

**Postcolonial Subjectivity in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Reading Mohsin Hamid's
Self-Help Narrative as a Proto-Digital Script**

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ABSTRACT

In today's digital age, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and online technologies play a major role in altering how people think, act, and communicate. As technology becomes thoroughly integrated into everyday life, human identity is increasingly shaped by automated choices and algorithmic instructions. Within this evolving milieu, Hamid's How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia emerges as an important literary work that simultaneously replicates and anticipates the working of digital systems. The book functions as an algorithm through its second-person, self-help approach, continuously counselling, correcting, and guiding the reader towards predetermined achievement. As a result, it reveals how earlier colonial structures continue to exist inside contemporary technology systems, creating what Couldry and Mejias (2019) refer to as data colonialism. Building on this perspective, the study looks at how digital power reshapes postcolonial subjectivity and how Hamid's story challenges the digital logic of self-optimization seen in AI systems. Additionally, it creates an interdisciplinary framework that connects Discourse and Power Theory, Critical Data Studies, and Postcolonial Theory. The finding reveals that by showing how people are programmed and measured in AI-driven civilisations, Hamid's novel foreshadows digital capitalism and data-based dictatorship. This study, ultimately, concluded how postcolonial literature offers a potent prism through which view how algorithmic culture fosters global inequality and reshapes identity. Future studies, therefore, apply this multidisciplinary method to writers who also raise ethical concerns about digital modernity, such as Arundhati Roy and Lauren Beukes.

Keywords: Postcolonial Subjectivity, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Data Colonialism, AI algorithmic Culture, Digital Identity, Self-Help Narrative.

INTRODUCTION

The basic definition of identity and selfhood has been changed in the twenty-first century due to the merging of technology and human life. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is driving the digital revolution, which has changed how people perceive, construct, and perform their identities in addition to changing

communication and labour (Hayles, 1999; Braidotti, 2013). As a result, digital systems, algorithms, and data-driven forms of self-discipline now mediate postcolonial subjectivity, which was previously fashioned by empire, migration, and global capitalism (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Zuboff, 2019). *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) by Mohsin Hamid stands out as a remarkable literary experiment that reflects this digital revolution of human awareness in this changing environment. Additionally, Hamid's usage of the second-person "you" predicts the interactive, customised, and data-responsive interfaces of the digital age in addition to encouraging close reader interaction. Because of this, his story might be interpreted as an early digital screenplay that foreshadows the algorithmic culture of optimisation and self-programming (Hayles, 1999; Fairclough, 1995). As a result, although while the novel takes place in a postcolonial, neoliberal Asia, it also foreshadows a future in which computational rationality shapes human identity and desire. Because of this, Hamid's work is a perfect place to examine how postcolonial identity and post-human subjectivity interact in a time of data capitalism and artificial intelligence.

Moving ahead from this conceptual connection, it is important to acknowledge that literature frequently both reflects and critiques the ideological changes of its era. Therefore, Hamid's story is a critical commentary on the automation of selfhood under global neoliberal systems rather than just a tale of ambition or love (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1988). Hamid presents the story as both a mirror and a machine by referring to the reader as "you" which forces the reader to follow the same optimisation logic that currently drives digital capitalism. In this way, the book reimagines how the self becomes datafied, programmable, and constantly self-regulating in addition to exposing the postcolonial subject's delusion of autonomy (Zuboff, 2019; Couldry & Mejias, 2019).

Background of the Study

The growing combination of postcolonial theory and digital modernity serves as the study's backdrop. Postcolonial discourse has historically focused on how colonial power systems influence resistance, culture, and identity (Said, 1978; Bhabha, 1994). But in the twenty-first century, algorithmic regulation and digital surveillance have replaced colonial governance as the centre of power (Noble, 2018; Mejias & Couldry, 2019). In the same way that imperial systems used to monitor and classify colonial subjects, computational technologies are being used to profile, optimise, and discipline modern people. Couldry and Mejias (2019) have effectively characterised this continuity between colonial and digital control as *data colonialism, a process in which human existence itself becomes a resource for exploitation*. Therefore, it gives Hamid's story a new span of meaning. In the same way that digital platforms teach users to internalise systems of efficiency and self-surveillance, his fictitious self-help guidebook resonates with the neoliberal logic of self-optimization. According to Hayles (1999), information technologies have made it difficult to distinguish between humans and machines, resulting in "cyborg" identities that operate inside algorithmic frameworks. Similarly, Braidotti (2013) contends that a transition from human-centered autonomy to networked interdependence is reflected in the post-human condition. As a result, Hamid's "you" figure could be seen as a precursor of the post-human subject, which is a creature influenced by both technological power structures and social hierarchies.

Furthermore, this study places Hamid's novel at the intersection of postcolonial critique and digital selfhood, providing a lens through which we can comprehend how technological power perpetuates the colonial legacy under new guises. Postcolonial identity, long defined by hybridity, displacement, and mimicry (Bhabha, 1994), now faces new forms of alienation through data-driven control. The individual, once navigating colonial binaries, must now navigate between human agency and algorithmic determinism.

Research Questions

In light of the above discussion, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* foresee and analyse the algorithmic logic of self-optimization (also known as digital control or AI-based control) that underpins modern AI-driven systems?
2. How do postcolonial subjects negotiating digital power dynamics in the Global South relate to Hamid's portrayal of identity, agency, and selfhood?
3. How can the intersections of technology, identity, and neo-colonial power in literary texts be revealed through an interdisciplinary approach that combines postcolonial theory, critical data studies, and discourse analysis?

These questions progress logically from textual analysis to socio-cultural interpretation and finally to methodological innovation, thereby ensuring a coherent analytical trajectory.

Research Objectives

To correspond with the above questions, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To examine how the algorithmic logic of digital systems is anticipated and criticised by postcolonial literary forms, especially Hamid's narrative techniques.
2. To examine how processes of digital colonisation and algorithmic control (also known as "digital control" or "AI-based control") alter postcolonial subjectivity and identity, particularly in Global South contexts.
3. To create and implement an interdisciplinary framework that combines discourse analysis, critical data, and postcolonial literary theory in order to better understand how literature might interact with and oppose the construction of digital empires.

When taken as a whole, these goals create a logical and forward-thinking research route that starts with textual analysis, progresses to contextual interpretation, and ends with theoretical synthesis.

Research Problem

In modern literary studies, the relationship between postcolonial subjectivity and artificial intelligence (AI) is still crucial yet mostly unexplored. While researchers have studied AI ethics (Broussard, 2023) and digital colonialism (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Zuboff, 2019) as distinct fields of study, little attention has been paid to how postcolonial literature foresees and critiques the emergence of algorithmic systems before these technologies become socially embedded. As a result, this study aims to fill three interconnected gaps in the body of current research.

First, the ways in which literary form anticipates digital logics of optimisation and behavioural control are not sufficiently explored. The self-help narrative style and second-person address of Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) create a proto-algorithmic structure that directs the protagonist and reader along predetermined paths of success and conformity. The way that modern AI systems and digital platforms function through prescriptive models that mould user identity and behaviour is reflected in this literary invention (Zuboff, 2019; Noble, 2018). However, the relationship between narrative form and algorithmic logic is still little understood in postcolonial literature studies, despite this striking connection.

Furthermore, current discussions about AI-mediated identity are primarily based on Western epistemological frameworks, which ignores the ways in which postcolonial subjects interact with digital systems through deeply ingrained power structures. Under the pretence of advancement and connectedness, digital technologies perpetuate colonial systems in many regions of the Global South. As a result, algorithmic standards and external measurements frequently mediate identity development in

such contexts, obscuring local subjectivities and indigenous epistemologies (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Bhabha, 1994). Analysing how literary depictions of postcolonial agency and identity, like those in Hamid's book, can shed light on the unequal processes ingrained in the global digital order is therefore crucial.

Lastly, there is a major methodological gap between fields that focus on technology and literary studies. Technology studies clarify the structural and algorithmic mechanisms of control in the digital world, while postcolonial theory offers a critical perspective for examining power, identity, and resistance. Nevertheless, systematic intersections between these two disciplines are rare. By creating an integrated framework that links discourse analysis, critical data, and postcolonial literary theory, this study aims to close this methodological gap. The goal of this multidisciplinary synthesis is to show how postcolonial literature both reflects and analyses the new digital colonisation systems that influence human subjectivity in the twenty-first century.

In summary, this work addresses the methodological divide between the humanities and technology studies, the conceptual gap concerning literary anticipation of AI logics, and the contextual gap involving postcolonial experiences of digital identity. The research advances a more thorough knowledge of how literature might anticipate, analyse, and contest the socio-cultural ramifications of algorithmic control and digital colonisation by addressing these dimensions jointly.

LITERATURE REVIEW

How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia by Mohsin Hamid provides an engaging literary framework for exploring the connection between algorithmic logic and narrative form. By using the format of a self-help manual, which reflects the algorithmic and procedural logic of artificial intelligence systems, Hamid's novel anticipates the dynamics of digital culture, as scholars have come to realise more and more. The language acts as a "proto-digital script", according to Poon (2015), which turns the self-help format into a narrative simulation of computational logic. Naydan (2016) supports this viewpoint by arguing that Hamid's use of the second-person narrative voice dramatises how contemporary people internalise patterns of self-optimization derived from data-driven technologies, similar to the personalisation mechanisms of algorithmic recommendation systems. Together, these insights suggest that Hamid's work not only reflects but also critiques the broader epistemic shifts introduced by algorithmic thinking.

Later researchers have examined how these algorithmic frameworks serve as tools of social and political control, building on these early readings. According to Divino (2024), the self-help genre is a "biopolitical tool" that, in the context of neoliberal capitalism, disciplines people into self-regulation and moralised output. In this regard, Hamid's story might be interpreted as a satirical exposé of what Petersmann (2023) refers to as "algorithmic governmentality"—the subtle ways in which people are taught to see themselves as optimisation projects controlled by unseen data and evaluation systems. As a result, Hamid's book both mimics and challenges the logic of neoliberal selfhood that it portrays, challenging readers to consider the philosophical foundations of self-improvement culture in a time when data is abundant.

The novel's discussion of the economisation of existence under computational systems has received more attention as study has developed. According to Yılmaz (2025), this is a regime known as "digital Taylorism", in which algorithmic management converts human behaviour into measurable measurements. In this way, the dehumanising reduction of subjectivity to programmable code is embodied in Hamid's depiction of economic success as a methodical procedure. Driss (2019) elaborates on this point, arguing that Hamid's story emphasises the cruelty of using computational frameworks to understand human identity. As a result, the novel's aesthetic form—its repetition, linearity, and didactic tone—becomes a

tool for criticism, revealing how neoliberal digital economies reduce complex cultural, social, and emotional issues to quantifiable results.

Recent research places Hamid's work within the larger discourse of postcolonial digital subjectivity by shifting from the logic of algorithms to their social repercussions. The emergence of what Ghazali (2025) refers to as "digital colonialism" highlights the continued existence of imperial hierarchies in platform economies and data infrastructures. According to Menon (2023), algorithmic systems reproduce Western-centric epistemologies through biased design principles and datasets, making them non-neutral. What Das (2023) refers to as "datafied precarity"—a state in which an individual's value is continuously tracked and assessed using algorithmic metrics—is embodied by Hamid's anonymous protagonist within this digital regime. This supports Yilmaz's (2025) claim that by extracting profit from data subjects in the Global South, platform capitalism maintains colonial processes. Through anonymity and erasure, Hamid's protagonist resists classification and legibility, subverting the demand for constant visibility that defines contemporary digital systems (Das, 2021).

Additionally, by illuminating how digital technologies perpetuate cultural homogenisation, the idea of "algorithmic coloniality" enriches this conversation. According to academics like Das (2021) and Yk (2022), data infrastructures marginalise alternative rationalities and local epistemologies while imposing Western forms of knowledge. Thus, Hamid's narrative strategies—its purposefully unclear context, fluid temporality, and rejection of national specificity—emerge as acts of defiance against the homogenising forces of digital globalisation. In this way, the novel reclaims plurality and opacity as postcolonial tactics that subvert the colonial goal of making all subjects knowable, transparent, and governable.

Scholars have highlighted the necessity of multidisciplinary approaches to investigate the convergence of postcolonial and digital paradigms in light of these theoretical advancements. Milan (2019) and Nothias (2025) both contend that a synthesis of literary, cultural, and technological viewpoints is necessary to comprehend "data colonialism". A more nuanced reading of works like Hamid's that interact with computational systems while staying rooted in postcolonial histories is made possible by this multidisciplinary approach. For example, a postcolonial literary study reveals how Hamid's narrative techniques—such as his use of direct address, prescriptive tone, and metafictional play—replicate and defy algorithmic logic (Shakun, 2024). At the same time, critical discourse analysis enables the exploration of how the novel interrogates neoliberal ideologies of entrepreneurship and optimization (Cheng, 2025). Supplementing these methods, digital humanities approaches such as distant reading can illuminate how algorithmic thinking structures narrative possibility (Rizwan, 2025), though Aslam (2025) warns against uncritically imposing computational models on texts that fundamentally resist them. A decolonial framework, as Zhang (2025) proposes, remains essential to ensure that the analysis privileges Global South epistemologies and resists the epistemic dominance of Western theory.

This study adds to a number of new discussions in modern academia by including these viewpoints. First, it shows how fiction functions as a kind of speculative critique of algorithmic culture, bridging the gap between literary studies and artificial intelligence ethics (Dhaliwal, 2023). Second, by explaining how "neocolonial digitality", as Hoque (2023) refers to it, appears through technologies of self-optimization that conceal power under the appearance of progress, it expands the field of postcolonial digital studies. Third, by conceptualising the self-help form as a "algorithmic narrative", which dramatises the convergence of human aspiration and computational order, it broadens the scope of narrative theory. Hamid's writing becomes both a literary production and a philosophical reflection on the digital condition when viewed via this triangulated lens.

However, the process itself needs to continue to be critically reflective. By rejecting digital universalism and emphasising situational knowledges, Smith (2020) highlights the need to decolonise research techniques. In keeping with this idea, Milan (2019) cautions that algorithms function differently in diverse

sociocultural contexts, which means that Western paradigms of AI ethics cannot encompass Hamid's depiction of South Asian digital reality. In a similar vein, Ponzanesi (2019) emphasises the significance of embodied, localised experience as a basis for interpretation, enabling the analysis to place Hamid's criticism within particular cultural and geopolitical circumstances. The interdisciplinary foundation required for such an undertaking is provided by integrating postcolonial theory (Said, Spivak, & Bhabha), critical data studies (Benjamin & Noble), and surveillance capitalism (Zuboff) (Zhang, 2025; Amiradakis, 2023).

Despite these methodological developments, there are still a number of difficulties in balancing technological criticism with literary interpretation. According to Crilley (2020), in order to preserve socio-technical complexity and narrative nuance, scholars must strike a balance between systemic analysis and close reading. In order to examine common reactions to digital modernity, future studies can compare Hamid with other postcolonial writers like Nnedi Okorafor or up-and-coming South Asian authors of digital fiction (Ismail, 2024). Beyond literary studies, Pendse (2022) contends that these analyses can contribute to more general discussions on data justice and AI ethics in the Global South by offering culturally sensitive viewpoints on digital policy and opposition to algorithmic government.

When combined, these studies highlight the fact that postcolonial works such as Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* actively challenge digital modernity rather than just reflecting it. Hamid foresees the human repercussions of algorithmic capitalism and reveals its colonial undertones by dramatising the logics of self-help and optimisation. His work shows how narrative art may serve as both resistance and diagnostic, conjuring areas of opacity, ambiguity, and liberation while exposing the systems of control. This research adds to an expanding interdisciplinary knowledge of how literature both responds to and reshapes the ethical and epistemological landscape of the digital age by integrating postcolonial theory, critical data studies, and discourse analysis. Ultimately, Hamid's fiction invites readers to confront the question of how humanity might reclaim agency within increasingly automated worlds and how postcolonial thought can guide us toward more just and equitable technological futures.

Research Gap

The connection between postcolonial literature and the digital age has drawn more attention from academics in recent years. Even Nevertheless, there is still a clear lack of knowledge about how postcolonial narratives anticipate and challenge the logic of algorithmic systems and artificial intelligence. Digital colonialism, surveillance capitalism, and AI ethics have all been the subject of several research (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Zuboff, 2019), although the majority of these studies have concentrated on technological or sociopolitical aspects. As a result, literature's function as a critical and reflective medium for comprehending digital subjectivity has received little attention.

Furthermore, relatively few scholars have examined how Mohsin Hamid's works interact with algorithmic logic or the developing culture of digital selfhood, despite the fact that his fiction has been extensively examined for its commentary on globalisation, neoliberalism, and social mobility (Poon, 2015; Naydan, 2016). *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*, in particular, has rarely been seen as a story that reflects algorithmic control's operational patterns, in which data-driven decisions, optimisation, and prescriptive actions govern daily life. This divide makes it more difficult for us to understand how literary form itself may foresee artificial intelligence's regulatory logic and reveal its possible implications for human agency.

Furthermore, experiences from the Global South are under-represented in current research on AI and digital culture, which frequently favours Western contexts and epistemologies (Milan, 2019; Smith, 2020). Because of this, little is known about how postcolonial subjects in historically colonised societies negotiate and reinterpret digital modernity. Based on South Asian reality, Hamid's fiction offers a critical

prism through which to look at how technological globalisation reproduces power and knowledge hierarchies. In order to provide more inclusive interpretations of algorithmic culture and to decolonise conversations about digital transformation, it is imperative that this discrepancy be addressed.

Additionally, theoretical frameworks like digital Taylorism (Yilmaz, 2025) and algorithmic governmentality (Petersmann, 2023) have rarely been used in literary studies, particularly in postcolonial contexts. This discrepancy highlights a more serious methodological issue: the division between critical data studies and postcolonial literary criticism. Scholarship runs the risk of ignoring how algorithmic power, or the power of an AI system, perpetuates earlier patterns of control, surveillance, and epistemic dominance in the absence of interdisciplinary integration. In order to investigate how contemporary literature simultaneously reflects and resists digital forms of coloniality, a bridge technique that integrates postcolonial theory (Said, Spivak, Bhabha) with digital and data studies (Zuboff, Noble, Benjamin) is desperately needed.

Thus, by interpreting Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* as a "proto-digital script", this work seeks to close these methodological and intellectual gaps. Using this lens, the study shows how the novel challenges computational logic's effects on subjectivity, freedom, and identity creation in addition to mirroring it. This study adds to the expanding field of postcolonial digital studies by placing Hamid's story within postcolonial and digital frameworks. It also provides a nuanced understanding of how literature can both anticipate and challenge the forces influencing human life in the era of artificial intelligence.

METHODOLOGY

The design, strategy, and techniques employed to answer the research questions are described in this chapter. The paper examines how Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* foresees and challenges the algorithmic logic of self-optimization that influences modern living. The research employs a qualitative and interpretive approach since the goal is to comprehend meanings, ideologies, and identities expressed through language.

Understanding how concepts and symbols function inside a text is the aim of qualitative research rather than measurement (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As a result, this design enables a thorough analysis of Hamid's story to reveal how it interacts with postcolonial identity, digital power, and global injustice.

The study uses a critical-analytical method based on attentive textual reading to logically advance towards these objectives. The approach emphasises how the novel's self-help narrative, second-person voice, and economic images reflect the algorithmic logic of the AI-driven world, which continuously promotes efficiency, optimisation, and self-improvement.

The initial research, whether it is a question or objective thus intimately related to the approach. Furthermore, this study acknowledges that postcolonial histories have a significant influence on these digital dynamics, which are not universal. As a result, the analysis places the text in the context of the Global South, where colonial systems are frequently reproduced through digital expansion. This stage relates to the second study question, which looks at how postcolonial people experience navigating digital systems of control as reflected in Hamid's depiction of identity and agency.

1. The research uses a triadic theoretical framework that combines three viewpoints to make this investigation rigorous:
2. Discourse and Power Theory (Foucault, 1977; Fairclough, 1995) offers tools to examine how language itself becomes a means of control or resistance;
3. Critical Data and Surveillance Studies (Zuboff, 2019; Couldry & Mejias, 2019) helps analyse how algorithmic systems extend capitalist control through data; and Postcolonial Theory (Said,

1978; Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1988) explains how older colonial hierarchies endure in digital forms.

When combined, these viewpoints create an interdisciplinary approach that directly addresses the third research question and goal. By bridging literary studies with digital culture, this method enables research to transition from textual detail to socio-political analysis.

Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) is the main source used for data collecting. Peer-reviewed books, essays, and theoretical works on post-colonialism, digital culture, and artificial intelligence are examples of secondary sources. These resources were carefully chosen to offer theoretical depth and cultural context (Silverman, 2020).

The study takes a number of consecutive steps in its analysis. In order to find recurrent themes regarding digital control, identity, and agency, the text was first carefully studied. Second, sections were categorised according to themes like "digital colonisation", "algorithmic logic", "subjectivity", and "resistance". Third, these themes were examined using the triadic framework, which connected textual evidence to international digital power structures.

Ultimately, interpretations were combined to demonstrate how Hamid's story functions as a pre-digital screenplay that simultaneously foreshadows and criticises the AI-driven alteration of human existence. By relating Hamid's language to more general ideological frameworks, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) helps the textual reading throughout the process (Fairclough, 1995). CDA assists in tracking the reproduction or resistance of digital-colonial authority via words and metaphors. This method allows a dynamic movement from micro-level textual patterns to macro-level cultural meanings, ensuring coherence between data, theory, and interpretation. Additionally, despite the lack of human subjects in this study, ethical care is upheld via accurate citation, intellectual integrity, and equitable representation of all academic sources (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Instead of imposing bias, the researcher lets the text and theory rationally direct the interpretation.

In summary, this technique provides an organised, human-centered approach that perfectly complements the goals and study questions. The research demonstrates how Hamid's work both reflects and challenges the algorithmic mechanisms influencing postcolonial subjectivity in the Global South by fusing textual analysis, discourse analysis, and postcolonial interpretation.

DISCUSSION/ ANALYSIS

Accurate citation, intellectual integrity, and fair depiction of all scholarly sources uphold ethical care even in the absence of human participants in this work (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher allows the text and theory to logically guide the interpretation rather than imposing bias. In conclusion, this method offers a structured, human-centered approach that flawlessly aligns with the objectives and research questions. By combining textual analysis, discourse analysis, and postcolonial interpretation, the study shows how Hamid's work simultaneously reflects and opposes the algorithmic mechanisms driving postcolonial subjectivity in the Global South.

First, the self-help structure and second-person narrative of the book directly address the logic of digital systems that steer and regulate human behaviour. Hamid employs imperative chapter titles throughout the novel, such as *move to the city* and *get an education*, which give the story a predetermined, sequential rhythm akin to the reasoning behind AI instructions or digital algorithms. The form of online courses or algorithmic decision-making procedures is echoed in each chapter, which reads like a coded command. In the same way that digital systems lead users to believe in the objectivity of automated direction, this self-help pattern provides an illusion of autonomy by persuading the reader that success can be had by adhering to precise, set steps. However, Hamid's narrative ironically exposes the emptiness behind such

illusions of control, revealing how structural inequalities and social hierarchies continue to shape one's destiny despite the promise of meritocracy. In this way, the novel simultaneously mimics and critiques the logic of optimization that dominates both the self-help industry and the data-driven digital world.

Additionally, a deeper postcolonial uneasiness about oneself in a technologically advanced, globalised world is reflected in this satirical imitation. The protagonist, referred to as "you", represents the anonymous postcolonial subject who is continuously instructed on how to behave, think, and move inside structures that offer freedom but really create dependency. For example, the voice that warns, *don't fall in love*, symbolises both the emotional distance required by digital and corporate cultures of efficiency as well as the strict tone of neoliberal self-help. Through these instances, Hamid reveals how the person turns into a data-like entity—a measurable, predictable subject moulded by unseen control mechanisms. The repetition of "you" across the narrative further highlights this transformation of identity into a statistical pattern, suggesting how personal stories are converted into impersonal data flows within the broader structure of digital capitalism. Thus, Hamid's narrative becomes a reflection of what scholars like Couldry and Mejias (2019) call *data colonialism*, in which human experiences are continuously extracted and repurposed as economic value.

This portrayal of control, which shifts from the textual to the contextual level, reflects how postcolonial nations currently deal with technological power. Although technology is imported as a promise of progress in many sections of the Global South, it frequently perpetuates earlier hierarchies and patterns of dependence. Similar to this, modernisation and technological advancement seem like routes to prosperity in Hamid's made-up world, but they come at the expense of uniqueness and moral rectitude. The narrator's advice in the next chapter in *move to the city* reflects the global narrative of urban migration and modernisation as a means of salvation, but Hamid demonstrates how this mobility results in new kinds of alienation. Therefore, the novel reveals how the digital and economic structures that claim to empower the postcolonial subject often operate through mechanisms of surveillance, imitation, and control—much like algorithms that "know" what is best for users while invisibly shaping their behavior.

It is now evident that Hamid's self-help framework serves two purposes: it both mimics and subverts the seductive rhythm of algorithmic systems. Homi Bhabha's concept of mimicry, in which imitation turns into a covert form of resistance, provides the best explanation for this duality. With his convincing tone, Hamid's narrator mimics the voice of authority while adding irony and scepticism, enabling the reader to see past the appearance of expertise. For example, even though the directions seem empowering, their results are sometimes devastating, highlighting the discrepancy between actual reality and prescribed achievement. This conflicted tone illustrates how postcolonial subjects must negotiate power structures from which they are unable to completely break free, but which they can still subvert through irony, consciousness, and narrative. Moreover, this discussion highlights the value of combining postcolonial theory, critical data studies, and discourse analysis as a methodological framework. Each theoretical lens contributes to understanding how literature can translate abstract technological power into human experience. Postcolonial theory, therefore, helps situate the novel within global structures of inequality; critical data studies explain how digital systems reproduce colonial hierarchies through data extraction; and discourse analysis reveals how linguistic features such as commands, repetition, and impersonality shape the reader's sense of control and submission. By combining these viewpoints, the study shows that literary works such as Hamid's can function as creative testing grounds for the ethical, psychological, and political ramifications of digital power. This interdisciplinary discussion presents a cultural criticism of the technological ideas that shape contemporary living in addition to deepening literary interpretation.

LIMITATION

Nevertheless, this study has certain limitations despite its discoveries. Its exclusive emphasis on a single book limits the findings applicability to the larger field of postcolonial digital literature. Future research

could contrast Hamid's writing with that of other authors who deal with technology and identity in postcolonial settings, including Arundhati Roy, Lauren Beukes, or Namwali Serpell. Furthermore, although this study uses literary form to understand digital logic figuratively, it does not evaluate scientifically how readers' perceptions and behaviours are influenced by real-world digital systems. This gap could be filled by future studies that combine literary analysis with computational tools or digital ethnography to examine how readers truly perceive "algorithmic" control in literary narratives.

Nevertheless, the implications of this study are significant. It demonstrates that *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* is a potent allegory for how contemporary lives are coded, monitored, and optimised under the influence of invisible networks rather than just a book about ambition in a rising nation. Hamid challenges readers to consider the ethical implications of digital modernity and to find human sensitivity amid the language of efficiency by transforming the self-help format into a place of critique. By doing this, the book serves as a reminder that human emotions like love, sorrow, and empathy cannot be programmed into systems that are meant to forecast and regulate behaviour. As a result, Hamid's story subtly but profoundly challenges the notion that human life can be reduced to statistics or governed by algorithmic logic.

CONCLUSION

To begin with, this study addressed the problem of how postcolonial identity and subjectivity are being reshaped in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and algorithmic control. It explored how Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* mirrors the digital systems that now guide, measure, and manipulate human behavior. The central issue lay in understanding how these technological forces reproduce colonial hierarchies through data-driven power, thereby creating new forms of digital colonization.

Moving to the key findings, the analysis revealed that Hamid's self-help narrative acts both as a critique and a reflection of our algorithmic age. Its second-person narration is similar to how AI systems operate, continuously teaching and assessing the subject. The reader is both empowered and controlled as they participate in a feedback loop like to that of a digital device.

The book, however, also highlights the psychological conflict between control and freedom in digital societies by showing how postcolonial people balance technology manipulation with self-determination. In terms of ramifications, these results imply that literature offers a special and essential forum for discussing the moral and cultural ramifications of digital technology. Hamid reclaims the agency of the postcolonial subject and shows how narrative art may humanise data and recover meaning in an automated society by exposing the logic of AI-driven capitalism through fiction. However, there are certain restrictions on this study. It mostly concentrates on one literary work and applies a particular theoretical framework to its interpretation. The conversation might be enhanced by more extensive comparisons with other postcolonial writers or actual research on reader reaction.

Future studies should therefore broaden this interdisciplinary approach by incorporating other authors who also deal with the intersections of technology, power, and identity, such as Arundhati Roy and Lauren Beukes. Research that is cross-cultural or comparative may help us better understand how various Global South contexts deal with digital colonisation. In conclusion, this research affirms that *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* is not merely a story about ambition but a profound reflection on how AI and algorithmic power redefine what it means to be human. Ultimately, literature stands as a vital tool for reclaiming voice, agency, and empathy in a world increasingly governed by invisible digital systems.

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