



## REPRESENTASI KEMISKINAN DAN DISKRIMINASI SOSIAL DALAM NOVEL JOHN STEINBECK 'THE GRAPES OF WRATH' (1939)

### *REPRESENTATION OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION IN THE NOVEL 'THE GRAPES OF WRATH' BY JOHN STEINBECK (1939)*

Muhammad Taufik<sup>1\*</sup>, Helmi Syukur<sup>2</sup>, Nasrum<sup>3</sup>, Syakirah Rahmah<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>\*Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Email : [muhammad.taufik@uin-makassar.ac.id](mailto:muhammad.taufik@uin-makassar.ac.id)

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Email : [helmisyukur@uin-makassar.ac.id](mailto:helmisyukur@uin-makassar.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Email : [nasrum@uin-makassar.ac.id](mailto:nasrum@uin-makassar.ac.id)

<sup>4</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, Email : [syakirahr@gmail.com](mailto:syakirahr@gmail.com)

\*email koresponden: [muhammad.taufik@uin-makassar.ac.id](mailto:muhammad.taufik@uin-makassar.ac.id)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62567/ijosse.v2i1.2137>

#### *Abstrack*

*This research explores the themes of poverty and social discrimination in John Steinbeck's work entitled 'The Grapes of Wrath' through the perspective of Marxist theory. By using qualitative methods, including and in-depth understanding, this research investigates the content of the extent to which the characters' analytical experiences are in line with Karl Marx's views on class struggle. Findings show emotional representations of poverty, depicted through the return of a person recently released from prison to meet basic needs, and social discrimination, such as the rejection of homeless groups as local residents. This research deepens the understanding of economic structures and dominance interactions, providing insight into the complex relationship between societal forces and individual experiences in this novel. The aim of this research is to understand the various forms of poverty and social discrimination by utilizing the Marxist theory proposed by Karl Marx.*

**Keywords:** *The Grapes of Wrath, Poverty, Social Discrimination, Marxist Theory, Social Class.*

#### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi tema kemiskinan dan diskriminasi sosial dalam karya John Steinbeck berjudul 'The Grapes of Wrath' melalui perspektif teori Marxis. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif, termasuk pemahaman yang mendalam, penelitian ini menyelidiki isi sejauh mana pengalaman analitis karakter sejalan dengan pandangan Karl Marx tentang perjuangan kelas. Temuan menunjukkan representasi emosional kemiskinan, yang digambarkan melalui kembalinya seseorang yang baru dibebaskan dari penjara untuk memenuhi kebutuhan dasar, dan diskriminasi sosial, seperti penolakan kelompok tunawisma sebagai penduduk lokal. Penelitian ini memperdalam pemahaman tentang struktur ekonomi dan interaksi dominasi, memberikan wawasan tentang hubungan kompleks antara kekuatan masyarakat dan pengalaman individu dalam novel ini. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk memahami berbagai bentuk kemiskinan dan diskriminasi sosial dengan memanfaatkan teori Marxis yang dikemukakan oleh Karl Marx.

**Kata Kunci:** *The Grapes of Wrath, Poverty, Social Discrimination, Marxist Theory, Social Class.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are expressions of creativity that describe human complexity in words. Each word not only contains meaning, but also summarizes the feelings, thoughts, and deep imagination of the author. Kosasih (2003) explains that literature is a writing or essay that contains good values written in beautiful language. Literary works can cause pity, emotion, and sympathy (Hamzah, 2017). A novel is a literary form of long narrative prose that tells a series of events and contains characters that develop in the story. Novels usually have a broader time frame than short stories and allow the author to introduce the complexity of characters and themes thoroughly. Novelistic works give the author great freedom of expression in describing life, conveying messages and stimulating the reader's imagination. Novels also usually contain the life experiences of individuals with a unique circle of life, and the people in novels usually show characters and attitudes that are different from humans. Kosasih (2002) states that novels are imaginative works that tell the full side of a person's life. of the problematic life of a person or several characters.

Poverty and social discrimination are often issues that are often raised in literary works, it is because these two topics are interesting topics to discuss. In the realm of societal challenges, poverty delineates a situation wherein individuals or families confront a deficit in resources or income, impeding their ability to fulfill fundamental necessities like nourishment, attire, housing, healthcare, and education. (Yacoub, 2012) asserts that poverty, being a global issue, revolves around the challenge of fulfilling fundamental life needs. This problem is not confined to specific countries, as indicated by (World Bank, 2004), which refutes the notion that lack of income and assets is the sole cause, emphasizing the complexity of poverty as a human experience. Literary works broaden the perspective, portraying poverty not merely as economic deprivation but also encompassing dimensions like inequality, marginalization, and the ongoing struggle for survival. The depiction of poverty in literary works can open a window for readers to understand social reality, elicit pity, and stimulate reflection on fundamental social issues. In other words, poverty in a literary context involves depicting the lives of economically marginalized individuals or groups of people by addressing the psychological, emotional, and social aspects of their experiences.

While social discrimination refers to unfair or unequal treatment of an individual or social group based on certain differences, such as ethnicity, religion, social class, or sexual orientation. as per the Big Indonesian Dictionary (2018), discrimination involves unequal treatment of citizens, considering aspects such as skin tone, strata, nation, financial status and beliefs etc.). Meanwhile, according to Elly Setiadi et al (2007: 152), discrimination is described as any unfair treatment towards individuals or communities, taking into account various factors such as ethnic origin, beliefs, strata, position, finances, gender, physical condition, period, sexual tendencies, philosophical and political perspectives. Social discrimination is also often raised as an interesting topic in literary works, social discrimination in literary works refers to the presentation of inequality, unfair treatment, or restrictions on the rights of certain individuals or social groups. This can include discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, social class or other characteristics. Through social discrimination in literature, writers can



evoke emotions in readers such as feelings of empathy, fight against social injustice, and make readers more critical of the justice around them.

The renowned work by John Steinbeck, 'The Grapes of Wrath,' stands as one of Steinbeck's most remarkable literary achievements and was initially released in 1939. This novel shows how capitalists exploit and manipulate the proletariat. As a Marxist, Steinbeck portrays the government as capitalists and the citizens as workers. The novel follows the story of Tom Joads and his family as they fight against poverty and discrimination in their country. The novel explicitly raises the theme of poverty and discrimination in it, where in many scenes it is explained how poor the characters in this novel are, and also after Tom and his family move to San Francisco with the aim of having a better life, but what they experience is discrimination because they are poor. For example in chapter 4 page 26 when Tom tells Casy that he has a friend in a prison cell who has just been released, but because he is poor and has nowhere to live, he chooses to steal a car in order to get back into prison, because he thinks being in prison is better, he gets food, a bed and electricity, it's better than him living on the streets.

From the explanation above, we see the phenomenon of poverty and social discrimination which is often seen in this novel, So the objective of this study is to explore the manifestations of poverty and societal bias through The lens of Karl Marx's Marxist theory. Among Marx's historical views that are considered important by supporters of Marxism, Marx has expressed Marxism that: The past of all societies has been marked by ongoing conflicts between different classes, such as the free and enslaved, patricians and plebeians, lords and serfs, and oppressors and oppressed. These opposing forces engaged in continuous, sometimes concealed, sometimes explicit battles that ultimately led to either a revolutionary restructuring of society or the shared downfall of the conflicting classes (Basir 2012:29). By examining how characters are positioned in relation to social class in the narrative. and explore gaps in access to resources, education, and opportunity, highlighting how these contribute to the persistence of poverty. Identify examples where characters are marginalized or excluded based on their social class. Additionally, consider the concept of alienation, which is a key Marxist idea. Analyze whether the characters experience a sense of alienation or alienation from their work, themselves, or others in the society depicted in the novel. By applying Marxist theory, it is possible to study the economic structure, class dynamics, and power relations depicted in the novel, providing a different understanding of poverty and social discrimination in the context of the narrative.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODS

According to Sugiyono, research methods are scientific methods for obtaining data with specific purposes and uses. This research is included in the type of qualitative research, namely data in the form of monologue quotes, dialogue between characters, and character behavior that reflects poverty and social discrimination in this novel. The method used in this research is descriptive, by looking at the phenomena experienced by the research object which shows poverty and social discrimination, especially social class. The data collection technique in this



research uses techniques content analysis and reading and note-taking techniques (Dewi 2023:48).

With this, researchers will look at it thoroughly with a focus on Marxism regarding poverty and social class discrimination. The technical steps that must be taken in collecting data are;

- a. Read the novel *Grapes Of Warth* by John Steinbeck repeatedly and read other reading sources that are relevant to this research;
- b. Mark every quote in the form of a statement or sentence in the novel related to the problem being studied;
- c. Understand and record data related to discrimination Social caste and poverty Within The novel *The Grapes of Wrath* and,
- d. Recognize information related to the research problem.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The novel *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, There are elaborate portrayals of settings that contain elements of social discrimination and poverty. carefully presents the harsh reality of social inequality in society during the Great Depression that occurred in the 1930s. Through his characters, John presents carefully the scenes of social discrimination and poverty that occurred at that time, making readers feel like they are invited to share the difficulties that the characters experience. Scenes where the poor, especially the Joad family, experience discriminatory treatment that degrades their human dignity. Whether in the form of unfair treatment at work or in social interactions, the novel illustrates how social inequality can widen the gap between social classes. Steinbeck skillfully presents the injustices and economic hardships faced by the characters, making the reader reflect on the harsh realities of society at the time; poverty and the frequent social disparities and discrimination.

#### a. Representation of Poverty

##### 1) Data 1

"They were a guy who got parole," he said. "A month later, he was back on parole. The man asked him why he broke parole. "Well"; she said. "I didn't get any comfort from my parents. No electric lights or bathrooms. No books and no delicious food." She said she went back to prison, where they had facilities and she ate regularly. He said after getting out of prison, it left him feeling alone and wondering what to do next. So he stole a car and went back to prison." -Chapter 4 page 26

Based on this description, the scene depicts the poverty of a man who had just been paroled from prison, but he broke his parole. He explains that he made this decision because of the uncomfortable place where his parents live outside the prison, because outside, there are no lights, electricity, bathrooms, books, and good food. The man said that returning to a familiar place (prison) made him feel more comfortable and prosperous, he didn't have to go hungry and cold, while being outside made him feel lonely and confused about his next move because he had no money. Finally, to cope with the situation, the man decides to steal a car and return to a place that gives him comfort (prison). This shows how poor the man is, so he thinks that life in prison is better than outside.



## 2) Data 2

“He’s very hungry for pork. I’m hungry just thinking about it. I’ve eaten four pig roasts in four years – one every Christmas.”-Chapter 4 page 29

The text depicts a situation of poverty, mediating the difficulty in meeting food needs. The statement “He jus’ got hungry for pork.”; shows that the characters in the story are unable to get the food they want due to poverty. In addition, financial constraints are seen in the statement “. I had jus’ four slices of roastin’ pork in four years—one slice ever’ Christmus.” This shows that the consumption of pork, which is considered a luxury for some people, is very limited and can only be celebrated at Christmas.

The depiction of food deprivation shows that the character suffers from food shortages over a long period of time, where it is said that the character survives by hunting the animals around him, without being able to buy them because he has no money, thus showing a significant level of poverty. That she is able to eat or get the things she wants when focusing on certain occasions only, such as Christmas, when most people celebrate with special treats, delicious meats, and gifts, this text shows how poverty can limit access to experiences and satisfactions that are considered common to most people.

## 3) Data 3

“Muley shyly uttered: a few times I ate frogs, squirrels, and prairie dogs. Forced to do so. But now I have a wire pole on a dry rail. Can get rabbits and sometimes prairie chickens. They catch squirrels and cougars too.” He reached out and picked up his bag and dumped it on the porch. Two rabbits and a hare tumbled and rolled, soft and furry.” -Chapter 6 Page 43

The text above provides a description of the poverty faced by the character Muley. The statement “For a while I occasionally ate frogs, squirrels and prairie dogs.” Reflects Muley’s compulsion to rely on uncommon or even taboo food sources, indicating the level of food deprivation he is experiencing. The words “had to do that” emphasize the financial pressure or circumstances that forced her to take such actions. The statement goes on to describe Muley’s efforts to forage and survive amidst poverty, mentioning the use of wire traps on dry river paths to catch rabbits, prairie chickens, squirrels and even cougars. This method reflects a harsh and extreme way of survival and highlights how difficult it can be in poverty.

The image of Muley emptying the sack he is carrying on the terrace and from it falling two nearly dead rabbits suggests that the rabbits are perhaps the only source of protein he may have. The simplicity and smallness of this catch highlights Muley’s limited resources, thus creating a picture of living in extreme poverty.

## 4) Data 4

”I don’t want to say that I’m trying to scam the rich,” the fat man continued. “I’m just trying to trade. People here stop asking for gasoline and exchange it for their belongings. I can show you in my back room what they exchange for gasoline and oil: beds, carts, pots and pans. One family traded their child’s doll for a gallon of gas. And what would I do with all that stuff, open a thrift store? Yes, someone would give me his shoes for a gallon. And if I were that kind of person, I would definitely get them...” She looked at her mother and stopped\_”. – Chapter 6 page 102





The text above shows the poverty and struggle of people to survive in the midst of their financial helplessness. At a store on the side of the road to San Francisco, Tom stopped his car because he ran out of gasoline and clean water, and he and his family met a fat man who told them that many people who had no money traded their belongings for gasoline and a gallon of water. "I can show you in my back room the things they traded for gasoline and oil: baby carriages, strollers, pots and pans", suggesting that the people who traveled earlier were also like Tom's family, equally poor, and moved to San Francisco in the hope of starting a new, comfortable life there.

The description of the exchange of goods such as baby carriages and so on just for a gallon of water illustrates how they are willing to do anything to survive in the midst of poverty. The text shows that the difficult economy forced them to do things that they might not have done under normal circumstances, all of which they were forced to do because they were ensnared by poverty.

### 5) Data 5

"The crouching people moved nervously. A broad-shouldered man, whose face was covered by a black hat, tapped his knee with the palm of his hand. 'I knew it, devil!' he shouted. 'And they starve people. How can you feed your family on twenty cents an hour, it's not going to be easy, so you'll take anything. They make you come and go. They sell works at auction.'" -Chapter 24 page 274

The text above reflects poverty, where there is uncertainty and anxiety experienced by a group of workers who appear anxious and worried about the difficult economic conditions. A broad-shouldered man speaking with his face hidden behind a black hat expresses anger and frustration over the difficult economic situation. He emphasizes that the low wage policy makes it difficult for workers to support their families.

The statement "You can't feed your fam'ly on twenty cents an hour, but you'll take anything." reflects the conditions in which workers inevitably have to accept any job that can earn them money, even if the pay is very low, because they are trapped by the low economic factors. The statement "They jes' auction a job off;" shows the unfairness of job recruitment, where workers are considered to be auctioned off at a low price. This shows the poverty and helplessness of people in low social classes.

It presents the economic inequality and hardships faced by workers at the time. It also reflects dissatisfaction with a system that seemed to put them at a disadvantage and forced them to accept difficult conditions to make a living.

### 6) Data 6

"We have nothing now," says Pa. – There has been no work or harvest for a long time. So what are we going to do? How do we get food? And let me tell you, Rosasharn is not far from Due. Damn, so I hate to think. Go back in time so you don't think. Looks like our lives are over." – Chapter 28 page 348

In this excerpt, John Steinbeck describes the plight of a family in severe poverty. As a patriarchal figure, Pa expresses despair and confusion due to the lack of jobs and harvests. The



bleak economic situation took everything away from them. The father even reflects a sense of despair by saying that their lives are over.

The uncertainty of the future, especially the economic problems faced by these families, causes emotional distress, especially regarding difficulties in accessing food. Rosasharn's not-so-distant Due statement adds an extra dimension to their anxiety, showing that poverty is not just an economic issue, but also a threat to family stability. The depiction of “digging back into the past” as an attempt to avoid thinking emphasizes that poverty not only affects the physical condition, but also has a heavy psychological impact. Steinbeck accurately portrays the despair and uncertainty that engulfs this family, making poverty a vast and devastating life experience.

#### 7) Data 7

Then groups of poor people came out of the tents, the overcrowded warehouses, their clothes tattered, their shoes stained, They threw themselves into the water, into the cities, into the shops in the countryside, into the offices to beg for food, grimacing and begging for food, asking for help, trying to steal, lying. And beneath the begging and fear, desperate anger flared. And in small towns, pity for the begging and begging people turned into hatred, and hatred for the starving people turned into fear. Sheriffs arrested deputies and ordered the purchase of guns, tear gas, and ammunition. Then hungry people crowded the alleys behind the stores, begging for bread, looting rotten vegetables and stealing whatever they could.” . – Chapter 29 page 356 The text above gives a picture of extreme poverty where a group of people coming out of overcrowded tents and huts are seen in very poor conditions. Their clothes are in tatters, their shoes are stained with mud, and they are forced to find food by begging, stealing and lying. This situation created an atmosphere of anger, horror and fear among the people and even prompted the local government to appoint deputies and prepare weapons and ammunition. This shows how poverty is a terrible thing, where people are willing to throw away their common sense and ethics in order to get food, they steal, beg, cheat and other bad things due to poverty.

#### 8) Data 8

“He shook his head at Pa “You must have quite a lot of money.” “No, we don’t have any money,” Pa said. “But we work hard and we’re all good people. We’ll get good pay and we’ll collect it. We’ll get them out.” The ragged man watched Paa speak, then laughed, and his laughter changed to a hoarse laugh.

“Go and get a good salary – oh my God!” He paused for a moment and said slyly, “Maybe pick oranges?” do you want to pick peaches?” – Chapter 16 page 150

In the quote, Pa states that they do not have enough money, reflecting the condition of poverty. However, Pa also underlined his passion for hard work, showing a desire to overcome economic limitations. This idea reflects the economic inequality and social challenges faced by the group, but also creates a narrative of solidarity and hope to build a better life despite existing limitations.



## **b. Representation of Social Discrimination**

### **1) Data 1**

The owner leaned forward. “No, he didn’t. And this is no time for us, the locals, to accept the nonsense of a nasty tramp like you..” - Chapter 16 page 149

In this quote, the owner rejects the idea that homeless people, like the characters discussed, can be considered local citizens. These statements reflect discriminatory attitudes towards homeless groups, showing how society may reject or exclude them as part of the community. This reflects social dynamics that differentiate and discriminate against certain groups based on their social or economic status.

### **2) Data 2**

And as the world moved westward, rules became laws, even though no one told the family. It was illegal to litter a campsite. It was illegal to contaminate drinking water in any way; it was forbidden to eat good, scrumptious food near a hungry person unless asked to share it. And according to their law, the punishment, and there are only two, is a quick fight and either murder or expulsion; and refusal is the worst. For whoever breaks the law, his name and face remain with him, and he has no place in any world, wherever he is created. -Chapter 17 page 156

The quote reflects social discrimination and poverty by depicting strict regulations and inequality in the treatment of disadvantaged groups. The harshly enforced laws against violations near the camps demonstrated injustice towards the poor. Restrictions on drinking water and rich foods emphasize inequalities in access to basic resources. Extreme punishments, such as deadly fighting or ostracism, show how harsh the consequences can be for those who break the law, creating inequalities that can exacerbate situations of poverty and lead to social isolation. The owner’s statement further demonstrated a discriminatory attitude towards homeless people, denying them recognition and acceptance as part of the community.

### **3) Data 3**

The man took two steps back and said. “You’re not in your country right now. You’re in California and we don’t want you to settle down and leave.” – Chapter 18 page 171

The quote reflects social discrimination by highlighting inequality and rejection of certain groups. The statement described discriminatory attitudes toward migrants referred to as “Okies,” emphasizing an unwillingness to accept them in California. By insisting that they are not in their country of origin and refusing to let them stay, the sentence creates a narrative of social inequality, where certain groups are deemed neither wanted nor recognized in the society they move to.

### **4) Data 4**

The contractor said, “I told you I need someone. If you don’t want to work well, that’s up to you.” The deputy smiled. “If they don’t want to work, there is no place for them in this area. We will deport them immediately.” – Chapter 20 page 213

The quote reflects social discrimination and possible unfair treatment of workers. The contractor expresses his disapproval of workers by referring to the need for “men” without providing a clear reason, giving the impression that there may be a rejection of those who may





be less capable or less desirable. Furthermore, representatives' statements that if they don't want to work, then it's not the right place, and that they will replace them quickly, suggest that there may be a perception that poor or underprivileged workers are seen as not having enough value or contribution. This reflects a discriminatory mindset towards those who may face economic or employment difficulties.

### 5) Data 5

They were the brave ones on the ridge and fought against the sun. Knew he stood out. He stretched out his hand and stood up. Naked as the morning, fighting the sun. Maybe he was crazy. I don't know. Stand there with arms outstretched; like the cross he saw. Four hundred meters. And the people-yes, they look up and feel the wind with their fingers; and then they lie there without being able to shoot. Maybe the Injun knows something. Knowing we can't shoot. Jes lay there with his rifle raised and wouldn't even put it on our shoulders. Look at her headband, one feather. Look and naked as the sun. For a long time we lay there and watched him and he didn't move. And then the captain got angry. "Shoot, you crazy bastard, shoot!" he yelled. And we just lay there. "I'll give you five and then mark you" said the captain. Well, sir- we slowly raised our weapons, always hoping someone would shoot first. I have never been so sad in my life. And I stared at his stomach, because you can't stop an Injun anywhere else. Well, he fell down with his toy and rolled over. And we got up. And he's not big – that's where he looks so big. All torn up and little. Have you ever seen a rooster, strong and beautiful, his feathers drawn and painted, even his eyes beautifully drawn? And boom! You take it bloody and twisted and spoil someone better than you; and eating it can never make up for it, because you broke someone inside and you can't fix it. – Chapter 23 page 263

The text above describes the tragic moment when a group of soldiers does not want to shoot an Indian hero standing on a hill. The hero appears boldly, resembling a cross with outstretched arms in the sunlight, creating an impressive symbol. The soldiers find themselves in a moral dilemma because they feel hindered by the Indian and his bravery, so they cannot shoot him even if the guns are aimed. Insecurities and inner conflict are portrayed as simply observing and unable to act ruthlessly. Even when orders are given, reluctance remains, reflecting a strong moral judgment. When the Indian man is finally killed, the description of how his beauty and glory are replaced by the destruction and brutality of war conveys a deep sense of tragedy. The moral consequences of the act are described by the analogy of a beautiful quail that is wounded and becomes bloody after being shot. It means the deep emotional and moral impact of brutal acts, which gives an understanding of the soldiers' internal conflicts and loss of humanity in war situations.

### 6) Data 6

Well, they consider each other poor. They were arrested and imprisoned and couldn't get out because one knew the other was rich. And the prison was cruel to them because he considered them poor. You should see what he looks like when he finds out. Yeah, almost fainted, that's all. What did they do in prison? Well, they attended some kind of radical meeting, but they weren't radicals. They just happened to be there. And no one wants to marry for money. And so the girls immediately started lying to each other. – Chapter 23 page 264



The paragraph above describes social discrimination where people are arrested and imprisoned for no apparent reason. They experience unfair treatment at the hands of cruel prison guards just because they look poor. The discrimination becomes even more apparent when the prison guards are surprised to find out that they are not actually poor. Stereotypes and prejudices against certain groups (in this case the poor) lead to discriminatory treatment in law enforcement and social interaction.

### 7) Data 7

People who can graft trees and make their seeds grow big and bear fruit cannot find a way to let hungry people eat their harvest. People who created new fruits in the world failed to create a system where their fruits could be eaten. And this failure struck the country like a great sorrow.

In order to maintain prices, the roots, the trees, the vines had to be destroyed, and this was the saddest and most bitter thing of all. Bags of oranges were thrown to the ground. People gathered to pick the fruit, but it couldn't be done. How could they buy oranges at twenty cents a dozen when they could get them right away? And the people with the hoses sprayed kerosene on the oranges and they were angry at the crime, angry at the people who came to pick the fruit. A million people starving and in need of fruit and kerosene sprinkled on a golden mountain. – Chapter 25 page 282-283

The text contains vivid examples of social discrimination resulting from economic inequality and the destructive impact of a flawed system. Farmers and men who increased agricultural production were unable to meet the basic needs of a starving population. The cause of this failure was the lack of a fair distribution system for the abundant fruits produced. This discriminated against the peasants. The destruction of food crops and the excessive dumping of oranges on the ground further emphasized the difference between abundance and scarcity. The injection of kerosene into oranges to keep prices high has become a symbol of indifference to the plight of a million starving people. This economic discrimination perpetuates the cycle of poverty and despair, thus highlighting the enormous social injustice inherent in the system.

### 8) Data 8

Fertile soil, straight rows of trees, strong trunks, and ripe fruit. And children who die of pellagra must die because oranges are of no use. And the coroner must complete the deed – death by malnutrition – because the food must rot, must be forced to rot.

People came to catch potatoes from the river with nets and the guards caught them; they came to pick up oranges thrown by roaring cars, but gasoline was sprayed. And they stood still and watched the potatoes fly, listened to the pigs killed in the ditch and sprinkled with lime, saw a mountain of oranges dangling in the rotting liquid, and the eyes of the people became blind and the eyes of those who were hungry became angry. The grapes of wrath become full and heavy in the souls of men, and it becomes difficult to harvest them. – Chapter 25 page 283

The text vividly depicts social discrimination due to economic interests and emotional indifference to human suffering. The reference to children dying of pellagra, a disease of scarcity, highlights the tragic consequences of prioritizing profit over human life. It is clearly discriminatory and deeply inhumane. Leaving food to rot and dousing oranges with kerosene



instead of allowing those in need access to it symbolizes systemic societal neglect and cruelty. Adding to the sense of injustice are the security guards who prevent starving people from getting basic food and the horrific sight of food waste. The human soul is metaphorically shown as a grapefruit of rage, indicating collective resentment and hatred towards a system that perpetuates social discrimination and makes vulnerable groups suffer and perish.

#### 9) Data 9

Casy looked through the entrance into the dark night. "Look, Tom," he finally said. "We came there to work. They said they'd get a penny. There's a lot of us. We arrived and were told two and a half cents. My friend couldn't even eat on that and if he had children- So we said we wouldn't take it. So they took us away. And all the police in the world attacked us. Now they pay you five dollars money. If they attacked here, do you think they would pay five?"

"I don't know" said Tom. "Pay five now."

"Look," said Casy. "We tried camping together and they treated us like pigs. We split up. We beat up our friends. Threw us out like pigs. They kicked you out like pigs too. We couldn't take it anymore. Some people don't see each other for two days. Will you come back tonight?"

"Of course" said Tom.

"Tell the people how it is, Tom. Tell them they starved us and stabbed themselves in the back. Because he immediately got two and a half juices when they cleaned us up." – Chapter 26 page 312-313

The text highlights social discrimination in the labor system, particularly the exploitation and unfair treatment meted out to workers during strikes. Workers initially want fair wages, but employers deceive them by reducing the promised wages, which is clearly wrong and does not respect workers' rights. Casy highlights the struggle to organize and assemble, only to face brutal opposition from the authorities and those who control the workforce. The reference to being treated "like pigs" highlights the inhumane conditions workers face. Social discrimination manifests in unequal power dynamics where workers are not fairly compensated, forced into poor conditions and subjected to violence as they seek to achieve their basic economic rights. The story presents a stark contrast between the plight of poor workers and the indifference or hostility of the authorities.

#### 10) Data 10

Casy said sadly, "I wish they could see this." I want them to see how they can depend on their muscles – Oh, sometimes I have to be" Geez, I know a friend. Brang and I have been together since I was in prison. I tried to start a labor union. One started. And then they took matters into their own hands and destroyed it. And you know what? They were the ones he was trying to help get rid of. It had nothing to do with him. Fear of being seen in society. Say and #039;Get out. You are a danger to us. Sir, that really hurt his feelings. But then he said, and said, "It's not as bad as you know. He said and quoted: The French Revolution – anyone who knows about it will be killed. As usual" he said.. – Chapter 26 page 314

The text above illustrates Casy's frustration with the inability of workers to organize and form unions. Casy tells the story of a man who tried to form a union to improve working conditions and wages, but his company was destroyed by thugs or informal law enforcement.



Even more disappointing, the people who should have supported him rejected him and chased him away for fear of joining his group. Casy then illustrates the pessimistic view that those who try to protect workers' rights are always oppressed. References to the French Revolution and the massacre of heads emphasize that those who fight for change often face great risk and betrayal, even by those who should be their allies. This provides a clear picture of the power disparities and injustices that workers face when they seek to improve working conditions. Difficulties in forming unions and gaining public support increase the gap and conflict between the working class and capitalists.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

John Steinbeck's novel, "The Grapes of Wrath," depicts the challenges faced by its characters, encompassing poverty and societal discrimination. The novel emotionally depicts the challenges faced by the Joad family and other migrant workers in the midst of the Great Depression. By employing Marxist theory, the research allows for a deeper understanding of the economic structures, power dynamics, and complex relationships between social forces and individual experiences described in the novel. The novel's characters are outcasts and outcasts because of their social class and struggle to access resources, education, and opportunities.

The novel highlights the injustices faced by the poor and working class, such as labor exploitation and lack of necessities such as food, housing and healthcare. It also highlights the alienation of the characters in their works, themselves or the rest of society portrayed in the novel. The characters experience a disconnection from their labor and the outcomes they create, resulting in a feeling of hopelessness and despondency. likewise experience a sense of estrangement from their own selves. and their identity as they struggle to maintain their dignity and self-esteem in the face of poverty and discrimination.

This novel vividly captures the multifaceted dimensions of poverty through apt examples. The desperation of those who resort to crime to return to prison, lack of food leading to limited and occasional indulgence, extreme survival measures and the degradation of human dignity to meet basic needs contribute to a compelling picture of poverty. The story also exposes the exploitation of workers and the difficulty of finding work, vividly painting a picture of economic inequality and how far poverty can take people. The social discrimination presented in the novel is equally profound. From the abandonment and dehumanization of the homeless by local communities to the imposition of laws and punishments that disproportionately affect the poor, the story reveals the injustices faced by those on the margins of society. Discrimination extends to immigrants seeking a better life in California, where they face hostility and rejection, reinforcing the issue of social exclusion based on economic status.

#### 5. REFERENCES

- Angela, Michelle, Septia Winduwat; 'Representation of Poverty in South Korean Films (Semiotic Analysis of Saussure's Model in the Film Parasite)'. Koneksi, 2019.
- Banerjee, Prasanta. 'Family, Gender Discrimination And Quality Of Life: A Marxist Perspective'. International Journal For Innovative Research In Multidisciplinary Field,



2017.

Caroline, Helena; 'Farm workers in all of California, unite! -An analysis of Marxism in John Steinbecks Of Mice and Men and The Grapes'. Bachelor Thesis, 2009.

Dewi, Tri Ratna; 'Analisis Nilai Marxisme Dan Diskriminasi Kasta Sosial Dalam Novel Jejak Langkah Karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer', EPrint3, 2023.

Ferezagia, Debrina Vita; 'Analysis of Poverty Levels in Indonesia'. Jurnal Sosial Humaniora Terapan, 2018.

Hooti, Noorbakshs, Farzaneh Arjmand; 'The Nature of Identity in "The Grapes of Wrath": A Postmodern Study'. International Journal of Modern Anthropology, 2013.

Ismail, Indriaty, Mohd. Zuhaili Kamal Basiri; 'Karl Marx and the Concept of Social Class Struggle', International Journal of Islamic Thought, 2012.

Komariyah, Ghufroni, Hanny Uswatun Nisa; 'Fenomena Diskriminasi Sosial dalam Film Yuni Karya Kamila Andini: Kajian Sosiologi Sastra'. Jurnal Ilmiah Wahana Pendidikan, 2022.

Lubis, Fheti Wulandari; 'ANALISIS DISKRIMINASI PADA NOVEL "AMELIA" KARYA TERE-LIYE'. Journal of Science and Social Research, 2018.

Napitupulu, Ayu Indari Tania, Alfitriana Purba; 'Analisis Diskriminasi Sosial Dalam Novel "Ayah Mengapa Aku Berbeda" Karya Agnes Danovar (Tinjauan Sosial Dan Moral)'. Jurnal Akuntansi, Manajemen dan Ekonomi Digital (JAMED), 2022.

Nurman, Muniralizah, Singgih Daru Kuncara, Fatimah Mujahir; 'Class Exploitation in Ron Rash's serena Novel : A Marxist Criticism'. Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Seni, dan Budaya, 2020.

Ridha, Fadhlina Kurnia, Yasnur Asri, Nurizzati; 'Social Discrimination In The Novel 'Dad, Why Am I Different?' By Agnes Davonar. Neliti, 2017.

Ryan, Michael; 'Marxism and Deconstruction'. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

Steinbeck, John; 'The Grapes Wrath'. The Viking Press - USA, 1939.

Subekti, Faris Maulana, Asih Prihandini; 'Kelas Sosial Di Novel The Great Gatsby'. Mahadaya, 2022.

Yusria, Juanda, Faisal; 'Pertentangan Kelas Dalam Novel RIMA Rima Tiga Jiwa Karya Akasa Dwipa (Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra Marxis)'. Makassar State University, 2018.