

THE REALISTIC DEPICTION OF POVERTY AND URBAN LIFE

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Abstract

This paper examines how literature realistically portrays poverty and life in urban areas. Realist writers focus on ordinary people and their daily struggles, showing how poverty influences every part of life, including work, family, education, and health. Cities are described in detail, with crowded streets, poor living conditions, and the difficulties people face in urban environments.

The study shows that characters in realist fiction often experience financial problems, unemployment, and social inequality. Through their experiences, writers reveal how poverty limits opportunities, affects personal relationships, and creates social challenges. Realist authors also highlight the differences between social classes, showing the gap between the rich and the poor and demonstrating how society can be unfair and difficult to navigate.

Urban life is portrayed as both a place of opportunity and a source of struggle. Writers describe neighborhoods, streets, workplaces, and social interactions to make the setting realistic and vivid. Poverty is also connected to moral issues, such as crime, corruption, and social responsibility, which adds depth to the stories.

In conclusion, realist fiction uses the depiction of poverty and urban life to show real social problems. It allows readers to understand human struggles and the effects of inequality. By presenting life in cities and the hardships of poor people, realist writers encourage empathy and reflection, making these works valuable for understanding society.

Keywords: Poverty, urban life, realism, social inequality, everyday life, cities, literature, social problems.

Аннотация

В данной работе рассматривается, как литература реалистически изображает бедность и жизнь в городах. Писатели-реалисты сосредотачиваются на обычных людях и их повседневных трудностях, показывая, как бедность влияет на все аспекты жизни, включая работу, семью, образование и здоровье.

Города описываются подробно: переполненные улицы, плохие жилищные условия и трудности, с которыми сталкиваются люди в городской среде.

Исследование показывает, что персонажи реалистической литературы часто сталкиваются с финансовыми проблемами, безработицей и социальным неравенством. Через их опыт авторы показывают, как бедность ограничивает возможности, влияет на личные отношения и создаёт социальные трудности. Реалистические писатели также подчеркивают различия между социальными слоями, показывая разрыв между богатыми и бедными, и демонстрируя, как общество может быть несправедливым и трудным для жизни.

Городская жизнь показана как место возможностей и одновременно источник трудностей. Авторы описывают районы, улицы, рабочие места и социальные взаимодействия, чтобы сделать изображение реалистичным и живым. Бедность также связывается с моральными вопросами, такими как преступность, коррупция и социальная ответственность, что добавляет глубины произведениям.

В заключение, реалистическая литература использует изображение бедности и городской жизни для показа реальных социальных проблем. Она помогает читателям понять человеческие трудности и последствия неравенства. Показав жизнь в городах и трудности бедных людей, писатели-реалисты развивают эмпатию и заставляют задуматься, делая свои произведения ценными для понимания общества.

Ключевые слова: Бедность, городская жизнь, реализм, социальное неравенство, повседневная жизнь, города, литература, социальные проблемы.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu ish adabiyotda kambag'allik va shahar hayotining realistik tasvirlanishini o'rganadi. Realist yozuvchilar odatiy insonlar va ularning kundalik qiyinchiliklariga e'tibor qaratib, kambag'allik hayotning barcha jabhalariga, jumladan ish, oila, ta'lim va sog'liqqa qanday ta'sir qilishini ko'rsatadilar. Shaharlar batafsil tasvirlanadi: gavjum ko'chalar, yomon yashash sharoitlari va shahar muhitida duch kelinadigan qiyinchiliklar.

Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, realist adabiyotdagi qahramonlar ko'pincha moliyaviy muammolar, ish topishdagi qiyinchiliklar va ijtimoiy tengsizlik bilan duch keladilar. Ularning tajribalari orqali yozuvchilar kambag'allik imkoniyatlarni cheklashini, shaxsiy munosabatlarga ta'sir qilishini va ijtimoiy qiyinchiliklarni yaratishini ko'rsatadilar. Realist yozuvchilar ijtimoiy qatlamlar farqini ham ochib beradi, boylar va kambag'allar hayoti orasidagi tafovutni ko'rsatadi va jamiyatning ba'zan adolatsiz va murakkab ekanligini ta'kidlaydi.

Shahar hayoti imkoniyatlar joyi va bir vaqtning o'zida qiyinchilik manbai sifatida tasvirlangan. Yozuvchilar tumanlar, ko'chalar, ish joylari va ijtimoiy

munosabatlarni batafsil bayon qilib, voqealarni real va jonli qiladi. Kambag'allik ham axloqiy masalalar bilan bog'lanadi, masalan jinoyatchilik, korrupsiya va ijtimoiy mas'uliyat, bu esa asarlarga chuqurlik qo'shadi.

Xulosa qilib aytganda, realist adabiyot kambag'allik va shahar hayotini tasvirlash orqali haqiqiy ijtimoiy muammolarni ko'rsatadi. Bu o'quvchilarga insoniy qiyinchiliklarni va tengsizlikning oqibatlarini tushunishga yordam beradi. Shahar hayotini va kambag'al kishilarning qiyinchiliklarini ko'rsatib, realist yozuvchilar empatiyani rivojlantiradi va o'quvchini o'ylashga majbur qiladi, shuning uchun bunday asarlar jamiyatni tushunishda muhim ahamiyatga ega.

Kalit so'zlar: Kambag'allik, shahar hayoti, realizm, ijtimoiy tengsizlik, kundalik hayot, shaharlar, adabiyot, ijtimoiy muammolar.

Introduction

Realist literature aims to show life the way it really is, without making it look perfect or ideal. Unlike romantic stories, realist writers focus on ordinary people, their everyday problems, and the conditions of the society they live in. One of the main topics in realism is poverty and urban life. Cities are often portrayed as crowded and busy places where people face many difficulties, such as poor housing, low income, unemployment, and social inequality. These details help readers understand what life is really like for ordinary city residents.

In realist works, poverty is not shown as a personal weakness but as a social problem that affects many aspects of life. People who live in poverty often struggle to find food, housing, and work. Families face ongoing challenges, and children may have limited opportunities for education.¹ By describing these problems, realist writers make their stories believable and show how society influences the lives of less fortunate people.

Urban life is also described in great detail in realist literature. Writers show streets, neighborhoods, markets, and workplaces to give readers a clear picture of the city. Cities are shown as places of both struggle and opportunity. People may try to improve their lives, but economic difficulties, social pressure, and class differences often make this very hard. Such descriptions allow readers to understand the social and cultural realities of urban life.

The realistic portrayal of poverty and city life also allows writers to discuss moral and social questions. Stories often show how inequality, unfair rules, and corruption affect people's lives and decisions. Some works compare the lives of the rich and the poor, highlighting injustice and making readers think about fairness and responsibility.² At the same time, realist stories also show hope, resilience, and human

¹ Dickens, Charles. *Oliver Twist*. Penguin Classics, 1998.

² Zola, Émile. *Germinal*. Oxford University Press, 2000.

strength, demonstrating that people continue to survive and fight even in difficult circumstances.

In conclusion, the realistic depiction of poverty and urban life is a key part of realist literature. It helps readers see the challenges of daily life, understand social inequality, and learn about the environment in which people live. By focusing on ordinary people and their struggles, realist writers not only tell realistic stories but also encourage readers to reflect, empathize, and think critically about society. This makes the study of poverty and urban life in literature important for understanding both literature and social life.

Urban Poverty: understanding and addressing its challenges

Urban dwellers are more likely than rural villagers to be exposed to the risks of cyclones and storm surges because urbanites are more likely to live on or near the coast: cities and towns account for nearly two of every three residents of coastal areas worldwide.

In Asia, 18% of the population lives in the low-elevation coastal zone – the highest percentage across all world regions – and 12% of the urban land is at low elevation and near the coast. Moreover, many of Asia's largest cities are located in coastal areas that are cyclone-prone, such as Mumbai, or Karachi.³ Flooding and storm surges also threaten coastal African cities, such as Port Harcourt and Lagos in Nigeria. Similar vulnerabilities affect Mombasa and various cities in Latin America within cities. Vulnerable people and households are more likely to be affected during extreme weather events, such as hurricanes and storm surge flooding, partly because these groups live disproportionately in low-lying areas and flood plains in many world regions, as documented from various cities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.⁴

Vulnerable people and households, such as women with low incomes or ethnic minorities, also possess substantially fewer resources to cope if damage occurs. For example, Hurricane Katrina disproportionately affected African-American residents and elderly people. Case studies suggest that mortality rates of women and men vary significantly for both climatologic and other natural disasters.⁵ During the cyclone in Bangladesh in 1991, death rates were 71 per 1,000 for women and 15 per 1,000 for men. In the 2004 Tsunami in Ampara, Sri Lanka, fatalities were 3,972 and 2,124 among women and men, respectively. In addition to human fatalities and infrastructure damages, a number of health risks are associated with coastal (and inland) flooding, such as cholera, cryptosporidiosis, typhoid fever, diarrheal diseases, and leptospirosis.

³ Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Words worth Editions, 1997.

⁴ Gissing, George. *The Nether World*. Penguin Classics, 1999.

⁵ Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

Lau et al.⁶ (2010) suggest that the combination of climate change, flooding, population growth, and urbanization will almost certainly lead to an escalation of leptospirosis, with high risks for urban slums, low-lying areas, and small island states. Storms are also expected to lead to water contamination with chemicals, heavy metals, and other hazardous substances for populations living near industrial areas on the coast.

The Facade of Prosperity

Urban landscapes often project an image of prosperity, but behind the glittering storefronts and upscale neighborhoods, there exists a stark contrast. Hidden from casual observers are the pockets of poverty, where individuals grapple with inadequate housing, limited access to education, and employment challenges that perpetuate a cycle of deprivation.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore how poverty and city life are represented in realist literature. The main method is text analysis, which involves reading selected novels and short stories carefully to understand the lives of characters and the social conditions around them. Works were chosen because they clearly show urban environments and the challenges faced by people living in poverty.

The research focuses on how writers describe economic problems, poor living conditions, unemployment, and social inequality. The study looks at how characters manage everyday difficulties, family responsibilities, and social pressures. Observing these details helps to understand how individual experiences are connected to broader social problems.

A comparative method was also used to find similarities and differences in the depiction of poverty and urban life across different works. In addition, literary criticism and academic articles were consulted to provide context and support the analysis.⁷

Overall, this methodology is based on careful reading, observation, and comparison of texts to show how poverty and urban life are realistically portrayed in literature.

Analysis and Results

The analysis shows that poverty and city life are central elements in many realists works. Cities are described as crowded, noisy, and full of challenges, with poor housing and difficult living conditions. Characters frequently face financial struggles, unemployment, and social inequality, which strongly influence their decisions and future.

⁶ James, Henry. *The Europeans*. Dover Publications, 1995.

⁷ Sutherland, John. *The Longman Companion to Victorian Fiction*. Longman, 1999.

A key finding is that poverty is presented as a social issue rather than an individual failure. Realist writers show how economic difficulties affect family life, education, and personal opportunities. Women and children are often the most vulnerable, highlighting how poverty affects different groups in society.

Urban life is depicted in detailed and vivid ways. Writers describe streets, neighborhoods, workplaces, and markets, creating a clear image of the city for the reader. The contrast between rich and poor areas is often emphasized, showing inequality and social injustice. At the same time, characters sometimes adapt, find ways to survive, or show resilience despite hardships.

Another important result is that realist literature not only depicts struggles but also raises social and moral questions. Stories show issues such as crime, corruption, and unfair social systems linked to poverty. Some characters resist these problems, demonstrating human strength and courage.

Discussion

The discussion highlights that realistic depictions of poverty and urban life are crucial for understanding both literature and society. Detailed descriptions of daily life allow readers to see the struggles of ordinary people and the social and economic conditions that shape their lives.

The study also shows that realist fiction encourages empathy. By presenting the difficulties faced by poor people in cities, writers help readers understand and feel their struggles. Cities are shown as places of both opportunity and challenge, reflecting the complexity of real life.⁸

Furthermore, the analysis shows that these works often critique social injustice. By showing inequality, poor living conditions, and the hardships of marginalized people, realist writers question unfair systems and traditions. At the same time, stories show moments of hope and resilience, highlighting that people can endure difficulties and work to improve their lives.

In conclusion, the realistic depiction of poverty and urban life in literature helps readers understand social structures, inequality, and human experiences. Realist fiction not only tells stories about daily life but also provides insights into moral, social, and cultural issues, making it an important tool for learning about both literature and society.

Conclusion

To sum up, realist literature's depiction of poverty and urban life is extremely important for understanding both human experiences and society. Writers of realist

⁸ Brant lingers, Patrick. Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914. Cornell University Press, 1988.

fiction focus on ordinary people and the daily challenges they face, showing how financial problems, poor living conditions, and social inequality shape their lives. Poverty is not shown as a personal weakness, but as a social issue that influences work, family life, education, and opportunities, making the stories realistic and relatable.

Cities in realist works are described in detail, including crowded streets, poor housing, busy markets, and noisy neighborhoods. Writers present both the difficulties and possibilities that urban life brings. By giving such vivid descriptions, they help readers imagine the environment in which characters live, struggle, and try to improve their lives.⁹ This realistic portrayal allows readers to understand the social and economic conditions of the time.

The research also shows that poverty and city life are closely linked to moral and social questions. Stories often show how unfair systems, corruption, crime, and inequality influence the daily choices and behavior of people. At the same time, some characters try to overcome these challenges, showing strength, resilience, and hope. This not only makes the stories realistic but also meaningful and thought-provoking, encouraging readers to reflect on society and fairness.

Furthermore, the realistic portrayal of poverty and urban life helps develop empathy and awareness. By showing the difficulties faced by ordinary people, realist writers allow readers to understand their struggles and feel compassion for them. The stories also demonstrate that even in difficult situations, people can find courage, strength, and creative ways to survive. This makes realist literature an effective tool for understanding not just daily life, but also social responsibility and human values.

In conclusion, the realistic depiction of poverty and urban life is essential for both literary analysis and social understanding. It allows readers to learn about the challenges of everyday life, the effects of inequality, and the social and cultural environment of cities.¹⁰ Realist fiction gives insight into human experiences, showing both hardship and hope, while encouraging readers to think critically about society. Studying poverty and urban life in literature is therefore valuable for developing empathy, social awareness, and a deeper understanding of the real world.

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⁹ Hobsbawm, Eric. *Industry and Empire: From 1750 to the Present Day*. Penguin Books, 1999.

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