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**Title: Themes from Dickens and Current Indian Reality: A Comparative Study of Social Injustice**

**Aditi Sisodiya**

**aditisisodiya1401@gmail.com**

**B708 Oasis Homes Beta 2 Greater Noida**

## **1. Introduction**

India is a nation rich in diversity. It is where many different cultures began. India is a country torn apart by poverty and injustice. In India, there are several varieties of social inequalities as well as a wide range of underlying causes. To understand why some social injustices, persist in India, this paper will examine some of the most prevalent forms of social injustices there, including child labor, the caste system, and the abuse of women. The prevailing belief in Western society is that India is a conventional, archaic nation, which explains its numerous social inequities. But that is not the case at all. Although some people are compelled by tradition to accept these conclusions, India is changing and there are other reasons. Social justice has seen several advancements since it was introduced and changed with the advent of globalization. Indians must make the fundamental framework of society, culture, and politics more in line with the principles of democracy, social and economic progress, and justice as an inclusive understanding of freedom with accountability if they are to promote an understanding of social justice, the defining issues, and the directions they offer.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Charles Dickens's Oliver Twist: From Children's Victimization to Psychological Improvement**

The article's preface recognizes the theme of victimization that permeates Dickens' writing, with a focus on the plight of orphans such as Oliver Twist. It delves into all the ways that Oliver was abused and exploited throughout his time living in the workhouse and working under the pickpockets led by Fagin.

Nevertheless, the essay does more than simply highlight Oliver's victimization; it also examines his psychological growth and resistance throughout the narrative. It examines the instances of moral rectitude, friendship, and compassion that contribute to Oliver's growth as a person and improve his mental health.

The authors look at key points in Oliver's path, such as his escape from the workhouse, his interactions with good people like Mr. Brownlow and Nancy, and his eventual atonement and acceptance of his heritage and identity.

This research also looks at Dickens' portrayal of societal injustice and how it affects characters like Oliver Twist's mental health and overall well-being. It discusses how the novel portrays institutionalized cruelty, poverty, and inequality as well as how these broader societal problems connect to the discussions around social justice that are happening right now.

This article provides a thorough and nuanced analysis of "Oliver Twist," highlighting the complex connection between victimization and personal development in the protagonist's journey. It highlights how skillfully Dickens conveys the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity as well as the virtues of moral integrity, empathy, and compassion.

## **2.2 THE DEPICTION OF SOCIAL INJUSTICE IN CHARLES DICKENS' OLIVER TWIST: Mrs. Sunita S Kademani**

The essay begins by introducing Charles Dickens as a significant Victorian writer and social reformer. The background information provides the basis for discussing Dickens' "Oliver Twist" and how it relates to contemporary life. The central theme of the book is unfairness in society.

In "Oliver Twist," multiple types of social injustice are portrayed, such as institutional violence, child labor, poverty, and exploitation. Mrs. Kademani examines these expressions. Her research delves into Dickens' portrayal of the harsh reality that orphans, like Oliver Twist, had to face due to maltreatment, disregard, and exploitation in both the workhouse and the streets of London. This research looks at the societal factors, such as moral deterioration, economic inequality, and upper-class apathy, that support social injustice and keep it going.

Mrs. Kademani investigates how the major characters of "Oliver Twist" either encourage or resist societal injustice.

She highlights Oliver Twist's journey from victimization to ethics and self-discovery, considering him as a symbol of innocence and resilience in the face of adversity. The article also discusses the

adversaries seen in the book, such as Bill Sikes, Fagin, and Mr. Bumble, who represent different forms of exploitation and corruption in society.

The analysis examines the key concepts and lessons from Dickens' depiction of social injustice in "Oliver Twist." "To address systemic injustices and encourage significant change, it discusses the need for social responsibility, empathy, and compassion.

Mrs. Kademani examines the topics that are still current in the present day as well as the lessons that may be utilized for today's social injustices by analyzing Dickens' tale.

A summary of the key findings derived from the analysis of "Oliver Twist" and its depiction of social injustice is offered at the article's conclusion.

Mrs. Kademani highlights the significance of Dickens' story as an enduring work of literature that enthralls readers and sparks discussion on issues of social justice and human dignity.

In short, the dissertation of Mrs. Sunita S. Kademani provides an in-depth analysis of Charles Dickens's portrayal of social injustice in "Oliver Twist," presenting perceptive viewpoints on the themes, characters, and lessons from the novel.

### **2.3 Social Criticism in Charles Dickens's A Christmas Carol: Stefanie Nerz**

Stefanie Nerz introduces the subject, highlighting the enduring popularity and cultural significance of "A Christmas Carol."

She highlights Dickens' reputation as a social critic and his commitment to utilizing his writing to draw attention to significant contemporary social issues. Dickens' critique of Victorian society is examined by Nerz, who places particular attention on problems such as inequality, poverty, and the dehumanizing effects of industrialization. She examines how Dickens utilized Ebenezer Scrooge to represent the pinnacle of greed and selfishness by contrasting his stingy deeds with the generosity and compassion of characters like Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim.

The research provides a historical backdrop to illuminate the socioeconomic conditions of Victorian England, including the frequency of child labor, the shortcomings of social aid programs, and the widening wealth disparities.

Nerz investigates how Dickens's portrayal of Christmas as a time of giving and goodwill serves as a critique of the values and priorities of Victorian-era society.

Dickens conveyed societal critique in "A Christmas Carol" using literary methods such as symbolism, irony, and allegory, which Nerz analyses. She looks at the relevance of the three

ghosts that appear to Scrooge, representing the consequences of his actions in the present, the past, and the future and how they cause him to become a more moral person.

The essay examines how "A Christmas Carol" influenced Victorian culture and how it endures as a beloved tale of social justice and atonement. Nerz discusses how the book continues to influence readers of all ages and stimulates reflection on issues of compassion, empathy, and social responsibility.

In her concluding piece, Stefanie Nerz lists the key points she learned from analyzing the social criticism in "A Christmas Carol." She draws attention to the significance of Dickens's book as a powerful work of literature that consistently challenges readers to confront societal injustices and strive for positive change. All things considered, Stefanie Nerz's research paper offers a comprehensive examination of Charles Dickens's critique of society in "A Christmas Carol," shedding light on the themes, characters, and enduring relevance of the novel to contemporary culture.

### **3. Dickensian Social Justice Themes**

The books of Charles Dickens are well known for their examination of social injustice and for illuminating the difficult circumstances that marginalized people in Victorian England had to deal with. Dickens challenges societal injustices and promotes empathy, change, and compassion via empathetic characters and gripping stories.

#### **An examination of "Oliver Twist"**

##### **1. Inequality and Abuse**

Dickens eloquently captures the misery and abuse that the impoverished face in "Oliver Twist." Oliver, who was abandoned at a young age and born into poverty, must endure a life of hunger, vulnerability, and poverty. He is thrown into a world where powerful people, like Fagin and Bill Sikes, take advantage of him and utilize him for their illicit purposes, all without thinking about the consequences to him.

Dickens highlights the extreme extent people would go to to live by exposing the terrible realities of poverty. The story emphasizes the moral bankruptcy of those who take advantage of the weak for their benefit as well as the structural inequalities that sustain poverty.

## **2. Cruelty in Institutions**

Dickens criticizes the inhumanity of institutional structures designed to help the impoverished via Oliver's experiences in the workhouse and the brutal treatment he gets from authorities. The workhouse is seen as a symbol of tyranny and dehumanization, where prisoners endure cruel treatment, poor nutrition, and harsh punishments.

Dickens demonstrates how institutional systems may prolong misery and injustice by exposing the callousness of authorities like Mr. Bumble, who runs the workhouse with brutality and indifference. Oliver's abuse is shown in such a way as to deliver a potent critique of the structural shortcomings that consign the impoverished to lives of suffering and deprivation.

### **Evaluation of "Great Expectations"**

#### **1. Disparities by Class**

"Great Expectations" examines the pervasiveness of social class and the obstacles that it creates for people who want to go up in life. Pip, a destitute orphan with aspirations of becoming a gentleman, is the protagonist of the book. Pip's encounters with Miss Havisham and Estella—symbols of power and wealth—fuel his dreams.

Dickens highlights the glaring differences between the higher and lower classes while illustrating the difficulties experienced by individuals like Pip who dared to question the inflexible social structure. Pip highlights the psychological effects of class differences by struggling with emotions of alienation and inadequacy despite his worldly achievement.

#### **2. Greed and Corrupt Behavior**

Along with exploring issues of corruption and greed, "Great Expectations" also explores the character of Miss Havisham and how she manipulates Pip. A prime example of the destructive power of greed and the pursuit of fortune at the expense of others is Miss Havisham's fixation with vengeance and her exploitation of Estella.

Dickens criticizes society's moral decline, pointing out that people like Miss Havisham put money above morality and interpersonal connections. As a warning against unbridled ambition and the dehumanizing effects of greed on people and society, the novel is written.

### **An Analysis of "A Christmas Carol"**

#### **1. The Gap in Wealth**

The glaring income gap between the wealthy elite and the underprivileged masses is addressed in "A Christmas Carol". Almighty greed and self-interest combined, Ebenezer Scrooge hoards his fortune and ignores the misery of the underprivileged. The marginalized, whose lives are clouded by poverty and misery, are represented by characters such as Tiny Tim and Bob Cratchit.

Dickens emphasizes the moral necessity of tackling economic disparity and draws attention to the human cost of being indifferent to the suffering of those who are less fortunate. Using Scrooge's metamorphosis, the book commemorates the ability of compassion and giving to close the wealth disparity.

## **2. Absence of Compassion**

"A Christmas Carol" revolves around the central issue of empathy—or rather, Scrooge's lack of it. The moral bankruptcy of a society that puts profit above compassion is symbolized by Scrooge's miserliness and disregard for the misery of others.

Dickens highlights the capacity of empathy to effect transformation by showing how Scrooge's heart is profoundly changed when he realizes the repercussions of his callousness. To promote social cohesiveness and address the underlying causes of injustice and inequality, the novel serves as a potent reminder of the value of empathy.

## **4. The Present-Day Situation of Social Injustice in India**

Despite its advancements and economic expansion, India is nevertheless plagued by several social injustices that compromise the rights and dignity of its people. These problems demonstrate the underlying problems that still exist in Indian culture, from widespread corruption and violence against women to deeply ingrained caste prejudice.

### **Unequal Distribution of Income**

#### **1. The Caste System and Prejudice**

In India, the system of castes is still a deeply embedded social structure that feeds prejudice and unfairness. Dalits, a historically marginalized caste group, experience social exclusion, resource restriction, and structural oppression. Despite legislative safeguards and affirmative action policies, caste-based prejudice persists in several spheres of life, including social interactions, work, and education.

## **2. The Urban-Rural Gimmick**

In India, social injustice is made worse by socioeconomic divides between urban and rural regions. Having access to essential facilities like clean water, sanitary conditions, medical treatment, and education can be difficult in rural places. Cycles of poverty and marginalization are sustained by a shortage of economic opportunity and the construction of infrastructure that further separates the inhabitants of rural and urban areas.

### **Corrupt Practices and Political Abuse**

#### **1. Entanglements and Proximity**

In India, corruption permeates society, weakening public confidence in institutions, undermining the rule of law, and escalating socioeconomic inequality. Numerous industries are plagued by widespread bribery, extortion, and nepotism, which impedes social fairness, economic progress, and access to the courts. Corruption is rampant, which serves the privileged at the expense of the marginalized and maintains the current status quo power structures.

#### **2. Usage of Power Abuse**

In India, societal inequality is further exacerbated by corruption and misuse of authority. Government representatives and politicians frequently put their interests ahead of the general good, using authoritarian, crony, and favoritism strategies to remain in power. The values of justice, equality, and democratic governance are compromised by the manipulation of democratic procedures, the repression of dissent, and the undermining of accountability frameworks.

### **Violence and Inequity Towards Women**

#### **1. The Dowry System**

Despite legislative bans, gender-based violence and discrimination, like the dowry system, continue in India. Because of its foundation in economic inequality and patriarchal norms, the dowry system contributes to gender-based violence, such as harassment, abuse, and dowry killings, and it keeps women as commodities. Cultural norms and societal expectations persist in the detrimental behavior of this kind, despite efforts to rectify it.

#### **2. Sexual Assault and Harassment**

In India, sexual harassment and assault are still common forms of gender-based violence that impact women and girls from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The persistence of gender inequality and the institutional inability to offer sufficient protection and assistance for

survivors are highlighted by incidents of sexual violence, including rape and domestic abuse, workplace harassment, and sexual harassment in public places.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, the examination of Dickensian themes of social injustice in current Indian reality highlights the persistent existence of structural inequality and the pressing necessity of extensive changes aimed at advancing social justice. Through investigating issues of gender inequality, caste discrimination, poverty, exploitation, corruption, and other types of injustice, we have learned more about the intricate problems that society faces.

Though Dickens' Victorian England and contemporary India are geographically and temporally distinct from one another, there are notable similarities in the enduring societal inequities of poverty, exploitation, and corruption. These similarities highlight the reality that human misery is universal and that structural issues are what keep inequity alive in many settings. However, it is important to acknowledge the difficulties and nuances of modern Indian culture, such as the deeply ingrained caste system, persistent gender inequality, and rampant corruption. The empowering of marginalized populations, the upholding of legal safeguards, and the advancement of inclusive policies and practices are all crucial components of the varied methods needed to address these issues.

Stakeholders must work together to advance social justice objectives going ahead, including communities, civil society organizations, and governmental institutions. Promoting equality and dignity for all people, breaking down structural obstacles, and fighting discriminatory practices should be the top priorities of this partnership's education, awareness, and advocacy campaigns.

In the end, the comparative analysis's findings might spur significant change by motivating group efforts and legislative changes that deal with the underlying causes of inequality in society in India. Society may strive towards a future in which every person has equal rights, opportunities, and dignity regardless of their origins or circumstances by adopting the values of empathy, compassion, and solidarity.