

Research Article

## Challenging Social Norm through Literature: Education, Inequality, and Sustainable Development

Rela Sabtiana<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of English Literature, Faculty of Communication and Language,  
Universitas Bina Sarana Informatika. Jakarta, Indonesia.

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### \*Corresponding Author:

Rela Sabtiana

**E-mail:**  
relasabtiana@gmail.com

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**Abstract:** Education plays a crucial role in shaping societal values and challenging structural inequalities. This paper explores how literature, particularly Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery," can be used as a tool to critically examine oppressive social norms within educational contexts. By applying Marxist and hyperrealist theories, the study analyzes how ritualistic violence in "The Lottery" mirrors real-world mechanisms of social control that sustain inequality. The paper argues that integrating literature into social sciences education can transform traditional learning approaches by encouraging students to question inherited norms and develop critical consciousness. This interdisciplinary approach aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), advocating for education that empowers learners to actively engage in social transformation. The findings suggest that a literature-based pedagogy in social sciences can drive a deeper understanding of systemic issues and contribute to a more just and sustainable society. The study further emphasizes the need for an interdisciplinary teaching approach where literature is used to foster critical thinking and inspire active participation in social change, supporting the realization of sustainable development goals.

**Keywords:** Education, Inequality, Literature, Social Norms, Sustainable Development.



## 1. Introduction

Education is essential in influencing societal values and tackling structural inequalities. As societies evolve, the education system must adapt to foster critical thinking and promote social justice. One of the most significant challenges within educational systems is the ingrained social norms that perpetuate inequality. These norms, often unconscious and deeply embedded in cultural traditions, can limit students' ability to recognize and address systemic oppression. Literature, particularly works like Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery," serves as a powerful tool to critically examine these norms. In "The Lottery," Jackson explores the dark side of human nature and the societal mechanisms that uphold oppressive traditions, providing a stark portrayal of the violence embedded within social structures [1]. This research investigates how such literary works can be integrated into social studies education to challenge societal norms, promote critical thinking, and raise awareness of social inequality. By connecting literature with social studies, the paper aligns with the broader goals of sustainable development, especially in relation to SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) [2] [3].

The integration of literature in education has been widely acknowledged for its potential to stimulate critical thought and challenge dominant ideologies. As noted by [4], literature fosters empathy and the capacity for critical reflection, which are essential components of a democratic society. [5] highlights the effectiveness of literature circles in fostering critical thinking, particularly in non-Western settings where traditional rote learning dominates. Additionally, scholars have argued that literary works offer students opportunities to explore and tackle intricate social challenges in ways that traditional social science methods often cannot [6] [7]. In this context, works like "The Lottery" offer valuable insights into the intersection of culture, power, and violence.

Marxist and hyperrealist theories, in particular, have been instrumental in analyzing the dynamics of power, class, and oppression. Marxist literary theory, with its focus on class struggle and the critique of capitalist systems, provides a framework for understanding how social systems maintain inequality [8] [9] [10]. As [11] famously argued, economic structures shape social relations, and literature can serve as both a reflection and critique of these structures. "The Lottery" exemplifies this by showcasing how unquestioned traditions sustain systemic oppression, mirroring the ways in which capitalism perpetuates class divisions [12].

Hyperrealism, on the other hand, examines how cultural narratives and representations distort reality and perpetuate ideologies that sustain oppressive social structures [13] [14]. According to Baudrillard's theory of simulation, society increasingly functions through symbolic representations that obscure real power structures. In "The Lottery," the blind adherence to ritualistic violence functions as a hyperreal spectacle—an act that conceals its own absurdity through normalization. This aligns with [15]'s concept of the society of the spectacle, where constructed social illusions dictate behavior, preventing individuals from questioning authority and social hierarchies. These theoretical frameworks are highly relevant for analyzing Jackson's work, as they shed light on the societal mechanisms depicted in "The Lottery" that sustain class and power disparities.

While there has been considerable research on the role of literature in fostering empathy and promoting critical thinking in the classroom [16] [17], a gap still exists in the literature regarding how literature can specifically support the transformation of social science education in a way that addresses Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Much of the existing research focuses on literature's role in individual moral development or its capacity to reflect social realities [18] [19], but fewer studies examine its potential in promoting a critical analysis of systemic structures within social sciences curricula. The current body of work on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) highlights the significance of critical thinking and transformative learning [18], yet it often overlooks the role literary texts can play in advancing these objectives. This research endeavors to bridge this gap by examining how works like "The Lottery" can be used to promote critical reflection on power dynamics, inequality, and social justice, thereby enhancing social science education and contributing to the achievement of SDGs.

This study is principally designed to examine how literature, particularly "The Lottery," can be used to facilitate a deeper understanding of social inequality and its connections to systemic violence. By applying Marxist and hyperrealist theories, the study will analyze how Jackson's work reflects real-world mechanisms of social control, such as ritualistic violence, and how these mechanisms perpetuate social divisions. This research argues that integrating literature into social studies education can transform traditional learning approaches by encouraging students to question inherited norms and develop critical consciousness [6] [7] [20]. As [20] posits in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,

education should be an act of liberation, encouraging students to challenge dominant ideologies rather than passively accept them. “The Lottery” serves as a case study in illustrating the dangers of uncritical obedience to tradition and authority.

Furthermore, this paper advocates for an interdisciplinary approach to social studies education, where literature is not only a means of reflecting reality but also a tool for critically analyzing and challenging that reality. The theory of ideological state apparatuses posits that education, media, and cultural traditions function as mechanisms of social control, reinforcing dominant ideologies [12]. By incorporating literature that challenges these ideologies, educators can disrupt the reproduction of social inequality and encourage students to engage in transformative learning.

The implications of this research extend beyond the classroom. By advocating for the inclusion of literature in social science curricula, this paper highlights the potential of interdisciplinary education to contribute to the realization of SDG 4 and SDG 10. Literature-based pedagogy can foster critical thinking, empathy, and social awareness, which are essential for creating a more just and sustainable society [16] [21]. This paper suggests that literature, when integrated effectively into social studies education, can empower students to actively engage in societal transformation, challenge oppressive norms, and advocate for social justice. The research also calls for a reevaluation of current educational practices, urging educators to adopt approaches that encourage critical reflection and active participation in social change. Ultimately, this study demonstrates how literature can serve as a significant tool in advancing the overarching objectives of sustainable development, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive future for all.

## **2. Literature Review**

Over the past decade, scholarly discussions on the intersection of literature, education, and social transformation have gained significant traction. Research has increasingly highlighted how literature serves as a critical tool for fostering social consciousness, questioning oppressive structures, and empowering learners to challenge systemic inequalities. This literature review examines recent studies on (1) literature as a tool for critical pedagogy, (2) Marxist and hyperrealist interpretations of literary texts, (3) the role of education in addressing structural violence and inequality, (4) literature, civic engagement, and social transformation, and (5) literature as a pathway to sustainable development.

### **2.1. Literature as a Tool for Critical Pedagogy**

The concept of critical pedagogy remains central to discussions on using education as a means of social transformation [20]. Research expands on this by emphasizing how literature enables students to question dominant ideologies and engage with diverse perspectives [22]. A research highlight that critical pedagogy promotes analytical thinking, social consciousness and academic achievement, particularly when applied in interdisciplinary contexts [23]. Their findings suggest that integrating literature into social sciences can equip students with the resources to critique systemic structures and challenge ingrained social norms.

Research by [24] and [25] further explore how literary texts enhance critical literacy by encouraging students to interrogate societal expectations and power structures. Through critical discussions, students develop analytical skills that allow them to deconstruct inequitable social norms and envision alternative futures. These studies reinforce the argument that literature, when used as a tool for critical pedagogy, contributes to broader conversations about education and social justice.

### **2.2. Marxist and Hyperrealist Approaches to Literature**

Marxist literary criticism continues to offer a powerful framework for analyzing class structures and systemic inequality. Scholars such as [8] and [26] argue that literature reveals and critiques the material conditions sustaining social hierarchies. Recent applications of Marxist theory, such as [27] analysis of *The White Tiger*, illustrate how literary narratives expose the oppressive mechanisms of capitalism while also depicting acts of resistance against inequality.

Hyperreality, as theorized by [13], has also been applied to literature to examine how reality is manipulated through social constructs. [28] applies Girard’s theory of violence and scapegoating to Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery,” arguing that ritualized violence serves as a tool for maintaining social control and justifying structural oppression. By framing violence as tradition, the story critiques the ways in which societies normalize injustice under the guise of cultural continuity. This aligns with Marxist critiques of ideology, suggesting that both capitalism and ritualistic traditions function to reinforce existing power structures.

### **2.3. Education, Social Justice, and Structural Inequality**

The role of education in perpetuating—or challenging—structural inequalities has been widely discussed. [29] argues that social justice and equity are often oversimplified in educational policy, failing to address their cultural, economic, and political dimensions. Similarly, [30] finds that online discussions in Global Citizenship Education (GCE) enhance students' awareness of global injustices, though deeper engagement is needed for meaningful transformation. These studies suggest that education alone is insufficient for challenging social norms unless it is coupled with critical pedagogy and literature-based analysis.

The research highlights how critical thinking is integrated into high school curricula, particularly through argumentative essays [31]. However, her study notes that many educational frameworks fail to fully incorporate critical literacy strategies that enable students to challenge ideological conditioning. This finding aligns with [32], who emphasize that public discourse shapes perceptions of inequality. If classrooms fail to cultivate critical discussions, students may unconsciously internalize social hierarchies rather than question them.

### **2.4. Literature, Civic Engagement, and Social Transformation**

In addition to developing critical literacy, literature plays a crucial role in fostering civic engagement. Research investigated college students' perceptions of social justice activities, finding that these activities often reflect broader ideological frameworks such as symbolic racism and neosexism [33]. Their findings suggest that literature, when integrated into social science curricula, can help students connect personal values with systemic issues, fostering a deeper commitment to social change.

Similarly, [34] argues that literature classrooms serve as spaces for civic engagement, where students develop the civic capacities necessary for social change. His work suggests that literary texts, when combined with critical pedagogy, cultivate both empathy and social responsibility. This aligns with [35], who examined civic engagement in Latin America and the Caribbean and found that civic education within formal curricula enhances students' awareness of inequality and their role in challenging it. These studies support the idea that education must extend beyond academic knowledge to foster active social participation.

### **2.5. Literature as a Pathway to Sustainable Development**

The integration of literature into social science education aligns with the goals of sustainable development, specifically emphasizing SDG 4 and SDG 10. Current research on ESD emphasizes the significance of critical thinking and transformative learning [18]. However, many studies do not fully explore how literary texts contribute to these goals.

This research seeks to fill that gap by exploring how works like “The Lottery” function as tools for critical reflection on power dynamics, inequality, and social justice. By equipping students with the ability to question and resist oppressive norms, literature serves as a vehicle for long-term social transformation.

## **3. Methodology**

This research utilizes a qualitative approach to investigate the role of literature, specifically Shirley Jackson's “The Lottery,” in promoting critical thinking and social transformation within the context of social studies education. The research focuses on the interdisciplinary application of literary works in social sciences curricula, particularly in relation to SDG 4 and SDG 10. The qualitative nature of this research allows for an in-depth exploration of how literature can foster critical consciousness and engage students in analyzing systemic social issues such as inequality, power dynamics, and oppression [36] [37].

### **3.1. Research Design**

This study uses a literary analysis approach, integrating Marxist and hyperrealist theoretical frameworks to examine “The Lottery” in the context of social studies education. The research does not involve fieldwork or classroom interventions but rather analyzes the content of the literary text and its potential pedagogical applications within social sciences curricula. The theoretical frameworks provide tools for exploring the power structures, class oppression, and ritualistic violence depicted in the text, linking these concepts to broader societal issues [13] [20] [28].

### 3.2. Data Source

The primary material utilized in this study is “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson, along with scholarly articles, books, and other literature that discuss Marxist and hyperrealist interpretations of literature, education theory, and Sustainable Development Goals. These sources provide the theoretical underpinnings and context for analyzing the role of literature in addressing social inequalities through education. Secondary data includes academic works on literature’s role in social science education, critical pedagogy, and interdisciplinary approaches [4] [21] [29].

### 3.3. Data Collection Procedure

The data acquisition method for this study involves a documentary analysis approach. The researcher will systematically review and analyze “The Lottery” alongside relevant academic literature. Key themes related to social inequality, power structures, and education will be identified and coded for analysis. Secondary sources discussing literary theory, education, and the SDGs will also be reviewed to provide context and support the analysis. No human participants are involved in this research, as it relies on textual data [18] [38].

### 3.4. Data Analysis

The study will utilize a thematic analysis method for data interpretation, where key themes, patterns, and concepts related to social inequality and power dynamics are identified in both “The Lottery” and the secondary literature. The researcher will apply Marxist theory to analyze the representation of class struggle and power within the narrative and utilize hyperrealism to examine how Jackson's portrayal of ritualistic violence reflects distorted societal realities. These analyses will be linked to educational theories and SDGs, specifically in the context of how literature can facilitate critical engagement with social issues. The findings will be interpreted to draw connections between literary works, social studies education, and the potential for fostering social change [19] [20] [39].

## 4. Finding and Discussion

### 4.1. Finding

This part outlines the results derived from the analysis of “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson, using Marxist and hyperrealist theoretical frameworks to explore the role of literature in addressing social inequalities and promoting social transformation. The results of the analysis are organized into key subtopics that directly address the research focus. The discussion that follows will interpret these findings and relate them to the broader theoretical and educational contexts, while offering new insights into the potential impact of literature in social studies education.

#### 1) Literary Analysis: Social Inequality and Class Oppression in “The Lottery”

The first major finding of this study is the representation of social inequality and class oppression in “The Lottery.” Jackson’s narrative centers around a ritualistic practice that disproportionately affects the lower classes, illustrating how entrenched social systems maintain the status quo. Using a Marxist lens, this practice can be viewed as a metaphor for class struggle. “The Lottery,” which results in a violent sacrifice, reflects the ways in which the lower classes are often exploited and subjected to violence in service of preserving the privileges of the elite. The villagers' unquestioning acceptance of this ritual symbolizes the dominance of capitalist ideologies that perpetuate inequality.

This finding aligns with Marxist theory, which posits that social systems are designed to benefit the ruling class at the expense of the oppressed. Jackson’s depiction of “The Lottery” as a social ritual that maintains inequality mirrors the way capitalism uses systemic violence to sustain class disparities. Through this lens, the ritual in “The Lottery” functions as a mechanism of social control, ensuring that the lower classes remain subjugated by tradition and authority.

#### 2) Hyperrealism: The Distortion of Reality and Social Norms

The second key finding involves the application of hyperrealism to analyze how the ritual in “The Lottery” distorts reality. In a hyperrealist context, the ritual is not merely a reflection of reality but a constructed reality that the villagers believe to be both necessary and unchangeable. Baudrillard’s (1994) theory of hyperreality suggests that in modern societies, individuals are surrounded by simulated experiences that seem more real than reality itself. In the case of “The Lottery,” the villagers' blind obedience to the ritual represents a hyperreal social construct—one that appears to be an inescapable truth, even though it is entirely artificial.

This finding suggests that Jackson's narrative critiques how cultural traditions can become so embedded in societal structures that they distort reality, preventing individuals from critically assessing their roles in perpetuating injustice. The analysis of hyperreality in "The Lottery" reveals the cultural hegemony that enforces oppressive traditions, making it difficult for individuals to question or change them. This is especially relevant in social studies education, where students are often exposed to historical and social narratives that may be presented as objective truths without critical examination.

### **3) Interdisciplinary Approach to Education: Connecting Literature and Social Studies**

The third major finding concerns the potential of using literature as a pedagogical tool in social studies education. This study highlights how integrating literary works such as "The Lottery" into social science curricula can encourage students to critically analyze social structures and cultural practices. By examining literature through Marxist and hyperrealist lenses, students can engage with complex issues such as class oppression, power dynamics, and the perpetuation of inequality.

The analysis of "The Lottery" suggests that literature can offer a transformative educational experience, one that goes beyond the rote learning of facts and encourages students to question the status quo. This finding supports the idea that education, particularly in the social sciences, must go beyond transmitting knowledge and should focus on cultivating critical consciousness—the ability to recognize and challenge oppressive structures within society. This approach aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) highlights the importance of providing inclusive and equitable educational opportunities that fosters critical thinking.

### **4) Relating Findings to Theory: The Role of Literature in Social Change**

The discussion of the findings ties the results back to key theories in education and social change. Marxist theory provides a framework for understanding how literature can reveal the structural forces that maintain inequality, while hyperrealism offers a lens through which to understand how social norms can be distorted and naturalized. These theoretical approaches highlight the importance of critical pedagogy—an educational approach that encourages students to question authority, challenge social norms, and engage in social transformation.

By applying these theories to "The Lottery," this research shows how literature can serve as a catalyst for social change. The findings suggest that critical literacy, which involves reading and interpreting texts in a way that challenges existing power structures, can serve as a crucial factor in achieving SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Students who are taught to critically analyze the cultural and social forces that shape their lives are more likely to become active participants in efforts to reduce inequality and promote social justice.

### **5) New Insights: Literature as a Bridge Between Disciplines**

One new insight this research offers is the potential for interdisciplinary collaboration between literature and social studies to foster deeper engagement with the SDGs. By using literature as a means of exploring complex social issues, educators can encourage students to think critically about both the personal and societal dimensions of inequality. This interdisciplinary approach could be particularly valuable within the framework of global citizenship education, where students are prompted to look beyond their local surroundings and reflect on their responsibilities in addressing global social challenges. Additionally, the findings suggest that pedagogical innovation is necessary to achieve the SDGs. Traditional social science education often relies heavily on memorization and factual recall, but a more dynamic approach—one that integrates literature and encourages critical reflection—could better equip students to tackle the intricate issues of inequality and social injustice. This calls for a reevaluation of existing teaching methodologies and the inclusion of more critical, interdisciplinary strategies that empower students to engage with global issues.

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that literature, particularly works like "The Lottery," can play a transformative role in social studies education. By analyzing the text through Marxist and hyperrealist lenses, the research has demonstrated how literature can reveal the underlying mechanisms of inequality, challenge distorted social norms, and encourage critical thinking among students. The integration of literature into social sciences curricula offers a powerful tool for fostering a more inclusive and equitable education system, one that aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals and empowers students to become agents of social change.

## 4.2. Discussion

Some discussions are:

### 1) Themes in “The Lottery” Analyzed Through Marxist and Hyperrealist Lenses

Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the major themes explored in “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson through the lenses of Marxist and hyperrealist theories. These theoretical frameworks help highlight the social issues and underlying mechanisms of power and control embedded in Jackson’s narrative.

Table 1. Themes in “The Lottery” Analyzed Through Marxist and Hyperrealist Lenses

Theme	Marxist Theory	Hyperrealism Theory	Implications for Social Studies Education
Social Inequality	Depicts class oppression through the ritual of the lottery, which disproportionately affects lower-class individuals.	The ritual becomes an accepted, unquestioned reality, distorting the villagers’ perception of injustice.	Encourages students to examine the role of systemic oppression in society.
Class Struggle	The lottery serves as a metaphor for the exploitation of the lower class to uphold the interests of the dominant elite.	The ritualistic violence is normalized and made to appear natural, reflecting the manipulation of social norms.	Students learn to identify the hidden power structures that sustain inequality.
Cultural Tradition	The lottery reflects the perpetuation of harmful traditions to maintain societal order.	The unquestioning adherence to tradition creates a hyperreal world where the ritual feels inescapable.	Engages students in critically assessing the role of cultural traditions in maintaining power dynamics.
Violence and Social Control	The violence in “The Lottery” is a tool of social control, reinforcing the existing power structure.	The hyperreal aspect of the violence makes it seem like an essential part of the community’s reality.	Encourages critical reflection on how violence and control are embedded in social systems.

The first theme addressed is social inequality. From a Marxist perspective, the lottery symbolizes the class oppression inherent in society, where the lower class is disproportionately affected by societal practices meant to uphold the status and privileges of the ruling class. In the lottery ritual, the scapegoat—usually someone from the working or marginalized class—is selected and sacrificed, reflecting how the working class bears the brunt of societal violence to ensure the maintenance of the economic system. Meanwhile, hyperrealism introduces the idea that the ritual is not simply a reflection of reality but a constructed reality that becomes normalized over time. The villagers accept the ritual without question, as it has become an embedded part of their community’s identity. This distortion of reality prevents them from recognizing the inherent injustice in the practice. In the context of social studies education, this theme encourages students to critically examine how social structures perpetuate inequality and how these power dynamics may often be hidden behind accepted societal practices.

Class struggle is another key theme examined through the Marxist lens. The lottery ritual represents the ongoing exploitation of the working class for the benefit of the ruling class. The act of sacrificing one individual to ensure the stability of the community mirrors the broader economic exploitation that occurs in capitalist systems. From the hyperrealist perspective, the ritual is not just a physical act; it is embedded in the collective consciousness of the community, making it seem like a natural and unavoidable part of life. The hyperreal aspect of the ritual makes it difficult for the villagers to question its fairness, as they believe it is a normal and essential practice. This theme prompts social studies educators to help students analyze how class dynamics can be ingrained in societal practices and traditions and to encourage critical thinking about the ways in which power is distributed in society.

In the theme of cultural tradition, the lottery represents how harmful social customs and traditions are used to preserve the established order. Marxist theory would suggest that these rituals serve the

interests of those in power by keeping the lower classes subjugated. Hyperreality further suggests that these rituals are not merely traditions but constructed realities that the villagers believe to be necessary for survival. The normalization of such practices prevents individuals from questioning their fairness or ethical implications. In social studies education, this theme can serve as a tool for encouraging students to think critically about the role of cultural traditions in reinforcing inequality and how seemingly benign customs can serve to uphold oppressive social structures.

Finally, violence and social control is a central theme in the analysis. In “The Lottery.” violence is used as a mechanism of social control, where the ritualistic act of stoning an individual is an expression of the community's adherence to the rules that preserve their social order. Marxist theory frames this violence as a tool used by the dominant class to maintain their power over the working class. From a hyperrealist perspective, the violence is not just a physical act but a simulated reality that is accepted without question by the villagers, who have been conditioned to believe that such practices are an essential part of their identity. This theme in the context of education encourages students to think about how violence is often used as a tool for maintaining control in society and how individuals are conditioned to accept certain injustices as normal.

Together, the themes explored in “The Lottery” through Marxist and hyperrealist lenses offer rich opportunities for analysis in social studies classrooms. By examining these themes, students are encouraged to critically examine the power structures and mechanisms of oppression within society, challenge accepted norms, and question the fairness of social systems. The table serves to organize and clarify the ways in which these theoretical perspectives can be used to uncover the deeper social issues embedded in Jackson’s text.

## 2) Connection Between Literature-Based Pedagogy and SDGs

Table 2 illustrates the relationship between literature-based pedagogy and the SDGs, specifically SDG 4 and SDG 10, highlighting how integrating literature into social studies education can actively contribute to achieving these global goals.

Table 2. Connection Between Literature-Based Pedagogy and SDGs

Theme	Marxist Theory	Implications for Social Studies Education
SDG 4: Quality Education	Encourages critical thinking, engages with power dynamics, and promotes an interdisciplinary approach.	Literature fosters deeper engagement with social issues and encourages questioning of inherited norms.
SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	Analyzing “The Lottery” highlights the structural inequalities that exist in society, such as class and social discrimination.	Literature can help students identify and confront systemic inequalities, advancing social justice and equity.

The first SDG addressed is SDG 4 (Quality Education), which stresses the value of inclusive, just, and excellent education that supports continuous learning opportunities for all individuals. The table shows that literature, particularly texts like “The Lottery,” can significantly contribute to encouraging critical thinking and helping students engage deeply with complex social issues. By analyzing literary works through frameworks like Marxism and hyperrealism, students can question societal norms, understand the dynamics of power, and examine the impact of cultural traditions on social structures. Literature-based pedagogy challenges traditional education by encouraging active participation and reflection rather than passive consumption of information. This aligns with SDG 4 by enhancing the quality of education and fostering an environment where students can develop the critical skills necessary to address contemporary global challenges.

The second SDG highlighted in the table is SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), which aims to minimize disparities within and between countries. The table emphasizes how literature, such as “The Lottery,” can expose the structural inequalities present in society, particularly those based on class, tradition, and violence. By analyzing the ritualistic violence and class oppression depicted in the story, students are invited to reflect on real-world inequalities and the mechanisms that perpetuate them. Literature, as a tool for social analysis, helps students recognize and question unjust systems, fostering

empathy and a desire for social change. Through this lens, literature-based pedagogy can serve as an effective method for engaging students in the fight against inequality, promoting a deeper understanding of how social systems and cultural practices can either sustain or challenge inequality. Overall, the table illustrates that integrating literature into social studies education does not only enrich students' understanding of the world but also directly contributes to the global objectives of quality education and the reduction of inequalities. By encouraging students to critically engage with texts that challenge societal norms, literature fosters a more active, informed, and empathetic generation of learners, better equipped to tackle the social issues that align with the SDGs. This underscores the potential of literature to be a transformative tool in education that contributes to a more equitable and sustainable future

### 3) Ramifications for Teaching Practices and Potential Impact on Students

Table 3 summarizes the key findings from the research and their ramifications for teaching practices in the context of social studies education and prospective impact on students. It outlines how integrating literature, specifically “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson, can significantly enhance the critical thinking abilities of students and help them engage with complex societal issues, such as social inequality and cultural traditions, through a more analytical lens.

Table 3. Ramifications for Teaching Practices and Prospective Impact on Students

Key Findings	Ramifications for Teaching Practices	Prospective Impact on Students
The role of the lottery in reflecting social inequalities	Educators should use texts that highlight power dynamics to spark discussion on inequality.	Encourages students to recognize and challenge societal power structures.
Hyperreality in the normalization of violence and inequality	Teachers can help students recognize the ways in which cultural traditions are used to justify inequality.	Fosters critical thinking and helps students develop the capacity to challenge established norms.
Literature’s potential to foster interdisciplinary connections	Social studies curricula should integrate literature to encourage analysis of complex social issues from multiple perspectives.	Provides students with tools to engage with global issues in a nuanced, informed way.

The first key finding, the role of the lottery in reflecting social inequalities, shows that “The Lottery” serves as a potent metaphor for the class oppression inherent in societal structures. Through the ritualistic violence depicted in the story, students can see how certain groups are scapegoated and sacrificed to maintain the status quo. The implication for teaching is that educators should use such texts as tools for sparking discussions about inequality, power dynamics, and the ways in which class divisions persist. By encouraging students to critically analyze these societal issues, teachers can help them understand the deeper mechanisms that perpetuate injustice. This finding supports the idea that literature can act as a mirror to society, allowing students to confront uncomfortable truths and question inherited norms.

The second key finding, hyperreality in the normalization of violence and inequality, suggests that the hyperreal nature of the lottery ritual—where violence becomes an accepted and unquestioned part of the community—mirrors how societal norms can become distorted and accepted without question. In the classroom, this finding implies that teachers should guide students to recognize the hyperreal elements in their own lives, such as the normalization of certain oppressive or harmful traditions. By exploring the idea of hyperreality, educators can help students see how social systems create distorted perceptions of reality, where the unjust becomes normalized. This reflection can lead to students challenging and questioning societal practices that they might have previously accepted as part of their everyday lives.

The third finding, literature’s potential to foster interdisciplinary connections, underscores the significance of incorporating literature into social studies curricula to offer a broader, more comprehensive perspective on social issues. The interdisciplinary nature of this approach encourages

students to view complex topics from multiple angles, blending insights from both literature and social sciences. The teaching implication here is that social studies educators should incorporate literary analysis into their curricula to allow students to engage with historical, political, and cultural themes in a more nuanced way. By drawing connections between literary works and social science concepts, students can develop a more sophisticated understanding of the world around them and how different disciplines inform one another.

In conclusion, Table 3 emphasizes that integrating literature into social studies education has the potential to significantly transform the learning experience. It inspires students to critically examine the world, question oppressive norms, and recognize the interconnectedness of social, cultural, and political issues. By using literature as a tool for exploring complex societal topics, educators can motivate students to become active and empathetic individuals, capable of addressing social injustices and promoting a more equitable society. These findings underscore the importance of interdisciplinary teaching practices and their power to foster a deeper understanding of both individual and collective experiences.

The findings of this study align with prior research on the role of literature in promoting critical thinking and social awareness. Prior studies, such as those by [4], emphasize the transformative power of literature in fostering civic engagement and challenging social norms. This study reinforces these claims by demonstrating how Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" serves as a powerful tool for analyzing systemic oppression and power dynamics.

Furthermore, this research builds on the work of [17] and [20], who argue that ESD plays a critical role in developing critical thinking skills. While these studies primarily focus on environmental sustainability, this study expands the discourse by highlighting the intersection between ESD and social justice education through literary analysis. The findings suggest that literature can effectively complement ESD by encouraging students to question societal structures and engage in transformative learning.

Additionally, the study enriches the expanding body of scholarship on critical pedagogy, as advocated by [16] and [21]. These scholars emphasize the importance of creating dialogic spaces where students can critically engage with texts and reflect on social inequalities. The thematic analysis of "The Lottery" supports this perspective, illustrating how literary works can prompt discussions on class oppression, ritualistic violence, and ideological control.

However, unlike previous studies that primarily focus on classroom interventions, this research adopts a theoretical approach, offering a comprehensive analysis of the literary text's pedagogical potential. This methodological difference highlights the need for future empirical studies that implement literature-based interventions in social sciences education. By connecting theoretical concepts with practical applications, future research can further substantiate the role of literature in cultivating critical literacy and social transformation.

Overall, this study complements and extends previous research by demonstrating the interdisciplinary potential of literature in promoting critical consciousness, social justice, and sustainable development within educational settings.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the scope of the analysis is confined to "The Lottery" as a single literary text, which may not fully represent the diversity of perspectives on social inequality and structural violence across different literary traditions. Future research could expand the selection of texts to include works from various cultural and historical contexts to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how literature addresses systemic oppression. Second, the study primarily employs Marxist and hyperrealist theoretical frameworks, which, while valuable, offer only one lens for interpreting literature's role in addressing social inequality. Incorporating additional theoretical perspectives, such as feminist or postcolonial criticism, could yield a more multifaceted analysis of the intersections between power, culture, and identity. Moreover, the research is largely conceptual, relying on textual analysis rather than empirical classroom applications. Further studies involving practical implementation of literature-based pedagogy in educational settings could offer understanding of how this approach enhances critical thinking and advances social justice among students. Finally, the study acknowledges that the integration of critical literary studies into social science education requires supportive institutional policies, teacher training, and curriculum development—factors that may vary significantly across different educational systems. Addressing these structural challenges would be essential for translating the study's theoretical findings into transformative educational practices.

## 5. Conclusion

This study highlights the transformative role of literature, particularly “The Lottery” by Shirley Jackson, in fostering critical thinking and challenging oppressive social norms within the framework of social studies education. By applying Marxist and hyperrealist theories, the analysis reveals how ritualistic violence in “The Lottery” mirrors real-world mechanisms of social control, sustaining inequality and reinforcing unquestioned traditions. The findings demonstrate that integrating literature into social sciences can move beyond traditional rote learning by encouraging students to critically analyze power structures, class oppression, and cultural rituals that perpetuate social inequalities.

The study further emphasizes that literature-based pedagogy supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting a more analytical and reflective approach to learning and equipping students with the skills needed to navigate and question social realities. Additionally, the findings support SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by demonstrating how literature can help students recognize systemic injustices and inspire them to become agents of social change. By integrating literature into social sciences education, educators can promote an interdisciplinary approach that bridges the gap between humanities and social sciences, leading to a deeper understanding of societal structures and their impact on marginalized communities.

In summary, this study highlights the significance of literature as a pedagogical tool in social sciences education. It advocates for a curriculum that encourages critical literacy, interdisciplinary connections, and active engagement with social issues, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and sustainable society. Future research could expand on these findings by exploring the impact of literature-based pedagogy across diverse educational settings, further validating its effectiveness in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals.

Drawing from the research findings, several suggestions can be proposed to enhance the role of literature in social sciences education, particularly in alignment with SDG 4 and SDG 10. First, educators should actively incorporate literary works that critique social structures, such as “The Lottery,” into social studies curricula. By doing so, students can develop critical consciousness, allowing them to analyze power dynamics, cultural traditions, and systemic oppression. This approach promotes an interdisciplinary learning experience that bridges the gap between literature and social sciences. Second, schools should implement critical literacy programs that teach students how to question dominant ideologies and challenge inherited norms. Instead of passively consuming information, students should engage in dialogue, debate, and analytical discussions on how literature reflects real-world inequalities. Third, future research should explore a wider range of literary texts from different cultural backgrounds to examine how diverse narratives address issues of social injustice, tradition, and power. Comparative studies between different works could provide deeper insights into how literature functions as a global tool for social critique. Fourth, further research should focus on creating structured teaching methodologies for integrating literature into the social sciences. This includes designing lesson plans, assessment methods, and interactive learning activities that help students apply literary analysis to real-world social issues. Finally, future studies could investigate the long-term effects of literature-based social science education on students’ critical thinking, social awareness, and civic engagement. Understanding how students apply these skills beyond the classroom can offer meaningful perspectives on the efficacy of this approach in shaping socially responsible citizens.

By implementing these suggestions, education systems can move towards a more inclusive, reflective, and socially engaged approach to teaching, ensuring that students are empowered with the critical skills needed to promote a more equitable and sustainable society.

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