

THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION TOWARDS CHILDREN AS REFLECTED IN CHARLES DICKENS' OLIVER TWIST

By:

Lusianus Laia ¹⁾

Merri Hotnauli Siregar ²⁾

Gongsar Silaban ³⁾

DarmaAgung University, Medan ^{1, 2, 3)}

E-mail:

lusianuslaia@gmail.com ¹⁾

merrisiregar@gmail.com ²⁾

gongsarsilaban@gmail.com ³⁾

ABSTRACT

This study deals with The Impact of Industrial Revolution towards Children as reflected in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist. The aim of this study is to find out the negative impact of industrial revolution towards children and how these negative impacts affect children. This study uses qualitative research method and sociology theory of literature in analyzing the data relates to the description of the negative impact of industrial revolution and how these negative impacts of industrial revolution affect children as portrayed in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist. The result of this analysis shows that there are two negative impacts of the industrial revolution toward children in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist, namely Poverty and Child Labor. Meanwhile, how do these negative impacts of the industrial revolution affect children there are four types, they are: Children Recruitment as Criminals, Baby Farming, Children Apprentices and Physical Abuse towards Children.

Keywords: child labor, exploitation, industrial revolution, negative impacts, poverty.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang Dampak Revolusi Industri terhadap Anak-anak sebagaimana tercermin dalam Oliver Twist karya Charles Dickens. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dampak negative frevolusi industry iterhadap anak-anak dan bagaimana dampak negative tersebut mempengaruhi anak-anak. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dan teori sosiolog isatra dalam menganalisis teks dalam novel yang berkaitan dengan deskripsi dampak negative revolusi industry dan bagaimana dampak negative revolusi industry mempengaruhi anak-anak. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada dua dampak negative revolusi industry terhadap anak-anak dalam Oliver Twist karya Charles Dickens, yaitu Kemiskinan dan Pekerja Anak. Sementara itu, bagaimana dampak negative revolusi industry tersebut mempengaruhi anak-anak terdapat empa tjenis, yaitu: Perekrutan Anak sebagai Penjahat, Pengasuhan Bayi, Anak Magang dan Kekerasan Fisik terhadap anak.

Kata kunci: pekerjaan anak, eksploitasi, revolusi industri, dampak negatif, kemiskinan

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is the result of the writer's imagination about the description of human life in society. It means that literature records the real life events from the society and converts these mundane activities into fiction and presents them to the society as a mirror in which people may look at their own images. According to Pradopo (1994: 26) Literature is a reflection of the world and human life with its social environment, where the main criterion as the basis for literary work is truth about what the writer wants to convey. Through this process, literary enthusiasts will more quickly understand the conditions and social life around the writer because literature represents the people and society, culture and tradition, even the social aspects and social problems that occurred in society and will serve as documents at that time.

It means that literature is a way for the writer to convey his thoughts, experiences, feelings and ideas about a reality or the real picture around him. It can be concluded that literature is the picture of its written time that reflects an event or human life and its relationship with society based on the experience or imagination of the author. So literature and human life are difficult to separate, because literary works tell about life, while life is an inspiration for a writer to produce literary works like novel.

In understanding humans and society and social phenomena, an approach is needed. According to Saraswati, (2003:2) Sociology means that an approach to learn about society. According to Henslin, (2003:4), Sociology is the scientific study of society and human behavior (Henslin, 2003:4), it means that sociology is a systematic approach to

thinking about, studying, and understanding society, human social behavior, and social groups.

Novels can be stories about technology, sexual freedom, global warfare, urban chaos, revolutionary technology, romance, fiction, real life, family, horror, social, anxiety or all about phenomena that occur in society. The same case happens in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, which was published in 1838, with the background of the Industrial Revolution that occurred in the Victorian Period. *Oliver Twist* is a story that describes the poor living condition of children in England in the Victorian era with the background of the industrial revolution who received unfair treatment from the social environments.

The industrial revolution indirectly changed the order of life from agricultural to machinery, and this was the result of the impact of the industrial revolution which emphasized the negative effect towards the lower classes or workers and forced them to commit violations such as crimes that harm themselves and others. Many changes had taken place quite significantly in the fields of technology, manufacturing, mining and transportation, agriculture, etc. It also had profound positive and negative impacts on social, economic, political and cultural conditions around the world. .

The industrial revolution is the process of developing human civilization or the process of an economic system that changes from an agricultural system to an industrial system that is driven by machines. It is the same as the Victorian era against the backdrop of the industrial revolution as technological and economic advances gained momentum with the development of steam-powered ships, rails, and later in that century the

development of internal combustion engines and the development of electric power.

The writer chooses Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* as the object of the study because it shows how hard the life of an orphaned child is to survive in the industrial revolution era that threatens his future in following the current development of the times and social demands and new social problems as a negative impact of the industrial revolution.

In this study, the writer analyzes the negative impact of industrial revolution towards children and how these negative impacts affect children in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

2. THEORRETICAL FRAMEWORKS

There are some relevant theories which are used in this study, they are: Sociology of Literature, Poverty, Child Labor and Exploitation.

a. Sociology of Literature

Sociology of literature is a study or approach in the form of an objective and scientific study of human in society, institutions, all social relationship, phenomena, social aspects and processes. According to Meiliana, (2019:1) in *Sociology of Literature*:

“Sociology of literature is a specialized area of study which focuses its attention upon the relation between a literary work and the social structure in which it is created. It reveals that the existence of a literary creation has the determined social situations. As there is a reciprocal relationship between a literary phenomena and social structure, sociological study of literature proves very

useful to understand the socioeconomic situations, political issues, the world view and creativity of the writers, the system of the social and political organizations, the relations between certain thoughts and cultural configurations in which they occur and determinants of a literary work.”

Based on the statement above, theory of sociology of literature helps the writer to understand about the relationship between literary works and social structure in this case *Oliver Twist* novel, so that this reveals that the existence of literary works. It aims to understand social phenomena, socio-economic situations, political issues, world view and the background of a literary work.

Literary work is regarded as the segment of society. According to Meiliana (2019:1) “The sociology of literature is an outcome of the complementary relationship between literature and society. Literature written in a certain period of time is directly connected with the norms, customs and traditions of the day.” It means that being a specialized area of literary study it explains the relationship between a literary work and society in which it is created. It also examines the sociology of the writer and analyses the conditions of creation and production of literary works

Apart from being a segment of society, literary works also a reflection of the society in which literary works created. According to Meiliana (2019:1) literary works is “As a social product, literature reflects human society and culture. So it is regarded as the mirror of the society.” By understanding sociology theory of

literature, then indirectly we are studying about the era in which the work was created.

b. Poverty

Poverty is a condition that does not support or is an inability to meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health. According to World Bank (2000:1) "Poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being." It means that Poverty is a state of not being able to meet the most basic needs in this life, such as lack of food so that hunger will occur, not having a proper place to live and proper clothing, sick and careless, illiterate and uneducated. Living in poverty is very vulnerable for unexpected events or disasters beyond their control. They often get bad treatment from the surrounding environment, such as state and community institutions and are ostracized from various communities.

According to Supriyatna (2008) "Meanwhile, the characteristics of poverty are: (1) most of them are living in rural areas; (2) their family size are bigger than the average; (3) their main source of income is agricultural sector; (4) lack of resources; (5) low quality of human resource; (6) low income; (7) most of income is used for basic needs; (8) tend to have food insecurity"

During the industrial revolution, the capitalist class or people who have power or authority took a lot of advantages while the lower class people only work in factories for low wages. According to Miller (2016) in the 19th century, rapid changes in employment, housing and social welfare brought about major changes in lives of the people. The Victorian era was a time of movement and adjustment in which many workers lived

in extreme poverty and even died on the city streets of starvation.

C. Child Labor

Child labor is a term for employing young children According to Wade (2009):

"Rich factory owners approached parish leaders with the idea of them taking in children and feeding, housing and providing for those children in exchange for the children's work in their factories." "Children worked under deplorable conditions and were being exploited by the industrialists. A picture was painted of the "dark satanic mill" where children as young as five and six years old worked for twelve to sixteen hours a day, six days a week without recess for meals in hot, stuffy, poorly lit, overcrowded factories to earn as little as four shillings per week."

In economic terms, pay low cost in order to get much income, so that the factory owners employed children because they can be paid cheaper and those children did not have working hour limitation. Humphries also says,

"At sufficiently low adult wages, many families would need children to work, and at these low wages, employers could put to work large numbers of children as well as adults." (Humphries, 2010: 34)

c. Exploitation

Exploitation is the arbitrary or excessive use of a person with the aim of personal or group interests without considering justice and compensation for the welfare of victims who are exploited.

According to Cory & McAndless-Davis (2005:30) "exploitation is the use of force, threat or coercion to abuse or intimidate people other." It means that exploitation is a form an acts or

behaviors can become a habit and create an imbalance social or physical strength.

In *Oliver Twist*, there are four kinds of exploitation that occurs against children during the industrial revolution, namely the recruitment of children as criminals, baby farming, children apprentice and physical abuse towards children.

1. The Recruitment of Children as Criminals

Those who are exploited are neglected children such as orphans, according to Miller (2016) that some poorer Victorian children found that criminal activities made their lives easier. Pickpockets were everywhere. Snatching food off food vendors' carts and quickly running away was often the only method of getting something to eat. Those children were asked to rob handkerchiefs, money, jewels, and many others. If they could not rob many things, they would be punished by the leader like let them sleep without eating and threaten them.

2. Baby Farming

In the era of the industrial revolution, the number of orphans also increased because many parents died due to accidents in factories so the orphans taken to parish houses and many women who worked in factories had to leave their babies to be cared for. According to Wynne (2021) "A baby farmer is someone who was purely interested in making money out of taking in these children." Baby farming was a very famous business at that time. The nannies were paid but they did not do their job well. They starve the babies, torture them and ignore them.

3. Children Apprentices

There were many orphanages to accommodate children who were

abandoned by their parents because they died or were abandoned because they were unable to care for them.

Most of the children would be sent to workhouses to work there when they were 10 years old and some of them were also offered at low prices to become apprentices or slaves to the capitalist class or to those who ran shops. Humphries (2010: 46) says, "Under such pressures pauper apprenticeships, never passports into the better trades, may have become ways to dispose of burdensome children, means by which they were hurriedly ushered into the labor market."

4. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is a form of physical or mental abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, or neglect of children. Most physical abuse occurs in the child's own home, orphanage, at school, or in the environment where the child interacts.

According to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Administration on Children, Youth and Families Children's Bureau (2019) Physical abuse is generally defined as "any non accidental physical injury to the child and can include striking, kicking, burning, or biting the child, or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child."

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, the writer applied a qualitative descriptive method and library research process based on sociology approach. According to Gay (1992: 217), descriptive method involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. It means that by using qualitative descriptive method the writer tries to describes and interpret the data related to this subject, in order to get deep data and information about the object by giving detail data,

information and solve the problem in this study. In this study, the writer collected the data to describe the impact of industrial revolution towards children as reflected in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. The data expressed as terms, dialogues, phrases and sentences.

The statements of the problems of the study are formulated as below:

1. What the negative impacts of the industrial revolution towards children are reflected in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*?

2. How do these negative impacts of industrial revolution affect children portrayed in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*?

The data were collected by the writer with the following steps:

1. Reading *Oliver Twist* novel repeatedly to get an accurate and clear understanding regarding the problems in this study.

2. Collecting some books that relate with sociology both library and internet research.

3. Finding and marking the data relates to the negative impact of industrial revolution towards children in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

4. Finding and marking the data explains how these negative impacts of industrial revolution affect children as portrayed in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

5. Arranging and choosing the data related to the problems of the study.

4. DISSCUSSION

This study deals with the negative impacts of industrial revolution towards children as reflected in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. The data were taken from the texts in the novel and the writer applied qualitative descriptive and library research which supported the analyzing of this novel.

A. The Negative Impacts of Industrial Revolution toward Children Reflected in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist

There are two negative impacts of the industrial revolution reflected in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, toward children namely: poverty and child labor.

1. Poverty

This study revealed the description of poverty in this novel was characterized by family low incomes, food shortages, poor living conditions, and poor health.

Poor living conditions are part of poverty. Families who have a lot of children experience difficulty to meet their needs so that most of these children will be neglected and even die on the streets.

The situation of hunger and destitution is part of poverty. Due to all the social problems associated with industrial poverty, the government tries to pass a new Poor Law in order to help the poor. Unfortunately, the Poor Law makes the poor suffer even more and the situation of orphans were left starve and neglect.

Poor health also parts of poverty. The growth of children both physically and mentally is very influential on the future of these children. But unfortunately, in the Victorian era with the background of the industrial revolution, the condition of the children was very worrying. They look thin and pale and neglected.

Low family income makes children worse off and fall into poverty. As the consequence of the low wages that they received, they have to suffer financial problem.

2. Child Labor

Children labor are involved in many different forms of works, which include risks and hazards such as agriculture, mining, manufacture, construction bonded children laborer,

domestic work. Most of the children in the industrial revolution era were made as worker, every child sent to the orphanage will be made as a farmer.

Many factories employ many children because they can be paid low wages and ordered arbitrarily. They work as oakum pickers, they spend their time from early morning until sunset. So that children in the industrial revolution era lost their childhood. With long working hours, food will be restricted so many of these children starve to death at work. They worked as construction workers, laying bricks. Another form of child labor is chimney sweeping. Each factory employs children as cleaners to maintain the factory environment.

B. The Effect of the Negative Impacts of Industrial Revolution Affect Children in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist

Based on the previous explanation regarding the negative impact of the industrial revolution, there are two types, namely: poverty and child labor. Both of these impacts certainly affect the children. As the effect is that they are exploited by the way they are recruited as criminals, baby farming, child apprentices and physical abuse.

1. Children Recruitment as Criminals

During the industrial revolution era, many children lived on poor living condition, they live on the street. Most of those street children are orphans or neglected children. The existence of many street children is caused by poverty. This situation gives a chance for the people who have authority in order to recruit those of children as pick-pocket or thief.

Recruitment of children as criminals is also considered as an influence of poverty that is afflicting them, so that children are used for their own interests without thinking about the safety of the children.

2. Baby Farming

During industrial revolution era, baby farming had become a very well-known business. The condition of those children when they are farmed out is also miserable. Some of them are dead due to bad treatment and the carelessness of baby farmer. The children in the orphanage receive allowances for their living expenses in the orphanage, but the person who is in charge of controlling the orphanage makes the children his business, which costs are not fully utilized for the benefit of the children in the orphanage by let them live in misery.

During industrial revolution, this kind of business was started because of the number of woman that worked as laborer was increasing so that they had to entrust their babies to baby farming and also orphans. Most of those babies are exploited by baby farmer to get money for their own advantages.

Baby farming can be considered as children exploitation because they utilize babies as their money farm. They are paid by their parents and orphanage but they never done their duty very well. They just think about themselves and take advantage of those babies.

3. Child Apprentices

There were many children who worked as apprentices during industrial revolution era. The word apprentice means a person who is under an obligation to work for his master for a period of time for which he receives his master instruction for his profession, art or occupation. Most

of children apprentice are offered with some pound for themselves from the board.

Child apprentice is form of child exploitation because they use these children to help with their work during their internship. There is no responsibility of a master when his apprentice is dead. All they think is about how the apprentice can help them look for money and helps their business.

4. Physical Abuse

Most Children in orphanages often experience physical abuse, like beatings or abuse by the take care of them. When there is negligence or the slightest mistake of the children then they will be punished and even caned

The physical abuse experienced by children is horrific. He even prayed that they would order him back into the darkroom, starve him, beat him and kill him if they wanted rather than send him with the horrible man. This is an illustration of how terrible the physical abuse experienced by children at the time.

Physical abuse is a form of exploitation as a result of the impact of poverty and child labor, where they experience physical abuse in their environment, both in the workplace, in orphanages and others.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After analyzing the data, the writer draws conclusions and author presents the conclusions of the overall analysis.

Based on the previous data analysis, the writer came to the following conclusions:

There are two negative impacts of the industrial revolution towards children reflected in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist:

1. Poverty was characterized by low incomes, food shortages, poor living conditions, and poor health.

2. Child labor is characterized by most children at that time working as farmer, chimney sweepers, picking-oakum, shop-keepers, construction workers and many factories prefer to employ children because they can be paid lower wages even if they work very long hours so that children lost their childhood.

Regarding the negative impact of the industrial revolution, there are two types, namely: poverty and child labor. Both of these impacts affect the children, the children exploited by the way: Children recruitment as criminals, Baby farming, Child apprentices and Physical abuse.

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