



An Analysis of The Evolution of Literary Forms and Their Role in Catalyzing Social Change and Global Conflicts

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Abstract

This research study provides an in-depth analysis on how literary forms, specifically figurative language techniques used within them, have catalysed social change movements on a global scale. It explores the relationship between literature, literary devices, and social change movements through highlighting its impacts on societal norms worldwide. Utilising a descriptive and analytical methodology, this research combines primary data from expert responses with secondary analyses of literary works which sparked change. The findings of the study reveal that figurative language techniques, predominantly imagery and metaphors, play a crucial role in fostering emotional connections with protagonists (or even antagonists) while further developing critical thinking skills and helping readers understand complex themes and ideas. In addition, this research discusses how social change movements, like the Women's Suffrage Movement, the Abolitionist Movement (slavery), the ongoing Refugee Crisis, and the Black Lives Matter movement (racism), have acted as transformative forces that have defined social hierarchies by empowering marginalised communities and advocating for humanitarian rights and social justice. Literature emerges as a catalyst for changes in socio political and cultural landscapes, while addressing global issues, diverse perspectives, and voices. Its evolution over time and throughout history highlights humanity's many struggles for a better tomorrow. This study underlines the importance of promoting inclusivity, accessibility and education by inculcating curriculum development programmes, public engagement initiatives, global awareness campaigns, and progress in the data analytics and AI fields. This analysis underscores the significance of literature as a powerful medium in bringing about progressive global change.

Keywords: literature, figurative language, slavery, racism, refugees, women's rights

I. Introduction

How would the absence of literature in the past have impacted your life now? Would you have been treated differently? Would you have less access to food, water, and other necessities? Would you have had equal rights, opportunities, and freedom? Today, women can often pursue an education, go to work, and have suffrage/franchise; people of colour now can exercise greater freedom and rights than they did in the past; and refugees are being provided support by governments by being given safe harbor. The social progress observed today is partially due to literature.

Literature has a large role in shaping our perceptions and ideologies, while also providing voices for the voiceless and acting as a powerful agent for social change. Specifically, types of literature including novels, poetry, and diary entries,

have had large-scale impacts on readers, within communities, and sometimes even globally. Various forms of literature raise awareness about ongoing issues worldwide, through providing information as well as first-hand experiences. Although literature may indoctrinate people into believing a certain ideology, it positively influences people to take radical action for the better, uniting against a common foe, which can be seen specifically in the Women's Suffrage Movement, the Abolitionist Movement (slavery), the ongoing Refugee Crisis, and the Black Lives Matter movement (racism).

Literature has simultaneously been both a product and a catalyst of social change movements, including the Abolitionist Movement and the Women's Suffrage Movement, which have reshaped societal norms and championed human rights and equality. This study seeks to examine the intricate relationships between literature, figurative language, and social movements, exploring their collective ability to influence individuals and society at large. By analyzing expert perspectives and contemporary texts, this research highlights the evolving role of literature as a universal medium that not only documents but also inspires societal progress, advocating for inclusivity, empathy, and a deeper understanding of the human experience.

This research paper analyzes how specific literary forms have evolved over time and examines their respective impacts that have catalysed social change and conflicts globally. This research paper predominantly discusses social change movements such as the ongoing refugee crisis (1685 to present), the Abolitionist Movement (1783 to 1888), Women's Suffrage Movement (1840 to 1920), and the Black Lives Matter movement (2013 to present).

1.1 Objectives of the Study

- To understand the significant contributions of literature to social change movements, specific to women's suffrage, refugee crises, racism, slavery and how they impacted society at the time.
- To analyze figurative language and literary devices used in order to create an impact on readers within texts, including metaphors, similes, personification, oxymorons, etc.
- To study how pieces of literature relating to movements such as women's suffrage, refugee crises, racism, and slavery, had an impact on readers and their lives.
- To study the impact of these literary texts in contemporary society.
- To analyze how these texts evolved over time and why they have done so.

II. Literature Review

The intersection of social justice themes such as racism, slavery, refugee issues, and women's rights is extensively explored in literature, revealing how literature could reflect and catalyze societal change. This review synthesizes literary works and their contributions to better understand these themes and their impacts on society.

2.1 Racism

Through exploring three different pieces of literature: *Still I Rise* by Maya Angelou, Frederick Douglass' *What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?* speech, and in Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl* we can identify the impacts on the Black Lives Matter movement. For example, in order to subvert racial oppression, Angelou states "I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide, welling and swelling, I bear in the tide." (Angelou, 1978) The use of the word 'black' is representative of people of color and the phrase "leaping and wide" suggests that they are unafraid to fight back for their rights; while on the other hand, the phrase "I bear in the tide." shows how much they may be affected by the stereotypes and harsh ideologies presented to them. Furthermore, in Frederick Douglass' speech titled *What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?*, the author states "I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary." (Douglass, 1852) Douglass uses irony and bitterness in order to demonstrate that as a person of colour ('I am not included ... the pale..') he cannot celebrate

American independence, as his issues have not yet been resolved. Moreover, in her diary, Anne Frank discusses the oppression Jewish people faced under the Nazis during the second world war, who viewed them as inferior. For example, she states “We are treated as outcasts... We Jews mustn’t show our faces, we mustn’t go out during the day” (Frank, 1947). This quote highlights the severe and harsh discrimination that confined Jews to hiding and stripped them of basic rights, showing how racism leads to fear and isolation. These works collectively highlight how racism fosters systemic inequality, exclusion, and fear.

2.2 Slavery

A multitude of pieces of literature have been created relating to slavery. A key literary work to delve into is Maya Angelou’s *Still I Rise*. To subvert economic oppression, she states “Cause I laugh like I’ve got gold mines, Diggin in my own backyard.” (Angelou, 1978) This could be a reference to the joy people claim to face when they are rich, which implies that those who are economically unstable will be unhappy. This statement could also be subverting slavery, along with “Cause I walk like I’ve got oil wells, pumping in my living room.” (Angelou, 1978) This quotation references oil wells, and the previous one references gold mines, which are places where slaves were often made to work. In Frederick Douglass’ speech titled *What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?*, he states “Why am I called upon to speak here today? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence?” (Douglass, 1852) In this statement, through the use of rhetoric, Douglass asks how he is related to American independence, as he and others who he represents, such as slaves, were still being mistreated at the time, which was not a cause for celebration. Next, although Anne Frank’s *Diary of a Young Girl* doesn’t address slavery in a direct way, how the Jews were dehumanized under Nazi Aryan rule reflects some aspects of slavery. Anne’s family, like many others at the time, lived in constant fear of being captured and sent to concentration camps, where they would be treated horrifically. This is similar to the brutal control over slaves, getting rid of their freedom and dignity. Anne’s writing clearly shows this message of loss of freedom, as well as the pressure to stay hidden, which can be seen when she states “We have to whisper and tread lightly during the day, otherwise the people in the warehouse might hear us” (Frank, 1947). These works demonstrate that slavery continues to resonate as a symbol of subjugation.

2.3 Refugees

To begin with, the theme of refugees is clearly depicted in Anne Frank’s story. Her family became refugees in their own nation; cut off from society, constantly terrified of being found, and unable to live normal lives. This is seen when Anne states, “We’re trapped in here like prisoners in our own home, with no way to escape” (Frank, 1947). Her words showcase the emotional difficulties and stress of being displaced and the uncertainty and anxiety that refugees face on a daily basis. In addition, Brian Bilston’s poem titled *Refugees* effectively demonstrates the contrasting perspectives on refugees through a unique use of structure and literary language. At first, the poem appears to convey a negative perspective, filled with anti-immigrant sentiments like “They are not welcome here.” (Bilston, 2016). This presents the harsh, hostile, unfair reactions refugees face in most countries; however, when the poem is read in reverse, its message transforms into one of compassion and empathy: “Let’s make them welcome here.” (Bilston, 2016) This underlines how perception and narrative can change dramatically, showcasing the importance of being compassionate to those in need. These texts explore the emotional toll of displacement and advocate for empathy.

2.4 Women’s Rights

Firstly, an article titled ‘The Impact of the First World War: Britain & Literature’ written by the British Literature Wiki group, explores the role of women during the war, on the home front as well as in literature, where they took on traditionally male roles and used writing as a means of emotional expression. This indicates that depicting their emotions and innermost thoughts through literature was quite a key factor contributing towards how women are regarded currently.

Additionally, when looking at Maya Angelou's *Still I Rise*, gender oppression is subverted through the phrase "Out of the huts of history's shame, I rise. Up from a path that's rooted in pain, I rise." (Angelou, 1978) It can be inferred that this excerpt demonstrates the struggles women have faced over time and in the past in order to eventually succeed in being seen as (somewhat) equal to men, based on its context. Another very significant piece of literature to study is Betty Friedan's 'The Feminine Mystique' (1963). It challenges the usually restrictive standards placed on women in post-war America, specifically critiquing the unbacked belief that a woman's fulfillment lies solely in homemaking and motherhood, calling this the "problem that has no name." (Friedan, 1963) She further states "Each suburban wife struggled with it alone...wondering why she wasn't happy...she was afraid to ask even of herself the silent question—'Is this all?'" (Friedan, 1963) This quote vividly shows that women's dissatisfaction was caused by societal denials of their true dreams and aspirations. Friedan's analysis and thought-provoking words inspired many women to question societal expectations, catalysing the modern feminist movement and advocating for changes in both policy and culture. Her work contributed to broader women's rights advancements, including workplace equality and reproductive rights. Friedan's famed quote that "the only way for a woman... to find herself, to know herself as a person, is by creative work of her own" (Friedan, 1963) reminds society of the importance of gender equality globally. These works underscore literature's role in advancing gender equality.

The themes of racism, slavery, refugee experiences, and women's rights are explored through literature. Works like *Still I Rise*, *What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?*, *The Diary of a Young Girl*, *Refugees*, and *The Feminine Mystique* reveal how literature reflects and critiques societal injustices while inspiring resilience and change.

III. Methods

This research attempts to discuss specific literary forms and their impacts on the society at large. It is based on descriptive and analytical study, using both primary and secondary research methods. For the primary study, a research instrument has been created, which consists of a set of 12 questions, which revolves around social change movements including women's rights and suffrage, the ongoing refugee crisis, racism (The Black Lives Matter movement), and slavery (The Abolitionist Movement), as well as the most impactful figurative language techniques and how they were used in literature. The research instrument was circulated amongst 10 experts: 80% specialised in English, 30% specialised in History, and 20% specialised in Social Studies, bearing in mind that 20% of respondents were experts in more than one field of study. This sample space was used due to their expansive knowledge and comprehension on the topics. Online sources, including articles, research papers, and webpages as well as pieces of literature, such as novels, poems, speeches, and texts have been explored for the secondary study. Each literary work was thoroughly analysed and studied in an in- depth manner, to examine their interconnectedness and investigate how and why they inspired social change.

IV. Results and Discussion

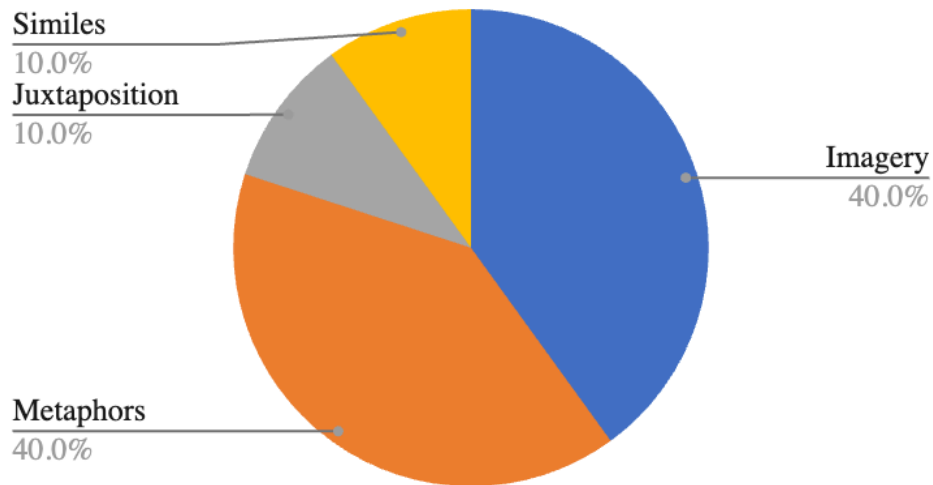


Fig.1: Most Impactful Figurative Language

According to the questionnaire, figurative language, specifically imagery and metaphors (40% of experts respectively) have the greatest impact on readers. The remaining 20% of experts deduced that juxtaposition (10%) and similes (10%) were the most effective. According to the respondents, imagery is believed to have a great impact because images and visual stimuli created through language allows readers to build connections with characters, as they can empathise and engage with them on a deeper level. Imagery further appeals to the reader's senses by creating a vivid mental picture to “bring the story to life.” On the other hand, the use of metaphors is considered to greatly impact readers as it allows for subjective interpretation. Moreover, metaphors help readers relate emotionally to complex or unfamiliar ideas by building connections to real life events and experiences, which enhances their understanding and receptiveness of the text/literature, especially the overall theme or message. This is also emphasized by Aristotle, when he states “To be a master of metaphor is the greatest thing by far.”

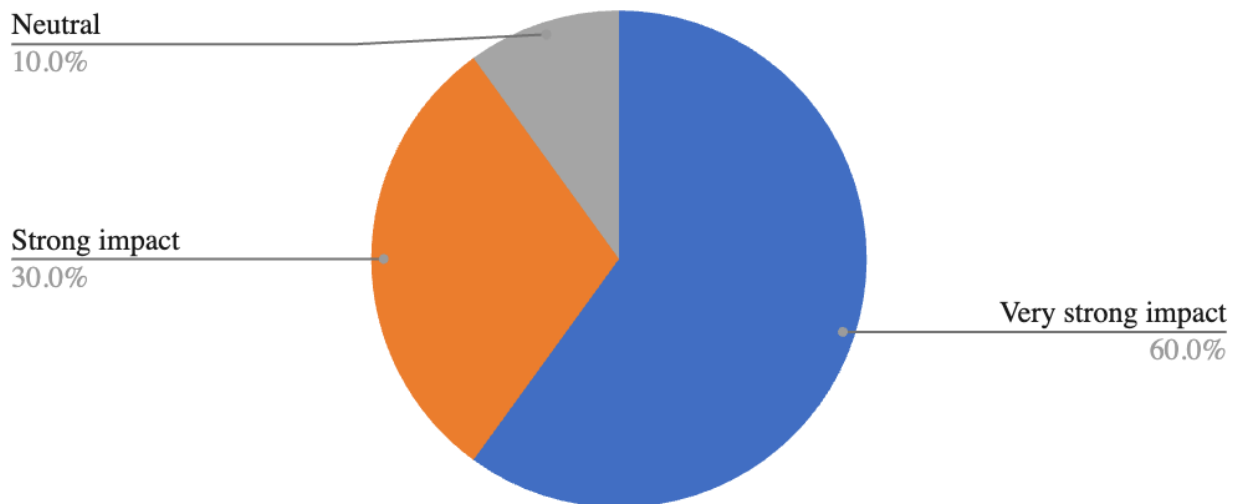


Fig.2: Extent of Impact of Figurative Language on Readers

90% of respondents stated that they believe figurative language has a strong impact on readers. The reason could be that figurative language stimulates critical thinking in the form of visualisation, emotional connections, and relatable experiences in order to develop readers’ understanding of various underlying themes, messages, and complex ideas, as well as simply allowing readers to engage with the literature on a deeper level.

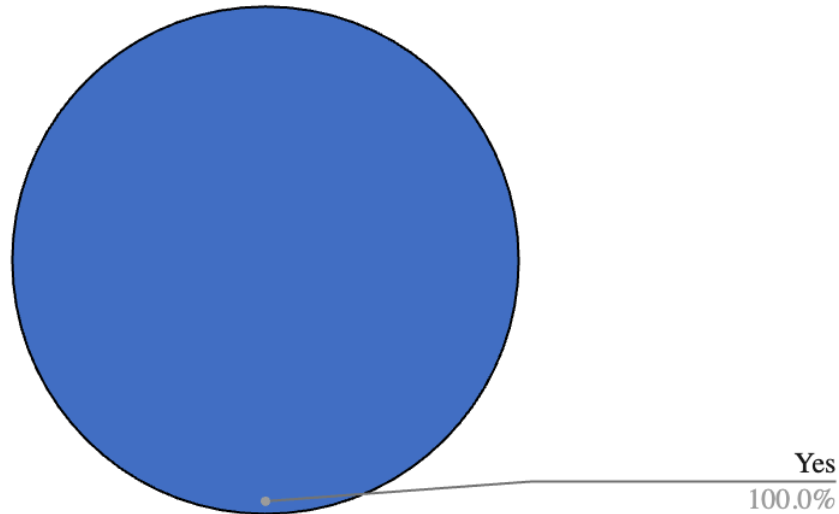


Fig.3: Do Social Change Movements Impact Us Today?

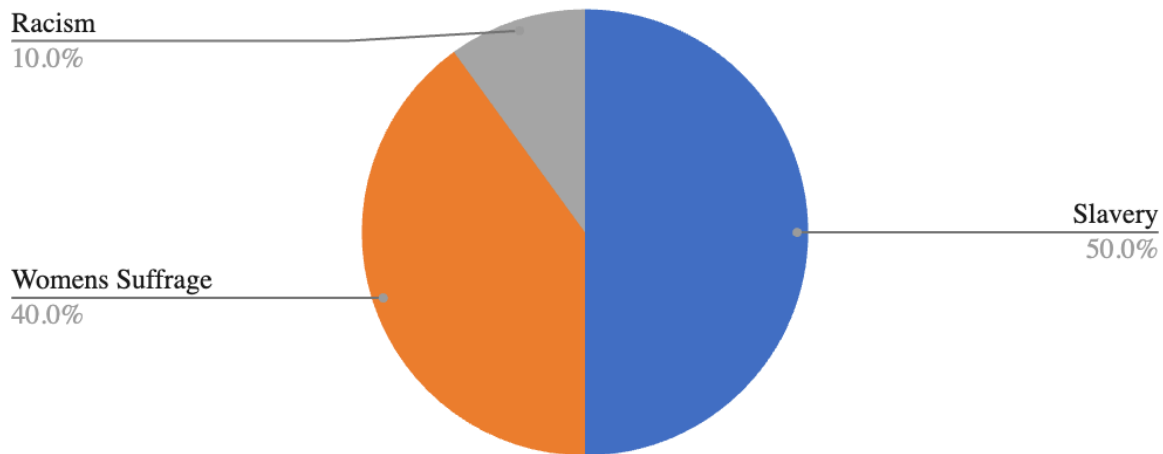


Fig.4: Most Impactful Social Change Movements Toady

100% of respondents agree that social movements of the past still affect us today, with 50% believing slavery (the Abolitionist movement) has the greatest impact while 40% believe that women’s suffrage has the greatest impact. As per the respondents, slavery is considered impactful because it has influenced the globe socially, politically, and economically, while setting a precedent for the recognition of human rights and equality and empowering other social justice movements. It additionally created generations of suffering, leaving remnants which can still be felt today. Regarding women’s suffrage, the respondents noted that it has a great impact even today as women now have the prospects to rise to greater positions of power within the society, such as the ability to vote and being an integral part of politics and

economics. On a more literary level, women are now able to write freely as themselves rather than being forced to use pseudonyms. Furthermore, the women's suffrage movement significantly changed family structures, work dynamics, and societal expectations, leading to the societal norms of familial structure as it is today, by building stability and an improved standard of living.

In terms of how social change movements made an impact globally, the respondents stated that they greatly influenced the way society operates and the societal norms. Additionally, social change movements caused the transformation of laws and governmental regulations, and cultural practices and beliefs, as well as presenting economic opportunities for the marginalized community. Moreover, these movements helped people reflect, learn, and understand how to advocate for change and make a difference.

When respondents were asked about the impacts of social movements in their lives, the data indicated that they each have experienced direct impacts. An example of this is the Women's Rights Movement, which promoted equality, suffrage rights, justice, and freedom, ensuring women have the rights they deserve today and challenging traditional gender roles to strive for equality in all aspects of life. Furthermore, women now have the confidence to speak out against inappropriate behavior, while simultaneously showing gratitude to those before them, without whom their career opportunities, education, political voice, and their ability to pursue their passions and advocate for change, would not be possible. Additionally, with regards to the refugee crisis, a respondent reported that through working for UNHCR and witnessing first-hand the living conditions of refugees, they were encouraged to support and advocate for the rights and integration of those displaced, acknowledging the importance and need of global cooperation and compassionate policies.

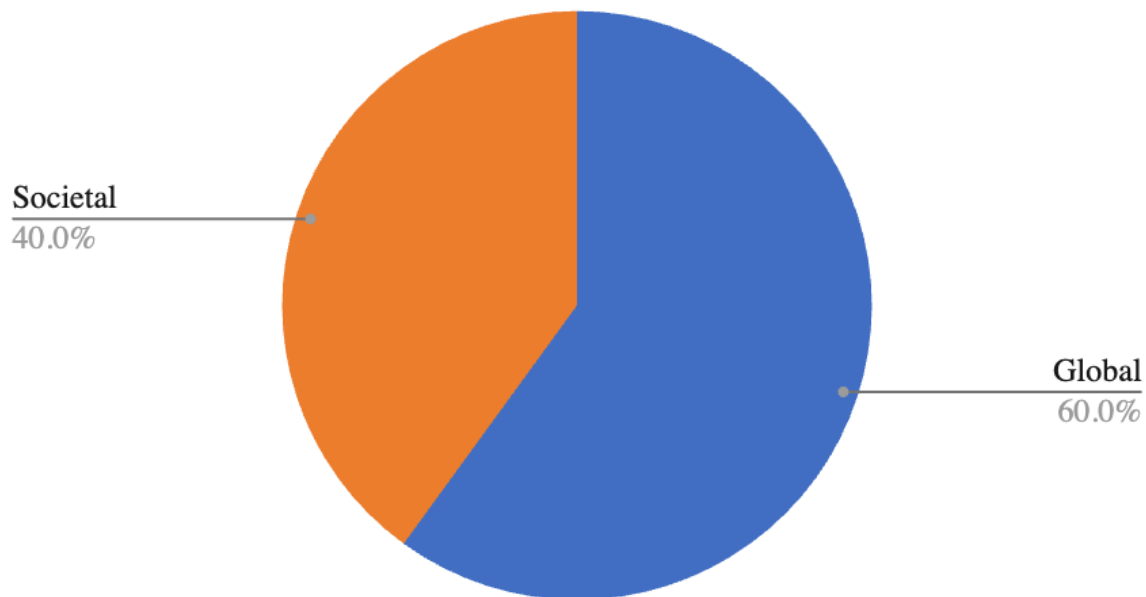


Fig.5: *Scale of Impact of Literature*

The data suggests that 60% of the respondents perceive literature to have a global impact, while 40% believe its influence is concentrated in a particular region or society. In addition, the respondents note that literature has evolved over time in a multitude of ways. For example, the themes, content, styles and issues depicted and used throughout literary pieces have changed dramatically, allowing for the rise of dystopian novels for a new target audience. Equally, the new use of literary

techniques and languages, particularly characterisation, allows readers to empathise with characters on a deeper level, as well as leading to ‘escapism through literature.’ Along with these, authors now come from diverse backgrounds (e.g. marginalized groups), showcasing different perspectives and viewpoints through narrative, poetry, or other forms. On top of this, as production scales have increased, so has the accessibility of literature. Moreover, linguistic advancements, such as in translation, allow literature to be more accessible to global audiences. In all, it can be argued that literature’s real concerns are universal, which is stated by William Faulkner: “The only thing worth writing about is the human heart in conflict with itself”.

4.1 Key Findings

4.1.1 Impact of social change movements

- Social change movements still impact today. 100% of respondents agree with this statement, with 50% believing slavery (the Abolitionist movement) has the greatest impact while 40% believe that women’s suffrage has the greatest impact. This is due to the fact that if slavery had not been abolished previously, many groups would have no freedom and would be marginalized, leading to oppression on a large, if not global scale. As well as this, if not for the Women’s Suffrage Movement, females today would be stripped of their rights as a human-being, including factors such as education, voting, working, etc.
- Globally, social change movements have promoted advocacy and initiative, encouraging people to stand up for themselves and work cohesively to make a change for the better.
- Personal Impact: Many respondents are impacted on a personal level by these social change movements. For example, as many are women, without the Women’s Rights Movement, they would be unable to have the same rights as men do, and would not have access to equal opportunities. Furthermore, due to intersectionality, some would be discriminated against and oppressed in more than one way, which would have lasting impacts on their social, economic, and cultural ways of life.

4.1.2 Impact of Literature

- Global reach: The data suggests that 60% of the respondents perceive literature to have a global impact, while 40% believe its influence is concentrated in a particular region or society. This is because while some pieces of literature are most widely available, some lack in terms of accessibility, and therefore only impact communities where they are popular, which depends on the author as well as publishing companies. Another reason for this is that some issues discussed in literature are more prevalent in certain regions, so evidently, they will be more popular there.
- Evolution of Literature: Literature has evolved rapidly over time, in many ways, including dramatic changes in terms of theme, structure, style, objective, and target audience, most likely due to the diverse backgrounds of up and coming authors and the mass production and therefore accessibility of literary pieces, as writers understand what audiences tend to enjoy (e.g dystopian novels). This wide range allows for readers to broaden their horizons and experience new perspectives and viewpoints.

4.2 Limitations

This study offers diverse perspectives on the impacts of literature and figurative language on social change movements; however, it is crucial to recognise limitations the study may have, including the scope of the study, methodology of research, and the impact of the pieces of literature. Highlighting these limitations allows area for further research in future studies.

The researcher is an avid reader and has read multiple pieces of literature, yet there are a variety of further pieces of

literature discussing the social change movements that the paper could have looked at, which may have had different impacts on communities. For this paper, the researcher has hand-picked the pieces of literature that have been reviewed and analysed to cover specific social change movements using the most relevant and pertinent information.

Apart from the social change movements covered in this research paper, others, including educational rights and the civil rights movement, have existed as part of human rights over past years, which can be a scope of further study in the fields of literature.

The sample size for the study is 10 respondents who are experts from the fields of English, History, and Social Studies, and although this may not represent a large spectrum of perspectives, it has been taken into consideration when conducting error-free, detailed, and statistical analysis. This further minimises the burden of expenditure for the researcher, while simultaneously providing meaningful findings.

In the current age of technology, online sources are frequently utilised. This is because all necessary information is available on these platforms, which may not be in physical stores or libraries. As a result the internet played a crucial role in this research, enabling the discovery of relevant literature and enriching the study with comprehensive insights.

4.3 Recommendations

The effective use of literary devices, figurative language, and persuasive tone has the ability to spark changes in the mindsets of individuals, inevitably contributing to social change in multiple forms. How can we effectively use literary techniques in writing, and what specific roles do they play in driving change?

4.3.1 Imagery, Illustration, and Sensory Appeal

- When conveying ideas, using imagery, illustration and sensory appeal, simple concepts can be transformed into vivid experiences. Descriptive language creates a vivid picture in the mind of a reader, making an argument more compelling and emotional. For example, through the use of metaphors and similes, the author's point of view is clarified and allows readers to paint mental pictures, engaging an audience on an emotional and intellectual level, while further ensuring the message resonates deeply with them. These techniques help audiences not just understand but feel the essence of what the author is communicating.
- Personification is a literary device that breathes life into the inanimate, allowing objects, ideas, or forces to take on human characteristics. By attributing human traits, emotions, or behaviors to non-human elements, personification bridges the gap between abstract or lifeless concepts and human understanding, creating emotional resonance and deeper connections. Through personification, objects and ideas are no longer distant or detached. Instead, they become vivid, approachable, and memorable, resonating with audiences in a way that purely factual descriptions cannot.
- Moreover, by providing personal real stories or life lessons, in the form of anecdotes, an argument will sound more relatable, allowing readers or audience members to be more emotionally engaged with the literature

4.3.2 Sound and Rhythm

- In terms of sound and rhythm, the way words can sound have large impacts on the way audience's perceive and understand a piece of literature. An example of this is alliteration, which is the repetition of the same sounds at the beginning of words. Using this allows for a piece of literature to be more engaging, specifically allowing audiences to grasp information better, and providing a lyrical, emotive, or lulling effect.
- In addition, another literary device to put into use is onomatopoeia: words describing and representing sound,

such as ‘boom,’ ‘crash,’ ‘thump,’ etc. Words such as these are meant to make audiences laugh and provide humour, excitement, action, and interest to a text, so the reader better understands the concept

4.3.3 Structure and Organisation

- Although the structure and organisation of a literary piece may not have a direct impact on the audience, it is still important to include some key cohesive devices from this category. Firstly, repetition: repeating key phrases, ideas, or points puts emphasis on them and makes them more memorable. Key examples of this are slogans, such as that of the Women’s Social and Political Union (1903) “Deeds not Words.”
- Furthermore, triadic structure, also known as the rule of threes, can be more engaging and memorable, and is scientifically proven to help our brains process and remember information more effectively. This device essentially simplifies complex ideas and themes, making them more accessible to an audience.
- In addition, using juxtaposition is done through presenting two contrasting ideas simultaneously or together. This can help strengthen your argument, and create an emotional response from audience members, as well as ensuring comprehension of the topic by comparing it to other themes..

4.3.4 Emotion and Tone

- Emotion or tone are key drivers in persuasion, allowing audiences to understand and empathise with the author’s key points and experiences. Using words that evoke strong emotions are vital in order to persuade an audience. For example, rather than saying something is ‘sad’ one could say it is ‘devastating’ or ‘melancholy,’ which can be done with the help of a thesaurus. Oxymorons (two words together that have opposite/contrasting definitions) are examples of this, as they enhance descriptions and explanations, in turn intensifying the audience's emotions regarding the theme. They may also simply add a humorous or lighthearted tone to the literary piece, increasing audience interest in the topic.
- Additionally, through using hyperboles, the author deliberately exaggerates an issue, underlining its importance and severity, while further allowing readers to truly “experience” the idea. Hyperboles also help the author get their point across to the audience, so that they understand the situation better.
- Next, rhetorical questions. Asking a question that doesn’t require an answer makes readers think deeply about the issue being discussed. Both authors and public speakers often use these in their works to connect emotionally with audiences, and encourage further thinking and exploration on the issue on the audience’s part.

4.3.5 Audience Engagement and Involvement

- In order to call for change, engaging audience members through involving them and making them feel like a part of not just the ‘problem,’ but the ‘solution.’ To begin with, an effective way to do this is by using inclusive language. Using words like ‘we,’ ‘our,’ ‘us,’ etc. creates a sense of unity, solidarity and a shared purpose between the audience and the author/speaker. It further causes them to feel more involved and somewhat responsible for the issue.
- Moreover, another example of audience inclusivity is direct address. Addressing an audience, whether through a speech, poem, or novel, with words. In addition, it enhances the reader/audience’s interest by speaking directly to them, as well as establishing real connections and relationships between the author and audience members, encouraging them to care about the subject matter.
- Finally, a call to action. It can be argued that a call to action is often the final factor or prompt causing someone to strive for change and take initiative for the cause. Ending with a clear and compelling call to action can motivate readers to take immediate action/steps based on the author’s argument.

Based on the findings and analysis, several recommendations can be made to enhance the understanding of figurative language, social change movements, and literature in both academic, individual, and global sectors.

4.4 Call to Action - Global

4.4.1 Curriculum Development

- Incorporate IDUs (Interdisciplinary Units) into school curriculums, allowing students to identify and explore connections between related subjects, including History, English, and Social Studies.
- Encourage student-led initiatives, specifically ECAs (extra curricular activities) and clubs to promote student engagement. Clubs could include storytelling opportunities, research, and reading. Such initiatives could help bridge social change movements with current issues like gender equality, justice and refugee rights.
- Lead conferences and seminars that explore the relationship between social change movements and their representation in literature, history and culture in today's society.
- Promote further studies in the fields of history, and literature in schools and encourage higher education relating to these, allowing for a deeper insight into the issues previously discussed as well as how they impact us now.

4.4.2 Public Engagement

- Organise public workshops and events to inform about these social change movements and focus on the influence of these movements in modern day society along with their contributions to current human rights movements.
- Take initiative and raise awareness about social change movements and their impacts even today through organised campaigns and advocating for a cause.
- Initiate library reading sessions in local areas, encouraging readers to connect with today's complex ideas as well as their historical origins and background.

4.4.3 Global Awareness

- Hold digital campaigns to emphasise the importance of these social change movements even today and showcase the impacts of literature on these, in the form of advertisements, blogs, vlogs, etc.
- Utilize digital platforms to make literature widely available on a global scale to all without restrictions. Offer translations and affordable publishing, as well as access to digital technology within marginalised communities.

4.4.4 AI and Literature

- Utilise data analytics and AI tools to track how literary themes and movements are evolving in different cultures and regions.
- Create interactive learning tools and platforms that use AI to analyse and educate the next generation on the impact of literature and social change movements

4.5 Call to Action - Individual

Literature has a large role in shaping our perceptions and ideologies, while acting as a powerful agent for social change. Many social change movements (ongoing refugee crisis [1685 to present], the Abolitionist Movement [1783 to 1888], Women's Suffrage Movement [1840 to 1920], and the Black Lives Matter movement [2013 to present]) are based on the way in which we perceive other people. Literature has a large role in this.

Within this section, the researcher discusses some practical, hands-on action points and principles that can be adopted on a daily basis. Specifically, changes we can make to our habits, daily lifestyles, and our perception of others for the greater

good.

4.5.1 Subverting stereotypes

The definition of subvert, is to undermine or contradict. The researcher suggests that instead of jumping to conclusions, one should aim to see the bigger picture, and practice being more open minded, accepting, and tolerant towards others.

4.5.2 Educate yourself

Rather than judging a book by its cover, one can explore diverse perspectives and educate ourselves before creating a singular perception. This can be done through reading/watching a variety of literature and media, or having respectful, open minded conversations/discussions with others to understand different perceptions on different things.

4.5.3 Tolerance

One must understand that all perspectives are valid, and that they must be respected. Through exploring various perspectives (as stated previously), one must learn to be open-minded, accepting, and tolerant towards new thoughts and ideas. To be a tolerant individual, the researcher suggests that one must adopt more effective active listening skills, which may teach individuals to listen to understand, not to respond. One must ensure that instead of simply hearing a side to a story, they must listen proactively. Active listening further helps individuals empathise with others and be more tolerant towards those who have experienced loss, pain, and/or suffering, building stronger relationships.

4.5.4 Advocacy

Furthermore, one can advocate for policies that support social justice, as well as take initiative and raise awareness about global humanitarian issues, potentially through literature and media. In addition, individuals can promote equality, irrespective of backgrounds, race, status, etc. by amplifying the voices of those who are marginalized, and mentoring and supporting individuals from underrepresented groups. The researcher suggests that citizens can get involved with organizations that assist refugees, whether through volunteering their time or donating resources. In general, one should act with kindness and compassion in daily interactions.

V. Conclusion

This research discusses the impacts of literature and figurative language on social change movements in shaping perspectives and societal norms globally. Figurative language, predominantly metaphors and imagery, have proven to be an indispensable tool in literature, allowing for subjective interpretation, along with a better comprehension of underlying themes, messages, and tones, stimulating in-depth critical thinking. These literary devices not only help with creating a vivid experience, but also act as a foundation to bridge the past with the complexity of today's literary works. Moreover, these new innovations in the literary field inspired marginalised communities to stand up for themselves, sparking change and causing worldwide social change movements, including the Women's Suffrage Movement, the Abolitionist Movement (slavery), the ongoing Refugee Crisis, and the Black Lives Matter movement (racism). These movements have had direct impacts on sociopolitical and cultural landscapes within society, while simultaneously advocating for human rights and equality. Furthermore, literature is a vessel that continues to advance, thereby acting as a voice for the voiceless and addressing modern challenges. This cornucopia of perspectives connects audiences from different regions or cultures and fosters open-mindedness, in turn causing the reduction of xenophobic tendencies. The findings in this paper call for sustainable efforts to promote diversity, inclusivity, accessibility and education, allowing authors from different backgrounds to gain accessibility in terms of publishing their stories, and therefore, their viewpoints

through writing. This research paper explores how authors have harnessed literature's potential as a catalyst for societal change. Literature is a reflection of change throughout history, which in turn, is the driving force of human existence. These aspects are similar, working in tandem, as literature's evolution is driven by the inevitability of change. This research paper ascertains that literature is the medium through which change is demonstrated.

*"The only thing constant in life is change."
Heraclitus of Ephesus (Greek philosopher)*

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Annexure

1. What is your specialisation?
 - a. English
 - b. History
 - c. Social Studies

2. Which type of figurative language do you think has the greatest impact on readers?
 - a. Metaphors
 - b. Similes
 - c. Personification
 - d. Juxtaposition
 - e. Onomatopoeia
 - f. Oxymorons
 - g. Alliteration
 - h. Hyperbole
 - i. Paradox
 - j. Idiom
 - k. Imagery

3. Why? Please reason your answer.

4. How great an impact does figurative language have on readers?
 - a. Very strong impact
 - b. Strong impact
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Weak impact
 - e. No impact at all

5. Which social change movement among these do you believe has been the most impactful on our society?
 - a. Women's suffrage
 - b. Refugee crises
 - c. Racism (Black Lives Matter Movement)
 - d. Slavery (The Abolitionist Movement)

6. Why do you believe this is the most significant? Please reason your answer.

7. Name an example of a piece of literature that has influenced one of the social change movements previously stated in Question 4.

8. Social change movements still impact us today. How far do you agree with this statement?
 - a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

9. How did they make an impact? (short answer)
10. Have they impacted you? If so, how? (personal anecdote)
11. According to you, what kind of impact do pieces of literature have?
 - a. No impact
 - b. Only on the reader
 - c. The reader and their family
 - d. Within a society (in a particular area)
 - e. Globally
12. In what ways according to you has literature evolved over time? Give three.