
THE IMPACT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION ON FAMILIES AS PRESENTED IN HARD TIMES

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ABSTRACT: *This paper investigates the Industrial Revolution's impact on families as presented in Hard Times novel. The researcher will discuss the main components and features of the families in Britain at that time, in which Charles Dickens represented them in different types as Gradgrind's family, Bounderby's family, Stephan's family, and Cecelia's family. These families represent the typical sort of family at that time with its features and their problems they face such as getting a divorce, getting drunk, and family disintegration in general. In addition to the reoccurrence of money motif being a capitalist at the expense of the family bonding as represented between Mr. Gradgrind and his daughter Louisa.*

KEYWORDS: Charles Dickens, industrial revolution, hard times novel, novel, literature.

INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Revolution first began in Britain in the 19th century and took place throughout the centuries that followed, its impacts can still be seen in our lives today. The Industrial Revolution led to many changes such as the social structure, the role of the women, and the appearance of the Capitalist system. Before the Industrial Revolution, males were dominance, but life after the Industrial Revolution changed in terms of women role; they can express themselves due to the power of money and they work as such as men in factories or the Textile mills as in Coketown in which Charles Dickens represented both characters Stephan Blackpool and Rachel. In addition to the types of marriage either marriage for business as in the relationship between Josiah Bounderby and Louisa Gradgrind, for love, or secretly as in Stephan Blackpool and Rachel, in which they reflect the social structure and the occurrence of blood lineage; the blue blood symbolizes the upper-class people like Gradgrind's family. Besides the rise of stock markets as a result of the Industrial Revolution, "the rise of market capitalism influenced which families had the opportunity to make money" (Martin Covey). People started to invest their money. such as Josiah Bounderby's factories and banks in his self-absorption trait claiming he is a self-made man.

Gradgrind's family is one example of the families represented at that time in Hard Times. Mr. Thomas Gradgrind and his fascination with teaching facts over imagination or creative activities besides the occurrence of capitalism and the dimension of the educational system which includes the concept of privatization, the apprentices are taught what the owner desires and it is a way to make money. This is all reflected in Mr. Gradgrind private school and the material he imposes on the children as Mr. Gradgrind exclaimed: "In this life, we want nothing but Facts,". This educational system was implied in the private school and Mrs. Gradgrind's home- Stone Lodge- with his two children, Tom, and Louisa Gradgrind. These two places depict only hard facts at the expense of compassion, love, and imagination or creativity. As an illustration, the eternal atmosphere in the family is cold, emotionless, and compassionless where

Mrs. Gradgrind tell her children to study their “ologies” as she does not represent any significant role as a woman in that time. This embodies the mechanized and monotonous life they are living

Eventually, Mr. Gradgrind realizes that educational system may not be perfect and failed to teach only the dry, hard facts. This appears when he knows that his son Tom has robbed Bounderby’s bank. Moreover, when his daughter confronts him of the way he has been treating her as a good selling her to his friend Bounderby for the sake of getting money to be a member of the parliament in order to show off his social status among others. Faced with these failures of his system, Mr. Gradgrind feels defeated “The ground on which I stand has ceased to be solid under my feet”. However, he becomes a good, wiser man away from stating facts.” making his facts and figures subservient to Faith, Hope, and Charity”.

In contrast to Gradgrind’s family, there is Stephan Blackpool and Bounderby. Firstly, Stephen Blackpool presented as the working-class people. One of the Hands in Bounderby’s factory that illustrates the proletarian type of people and his life as an individual representing the second kind of marriage which is marriage for love. He seems to be struggling with his life as “Hand” which eventually turns his beloved wife to a bedridden, alcoholic wife. due to the monotonous life. “if work and family role are not well balanced, it can increase both interpersonal and intra-personal conflict in the organization resulting in work-family conflict,” (Mukanzi1, C. & Senaji, T). As a sequence of this, Stephen fell in Love with Rachel and decided to divorce his wife but he could not. which is considered one of the social problems emerged after the Industrial Revolution reflecting the power of money in getting a divorce too which emphasize the importance of money at that time and distinguishing the poor from the rich. “there is a low but it is not for you because it costs much of money”. Stephen also represents satisfaction, when he met Louisa and helped him with some money in order to travel, he refused to take more than the price of the ticket which illustrates the high moral standers and the sense of satisfaction of what he has compared to the wealthy Mr. Bounderby and Mr. Gradgrind. “I’ll tak two pound. I’ll borrow’t for t’ pay’t back”.

Another type of the families was presented in Hard Times is Cecelia’s family or the circus family which considered to be exactly the opposite of the two aristocratic families of Mr. Gradgrind and Mr. Bounderby. The circus family was not affected by the Industrial Revolution negatively. The sense of compassion, love, and imagination was implied for them. One example is Cecelia Jube who went to the private school to learn but instead of undergoing the educational system of Mr. Gradgrind, she broke it by implementing her ideas “Wisdom of the heart” over his. As an illustration, Cecelia and her family are the helping hands or the neutral place away from facts. This could be seen when Thomas and Louisa Gradgrind were spying on the circus through a hole in the fence, in which it turned Mr. Gradgrind furious “Louisa!! Thomas!!”. Moreover, the relationship between Cecelia and Louisa throughout the course of the novel seems to get better as Cecelia helps Louisa to overcome her struggles in expressing her feelings and emotions “I am so unhappy”.

As stated above, the impact of the Industrial Revolutions on families is very significant as presented in Hard Times with two opposing dimensions, facts and imagination or love. Facts represented by Gradgrind’s family and the aristocratic behavior of Mr. Bounderby and their family bonding is getting worse in which, as a result, it ends with isolation and family disintegration. On the other hand, Cecelia Jube or the circus family and Stephan Blackpool

with his beloved Rachel they provide moral education that centers on altruism. In addition to emphasizing the concept of that the families if they were ruled by hard, dry facts and logic, they will lose emotional connection and the society will be self-serving caring about money and as individualism rather than self-sacrificing “It is a matter of humanity not money” (Abuzahra, N. A., & Imraish, N).

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