

Child Labor As Reflected in Francesco D’Adamo’s *Iqbal*: A Mimetic Approach

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Labor <p>Keywords Child labor Poverty Slavery</p>	<p>This research is entitled "Child Labor as Reflected in Francisco D'adamo's <i>Iqbal</i>: A Mimetic Approach". The aim of this research is to find out the factors that cause child labor, convey the struggle of an <i>Iqbal</i> in experiencing child labor, and finally convey the serious impacts caused by the phenomenon of child labor.</p> <p>In this research, the method used by the author is a qualitative descriptive method aimed at analyzing the entire data. The data collection method uses the library study method. In conducting research, researchers used the mimetic approach and also the memitic theory of M.H Abrams.</p> <p>The main data is taken from words, phrases and sentences from the novel. Meanwhile, supporting data is taken from several books, articles and the internet which supports the findings in the novel and will be compared with events that occur in real life.</p> <p>Based on this research, it has been found that the factors of child labor are poverty, poor development, and also a bad government system. The negative impacts of child labor are poor health, lack of education, exploitation of children and loss of childhood.</p>

I. INTRODUCTION

Literary work is a collection of ideas, thoughts, and feelings of a person that is poured so that it becomes a creative work. Literary works are also the result of someone's imagination taken from life stories as a source of inspiration, using existing stories. It makes it easier for readers to capture the characteristics of the literary work related to the world around him and enjoy reading. Basically, a literary work is a work created from one's imagination about an event, wishful thinking, situation, and even feelings. Semi (1993:8) claims that literature is a type and creative of creative artwork whose objects are humans and their lives told via the medium of language.

Literary works contain a lot of social values, philosophies and problems that exist in society. It shows that literature cannot be separated from the values of human life and social changes. Literature in general is a reflection of social reality, namely a reflection of community life, which is manifested by poverty, social inequality, economy, education, culture, religion and history. This is in accordance with the opinion of Wellek and Warren (1995, 1995:38) which states that literary works can be seen as a series of works that are arranged chronologically and are part of the historical process. Therefore, the creation of a literary work is influenced by the historical process. Then many were appointed by the author to become a literary works.

In addition to the imagination, literary works are also created based on events that the author saw, heard, or experienced directly. Social problems are the topics most often used as the subject of a literary work because they are closest to real life. One of the social problems that is often made into a discussion is poverty. Poverty is one of the many social problems, so many authors adopt it as a literary theme. because poverty is a problem that never goes away from either a region or a big country.

Poverty in Pakistan declined inversely from 1970 to 1980. In 1993, the poverty rate in Pakistan was 26.6 percent, but by 1999, it had risen to 32.2 percent. Since 1999, economic growth has dropped even further, expenditure has continued to fall, and the country has been hit by a severe drought. Asian Development Bank (2002)

states that rural poverty in Pakistan is 36.3 percent, whereas urban poverty is 22.6 percent.

Poor governance issues are the reason for Pakistan's poverty it is also a major source of low corporate confidence, which means low levels of investment and growth. Government problems also lead to inefficiencies in social services, posing a serious threat to the utilization of the country's human resources. The lack of public trust in state agencies, particularly the police and courts, undermined their legitimacy and directly improved the security and public situation that deteriorated during the 1990s.

A horrendous economic situation in Pakistan is portrayed in a novel entitled *Iqbal* by Francesco D'adamo in 1999. *Iqbal* is a novel based on a true story in Pakistan. The novel is about a child who works in a carpet factory because his father exchanged it for money. It starts with Iqbal's younger brother, who was sick but had no money, so his father exchanged Iqbal for Mr. Hussain Khan, who was the owner of a carpet factory for some money. From then on, Iqbal worked in a carpet factory, where he was not alone; there were 14 other children who also worked because of their parents' debts.

Khan tells the children that their hard work will lead to their freedom. Each child has a blackboard with lines on it representing the amount of money their parents owe, and they are told that the lines will be erased as their work earns them. This money is for him. But this is just a trick of the khan. Iqbal informs them that they will not be released no matter how good the carpet they make. This made Iqbal think about how to bring all his friends out of the carpet factory. The main interesting point in the novel is how Iqbal deals with the social condition surrounding him which forces him to live a terrible life and put the children to work.

Thus, the researcher is interested in analyzing the novel. The novel portrays children who are sold or used as substitutes for their parents' debts. Moreover, the social conditions of the environment in this novel can be analyzed further to explore the main problems and how Iqbal survives in his own life. The researcher uses a mimetic approach. The mimetic approach to literary studies is a method of studying the link between literary works and reality outside of literary works. This viewpoint regards literature as both imitation

and actuality (Abrams 1981:89). Mimetic criticism, according to Rahayu (2014), is criticism that views literary works as imitations of natural characteristics, a mirror of or description of the universe and life. the purpose of using the mimetic approach is to study Iqbal's novels and to know Iqbal's struggles

II. METHODOLOGY

In this study the method used is a descriptive qualitative method. According to Mulyana (2008: 145) the methodology is processes, principles and procedures that we use to approach the problem and look for answers. a qualitative research method is a research method used to examine the object. This research is a key instrument, technique data collection is carried out combined, data analysis is inductive, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning more than generalization Sugiyono (2007: 1).

Descriptive method is a research method that determines the status a group of people, objects, conditions, systems of thought or classes of events in the present. The research objectives based on the descriptive method are to make a description, picture or painting in a systematic, factual and accurate information about the facts, properties and relationships between phenomena there is. The characteristics of the description do not only describe the situation or situation events, but also determine relationships, tested hypotheses, make predictions and get items from a problem that you want to solve. Rukajat (2018). Patton and Cochran (2002) stated qualitative research is distinguished by its goals, which are concerned with comprehending some element of social life, and by its techniques, which (in general) provide words rather than numbers as data analysis.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

M.H. Abrams is one of the figures of literary philosophy who put forth the theory of life in society. Mimetic, Objective, Pragmatic and Expressive is the most influential work in the area of literary critique and theory by M.H Abrams. In this study, the researcher chose one of M. Abrams's theories,

namely Mimetic. Mimetic is often identified with the mirror of life (Abrams, 1971: 4).

Mimetic theory has the principle that literary works are imitations of the universe, which is an imitation of the moving world and the story of human life. Humans become objects as the main actors in a life because of their real shape, patterned behavior, ethics, norms, and customs. Mimetic theory is based on history, in which a writer of a literary work expresses his work by following existing history, where the work is made with real-world experiences or events. Many events are not written by a historian but become a topic for a writer because, according to writers, literary works are imitations of events that exist in the world, both old and recent events (Abram, 1999).

Mimetic theory is a literary and cultural theory that stresses the imitation or portrayal of reality in writing. It is also known as literary realism. According to this philosophy, writing should seek to depict the world as it is, without embellishment or idealization. Mimetic theory is most closely connected with Aristotle's works, who claimed that literature should be an accurate portrayal of reality.

Child labor is a social problem that has become a global issue and agenda for nations in the world, including Indonesia. Data from the International Labor Organization (ILO) shows that the number of child workers in the world reaches around 200 million people. Of that number, 75 percent are in Africa, 7 percent in Latin America, and 18 percent in Asia.

Darusari and Piyoto (2011) state that child labor occurs due to various reasons which are generally interrelated. There are several factors that cause the emergence of child labor such as poverty, low education, the development of the informal economy, lower costs incurred by employers to pay child workers than adults.

according to Todaro and Smith (2011:458) that children have small fingers which makes them productive in producing products.

Child labor is a complex problem in Pakistan. This can be seen from the number of children under the working age. work that is mostly done by underage children in Pakistan such as in mining even though the work sounds very hard but it does not rule out that it can be done by children, in

plantations many children become harvest laborers in plantations such as cotton and rice fields, many industries children working in the plastic, glass and garment industries.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), employing minors has a big negative risk. in terms of health, safety and obstacles in education. Child workers are also vulnerable to exploitation, abuse and human trafficking. This was also agreed upon by the Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). According to him, child labor also has a long-term impact on the economic and social development of a country, besides that child labor hinders economic growth and creates social inequality. They tend to get stuck in low-wage jobs and a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break, so that this keeps them from developing and they continue to be labourers.

Pakistan still had a major problem with child labor in 1998. According to a 1996 International Labor Organization (ILO) research, there are around 3.3 million working children in Pakistan, with approximately 73% of them working in the informal sector such as agriculture, trading, and household services (ILO,1998). In 2020, the ILO again announced the problem of child labor that is happening in Pakistan, even though the percentage is increasing. in this year, the field of child labor is expanding, such as in mining and manufacturing, there are around 3.8 million working children in Pakistan, with more than 40% of them working in hazardous or harmful situations to their health. Researchers concluded the factors of the occurrence of child labor in Pakistan.

a. poverty

Poverty is a problem faced by all countries, both developed and developing countries, but it is more common in developing countries, because their development conditions are still unstable. According to the American anthropologist, known for his cultural concept of poverty, Oscar

Lewis, states poverty as the inability of a person or a group of people to be able to meet and satisfy their basic material needs. Basic needs, for example: clothing, food and shelter (Lewis, 1966).

Pakistan is one of the poorest countries in the South Asian region, with a population that ranks 6th highest in the world, which is 188.9 million people. According to an independent agency, poverty in the country has fallen significantly, as seen in 2007-2008 an estimated 17.2% of the population lived below the poverty line (ILO, 2008).

Pakistan's slow economic growth is one of the factors causing poverty. This condition forces children and their families to look for work, especially in rural areas where education levels and job opportunities are limited. In addition, social inequality also makes children from poor families more vulnerable to forced labor because they often do not have access to adequate education and health services.

According to Christine and Watson, A brutal reality embedded in Pakistan's socioeconomic structure throws a shadow on the lives of around 12 million youngsters. These young souls, who should be reveling in the joys of youth, are dragged into a role well beyond their years. These children are driven to contribute to their households due to the demands of their families' circumstances, effectively becoming inadvertent breadwinners. (Christine,Watson2015)

b. Poor Government

The government plays an important role in the situation that is happening countries. Factors that influence the phenomenon of extreme poverty in Pakistan is the bad government system in that country, bad governance in Pakistan causes weak protection and law enforcement for children. This makes children vulnerable to exploitation by irresponsible employers. The statement highlights the significant role that the government plays in the ongoing situation within a specific country. In this case, the

focus is on Pakistan and its struggle with extreme poverty. Several factors contribute to the prevalence of extreme poverty in Pakistan, and a primary one is the ineffective government system. The inadequate governance in the country leads to various negative consequences, particularly when it comes to safeguarding the rights and well-being of its citizens, especially children. (Christine Fair, Seth G. Jones, and James Dobbins 2015)

One of the prominent outcomes of the poor government system is the weak protection and enforcement of laws, especially those aimed at safeguarding the rights and welfare of children. This deficiency creates an environment in which children are left vulnerable to exploitation. Irresponsible employers take advantage of this situation by subjecting children to exploitative practices. These practices include employing them in hazardous and unsanitary conditions, often with little to no remuneration. This exploitation of children for labor is a direct result of the government's failure to enforce protective laws and ensure proper oversight of employment practices. (Christine Fair, Seth G. Jones, and James Dobbins 2015)

The root causes of this situation can be traced back to issues such as abuse of power, corruption, and overall poor performance within the government. When those in positions of authority abuse their power, it exacerbates the problems faced by the most vulnerable members of society, including children. Corruption further erodes the effectiveness of government institutions, diverting resources away from crucial initiatives that could uplift the lives of citizens, especially those living in poverty. Moreover, the lack of attention to and denial of basic rights for a significant portion of the population compounds the issue. This neglect prevents the implementation of social safety nets and support systems that could mitigate the impact of extreme

poverty. It also perpetuates a cycle of deprivation that is difficult to break without meaningful government intervention. (Christine Fair, Seth G. Jones, and James Dobbins 2015)

c. Lagging Infrastructure Growth

The factors contributing to the expansion or progression of a situation can be neatly categorized into two distinct groups. The first category encompasses challenges that arise as a direct consequence of deteriorating governance. In the case of Pakistan, this manifests through a combination of escalating debt obligations and a diminishing ability to compete in the global economic landscape. In a world that places ever-greater emphasis on specialized skills and adept economic maneuvering, the mismanagement of the country's economy and its relatively modest level of development further exacerbate these issues. (Nasir, Muhammad 2015)

The swelling weight of the debt burden borne by Pakistan stands out as a significant catalyst. This mounting financial obligation restrains the government's capacity for public investment. As a result, critical sectors that necessitate governmental backing, such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare, are left wanting. This paucity of public investment, when coupled with ineffective attempts at stabilizing the macroeconomic framework, casts a shadow over the private sector's willingness to invest. The adverse effects ripple through the economy, contributing to a climate that is less conducive to economic expansion and growth. (Nasir, Muhammad 2015)

The intricate relationship between these factors underscores the interconnectedness of economic dynamics. The deterioration of governance sets off a chain reaction of sorts, with the escalating debt burden not only constraining immediate financial resources but also indirectly impeding long-term prosperity by limiting crucial public investments. These interwoven challenges then hamper attempts at macroeconomic stabilization, further

dampening the incentives for private sector investment. In this intricate dance of cause and effect, the consequences of faltering governance become increasingly apparent, culminating in a stymied economic landscape that struggles to keep pace with global demands and expectations. (Nasir, Muhammad2015)

In essence, the causes behind the expansion or growth of a situation can often be dissected into distinct categories. In the case of Pakistan's economic challenges, the erosion of effective governance leads to a burgeoning debt load and a waning competitive edge. These, in turn, diminish public investment and disrupt the equilibrium needed for private sector participation. Thus, the intricate interplay of these factors underscores the complex tapestry that dictates the country's economic trajectory.

Due to low levels of human development, excessive government interference, and poor physical infrastructure, the areas of the economy in which Pakistan is competitive are few. As a result, the total fixed investment decreased significantly, causing a reduction in the rate of economic growth. problem Agricultural land is very unequal in Pakistan. Widespread inequality in land ownership increases the level of vulnerability of the poorest rural communities because the impact of unequal land distribution is not limited to asset tenure.

A. Struggle Child Labor in Pakistan

In Pakistan, child labor is often involved in a variety of sectors, including the textile industry, agriculture, mining and other informal sectors. Several factors lead to children being involved in work including extreme poverty, lack of access to quality education, and the inability of parents to provide basic needs to their children, the struggle of children who are made into labor in Pakistan is

not easy.

According to Arshad (2013), Many children are forced to work at a young age because their families are unable to provide proper education. This work often hinders their access to formal education, which has a negative impact on their development. At work Employed children are often exposed to hazardous and poor working conditions, such as long working hours, low pay, lack of protection, and risks of injury or even death.

a. Poverty

The condition you're referring to, which is reflected in Iqbal's novel, sheds light on the grim reality of child slavery in Pakistan. The novel is narrated from the perspective of a shop owner named Iqbal. The character of the novel is a 13-year-old boy named Iqbal. His story serves as a poignant representation of the countless children who find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of exploitation and abuse. Iqbal's journey begins in the heart of child slavery, a brutal ordeal that plagues many parts of Pakistan.

Iqbal was brought to this factory to pay off his father's debt, Hussein Khan had paid off Iqbal's father's debt to someone else. as collateral and to pay off his debts, Iqbal's father had to send one of his sons to work for Hussein Khan.(Francesco,2001:19)

In this narrative, we follow Iqbal's life as he is forcibly thrust into the labor force of a carpet factory, alongside other children who share his unfortunate fate. These children, all innocent victims, are subjected to abhorrent treatment by the factory owners. The conditions they endure are nothing short of cruel, and the toll it takes on their physical and emotional well-being is devastating.

In Pakistan, the effectiveness of governance systems can vary, and there are challenges in addressing issues related to child labor and exploitation. Unfortunately, the phenomenon of child exploitation for personal gain and financial gain is not uncommon in Pakistan. Iqbal's novel provides a sharp depiction of this grim reality, highlighting the struggles faced by children forced to work under enormous

pressure. This is conveyed on pages 4-5.

“Hussein Khan gave a stone on which he had carved long lines like dog hair, then the stone was given to Fatimah, who was also a girl who worked in Hussein Khan's carpet factory. He told him that the lines on the stone were Fatimah's debt. Each line is worth one rupee, Mr. Khan will give one rupee every day of Fatimah's work. But Fatimah realized that this was not true, no lines had been erased or debts reduced in the 3 years she had worked here. This matter not only belongs to him but also to his friends”.(Francesco,2001:4-5)

Not only do they work long hours, eating and talking are also limited, this is felt by the children who work in Hussein Khan's carpet factory. They will receive punishment after punishment if they make a mistake or make Master Khan's heart angry and there are many forms of injustice that they experience. this incident is seen on pages 34-37.

“With a sharp gaze, Iqbal took the knife that was next to the beautiful carpet and then without thinking he damaged the carpet with the knife, seeing the threads of the carpet flying, Hussein Khan screamed and was very angry. Iqbal was taken and put in a container made from an old well covered with old and rusty iron. There was also little light and it was damp”.(Francesco,2001:34-37)

The term "carpet skipper" mentioned in the narrative suggests that these children are engaged in the repetitive and monotonous task of carpet weaving. It's a demeaning and dehumanizing job that confines them to the factory, where they must work tirelessly day in and day out. The term "skipper" implies that they are essentially skipping their childhood, as they are forced into adult labor roles at such a young age.. This phenomenon can be seen on page 12.

"Another long day of sewing carpets. My fingers ache, and my eyes can barely see straight."

"Iqbal, we have to finish these orders quickly. The master won't be happy if we don't meet the quotas."

But Razia, we are just children. We should be playing, going to school, not working like this."

"I know, Iqbal, but we have no choice. Our families rely on the money we earn here (Francesco,2001:12)."

A. Struggle Child Labor in the Nove

There are many risks that must be borne by children who are victims of child labor, and the struggle to survive is also not easy. with a small body, a young age and perhaps a weak body, you have to do extra work. Children should make carpets throughout the day without any designated rest periods. This not only physically exhausts them but also deprives them of the necessary breaks and relaxation that are vital for their well-being. they only do a little of this so they don't get punished. Apart from that, Hussein Khan also told them that he would release them and let them go home after paying off their parents' debts, by means of which they had to work well all day so that day would be counted as one cent. (Francesco,2001)

The children tried to work well making neat weaving so that Hussein Khan would be happy and not punish them, but it was a futile effort. Hussein Khan did say that if he did a good job he would give one rupee to pay off the debt, but that would never happen because Hussein Khan was just lying for his own sake so that the child would make a beautiful carpet and buy it at a high price.(Francesco,2001:20-21)

They tried everything to get out of Hussein Khan's carpet factory, they could no longer stand Hussein Khan's cruel attitude. According to them, Hussein Khan is increasingly scary every day, even Hussein Khan is worse than before. This made one of the children come up with the idea of

inviting their friends to run away.

"We should all run away," said Twig.
"Just think of Hussain's face! I can't stand him. He's almost worse than the master I had before. Let's become bandits and attack the trucks that come into the city."

"Why the trucks?"

"Because they carry a lot of food."

"Forget it," said Mohammed. "We should escape to the mountains. There the master would never be able to find us."

"Yeah, and how did he find you?"
Twig asked.

"Bad luck." (Francesco,2001:54)

B. Impact of Child Labor in the Novel

Doing work that is not age appropriate has many negative impacts felt by children. Childhood should be spent studying, playing with friends, spending time with family and doing things appropriate for their age. However, children who are victims of child labor cannot experience such things. where they have to work at risk and give up their childhood being taken away. In Iqbal's novel the impact of child labor is also mentioned.

"It was demanded to make good carpets so that many foreigners would buy Hussein Khan's carpets at high prices. This makes the child's fingers that make the carpet bleed all because of the thread cut to make a good carpet (Francesco,2001:24)"

Apart from feeling sore fingers, children in carpet factories also cannot enjoy the things they should have felt as children. They can only listen to stories from friends who have watched cinema or just fantasize that one day, when they have paid off their debt, they will go to the city and see the buses in the city.

"Karim said that he had watched the cinema, he even explained in detail the storyline of the film he watched in the cinema. The story is quite long so we enjoyed it by imagining the story,

Iqbla also thought that he would go to the cinema with his father, mother and sister after he returned home. Sometimes at night we'd sneak out for five minutes to peek at the colorful lights and faint sounds of Hussein Khan's television while he was watching a cricket match. (Francisco,2001:10-11)"

The cruelty they have to face is human exploitation, in terms of child labor, child exploitation is commonplace. When a master no longer needed the child's services to be enslaved, the master could sell the children to another master at the right price. Many places require workers to be employed but do not want to pay workers high wages, this is usually a factor in child labor and child exploitation.

We never saw the older boy here again after Mr. Hussein Khan asked him out that night. Maybe Hussein Khan has already sold it, we are used to seeing facial changes constantly. The skinny new kid whose ribs can already be counted is probably the old man's replacement.(Francesco,2001:51)

IV. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher concludes the findings and analysis from the previous chapter. *Iqbal*, a novel by Francesco D'Adamo, is a literary work that raises serious issues about child labor and child exploitation in Pakistan. This story follows the struggle of Iqbal and his friends who have to work in very bad conditions. They have to make carpets all day long without enough rest, insufficient food, and live under stress.

The main problems in this novel are poverty, a bad government system and uneven development. This is a very strong factor in the problem of child labor. Corruption and non-enforcement of laws regarding the employment of minors are also the underlying story in this novel. Iqbal's struggle in this novel is quite complicated, starting with him being made a slave because he wanted to pay off his father's debt. After arriving at the Karpen factory, there were many things he had to do to stay strong. He ran away from the factory and returned to the factory to free his friends.

The impacts of child labor are many, on health because they work in slavery so no one cares about their health. They don't even get an education, many children who are victims of child labor become illiterate because they don't get the opportunity to learn. As in the novel, many children had their fingers injured, bitten by insects, which they got in the carpet factory. Like Karim and his friends who can't read, this makes Maria one of the children who can read try to teach.

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