobility and masculinity in Adiga's works. *Indian Literature Today*, 8(3), 34-46.
- Sen, P. (2019). Alternative masculinities in Selection Day. *Critical Masculinities Review*, 5(4), 96-111.
- Sharma, D. (2021). Conformity and resistance in contemporary Indian sports fiction. *Postcolonial Masculinities*, 10(3), 71-85.