

Representation of Social Inequality in *Mung Dodol Jare's* Geguritan: A Sociological Study of Literature by Widodo Basuki

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ABSTRACT

In his poem titled "*Mung Dodol Jare*," Widodo Basuki addresses the topic of social inequality. The poem is a literary work that illustrates the imbalance in society. This study aims to: 1) represent social inequality; 2) describe social values; and 3) explain the impact of social inequality as depicted in Widodo Basuki's poem "*Mung Dodol Jare*." This study employs Max Weber's sociological theory of literature, focusing on the analysis of social relationships within literary works. The data type is qualitative, derived from primary sources in the form of the poem. Data collection was conducted through a literature review using reading, note-taking, and analysis. Data analysis was performed by applying three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the analysis of the poem reveal: 1) social representations regarding economic class, social status, and political power; 2) social values in the form of justice, tolerance, and democracy; 3) the impact of social inequality in the form of poverty and social dissatisfaction, which has the potential to cause social conflict.

Keywords: *poetry, literary sociology, social inequality*

1. Introduction

Insights into Javanese society can be gleaned from literary works in prose, drama, and poetry (geguritan). Cultural issues that emerge within a particular region often inspire literary works. Authors draw on their own experiences or on events they have witnessed in various phenomena within society when writing literary works; thus, literature cannot be separated from people's lives (Nensilanti et al., 2023). Literary works serve as a medium to reflect human realities, as they inherently contain social realities (Qothrunnada & Sulanjari, 2023). Reflection is an image, a movement, or a reflection beyond one's will, whereas the reflection of life is an image mirrored in life itself (Jannah, 2021). A person of sound mind is capable of reflecting on all the events they have experienced. Geguritan contains reflections on life, so that after reading geguritan, one can contemplate life experiences and understand the meaning of life.

The issue of social inequality is a common problem encountered in real life, making it an

intriguing subject for literary works. Through various forms of literature, authors not only present stories but also reflect on unequal social conditions, such as class differences, poverty, and injustice. The theme in a *geguritan* can be conveyed to readers through figurative language that clarifies and deepens meaning, allowing readers to experience the emotional journey depicted in a literary work (Zahra & Rositama, 2024). *Geguritan* can also reveal the contradiction between hope and reality: the hope for a better life among the lower classes is conveyed implicitly, and this hope is contrasted with the community's suffering. Therefore, literary works can serve as a medium for representing social reality and a means of critique, opening up a space for reflection on various forms of inequality within society.

Social life in Indonesia is currently undergoing significant changes. Social inequality between the lower and middle classes and the government elite reflects vertical inequality that can fuel dissatisfaction and a legitimacy crisis. Inequality in access to government policymaking is often perceived as disadvantageous to ordinary citizens. Social inequality refers to imbalances within society (Irawan & Sulisty, 2022). Inequality in the justice system is one of the issues highlighted by the public. This has led to the perception that the law in Indonesia is no longer applied in accordance with the fifth principle of Pancasila, namely, social justice for all the people of Indonesia. From elementary and secondary education onward, the Indonesian people have been taught about applying Pancasila values in daily life. The fifth principle of Pancasila teaches us to be fair to our fellow human beings. The values contained in Pancasila are important in life, especially in Indonesia, and serve as a guide for the Indonesian people in their actions (Lestari et al., 2020). However, in reality, the fifth principle of Pancasila has not been optimally applied to the Indonesian people.

These various issues of social inequality will certainly violate the fifth principle of Pancasila and give rise to social criticism expressed through various media. Social criticism stems from the author's concern about social issues (Desti & Purwanto, 2025). Literary works are not only viewed from an aesthetic and imaginative perspective but also as a reflection of specific social, cultural, and political conditions. Understanding literary works entails recognizing that they are creations intended for the public to enjoy, comprehend, and use (Damono, 1978). Literary works are depictions of the author's imaginary life, set against the backdrop of their life, attitudes, beliefs, and education (Azzahra & Washadi, 2023). One suitable approach to analyzing literary works is literary sociology, which incorporates literary criticism and the representation of human life within society.

Geguritan is a form of Javanese poetry that originated and developed on the island of Java. *Geguritan* is a literary genre influenced by community life, particularly the author's own experiences, and serves as a mirror of society (Murti, 2022). *Geguritan* can be beneficial if it teaches virtue, thereby capturing the reader's attention; every author possesses a distinctive style in crafting the beauty of *geguritan* (Diviola, 2021). *Geguritan*, which has been created, inevitably conveys the meaning of life, not merely visible to the eye but also conveyed through emotion, offering numerous benefits, such as moral messages. *Geguritan* is aesthetically beautiful because it is composed of a series of words that express the author's feelings; its messages can be conveyed deeply, thereby influencing the reader's imagination (Dewy, 2025).

Geguritan "*Mung Dodol Jare*" is a poem that addresses the theme of social inequality. It was published in 2023 as part of the "*Jaran Tunggang*" poetry anthology. Widodo Basuki is a Javanese writer who has produced numerous works, including poetry, short stories, articles, and essays. The themes discussed in this poetry anthology revolve around life, such as the meaning of life, life's journey, and the things humans can do in their lives. *Geguritan* features beautiful language and complex symbolism, employing figurative language to convey meaning indirectly, represent inner

experiences, and open up interpretive space for readers (Bintang et al., 2023). As a form of Javanese poetry, *Geguritan* has distinctive characteristics in its diction, with words typically reflecting the uniqueness of the Javanese language and culture.

The social aspects of literary works can be studied and analyzed through a sociological approach to literature. This approach can reveal the meaning of social phenomena hidden behind literary works. Literary sociology aims to enhance understanding of the relationship between literary works and society, as the social issues frequently faced by society constitute one of the implicit messages authors seek to convey through their literary works (Rakasiwi & Hasan, 2024). The sociological approach to literature focuses on the relationship between literary works and the social life of society, making it particularly suitable for examining the social, cultural, and value realities as well as the worldview of Javanese society.

Literary sociology is a branch of literary studies that cannot be separated from the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts in which literary works are received by society (Desti & Purwanto, 2025). This understanding of literary sociology aligns with that expressed by Damono (1978), who states that literary sociology is an objective study that analyzes humans in society, as well as the social institutions involved in the economy, religion, politics, and social structure, which are reflections of humans in relation to social mechanisms and the acculturation processes of community members in their respective environments. From these two perspectives, it can be understood that literary sociology is a study of literature that examines the relationship between humans and their environment within social, cultural, political, and economic contexts. Approaches related to literary sociology not only discuss the author's expression but also the collective consciousness regarding social reality, namely that social issues cannot be separated from the social environment, including social inequality, which frequently occurs in heterogeneous societies such as those of today.

This study focuses on Max Weber's sociology of literature, which views social inequality as a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by economics, social status, and political power. The theory of stratification, or the distribution of power, is divided into three components: individual effort in achieving wealth (the class dimension), an individual's relationship with other groups (the status dimension), and the power dimension, which addresses the dominance of an individual's or group's capabilities through specific positions or authority (Weber, 1978). The class dimension emerges when resources are unequally distributed, resulting in some groups having better life opportunities than others. The status dimension arises from differences in education, culture, or lifestyle, even when economic conditions do not differ significantly; thus, this dimension refers to the recognition or honor society bestows on specific individuals or groups. The power dimension consists of groups that have access to power, enabling them to maintain or exacerbate existing social inequalities, as they can influence decisions and policies. Inequalities in the class, status, and power dimensions lead to violations of social values.

Inequality in terms of class, status, and power leads to violations of social values such as justice, tolerance, and democracy. Economic and power inequalities result in injustices, such as discrimination in access to education, employment, or the legal system. This occurs because dominant groups tend to receive more favorable treatment. Differences in social status can trigger prejudice, stereotypes, and intergroup conflict. This can occur when one group perceives itself as superior to others, thereby diminishing tolerance. Political power inequality threatens democratic principles, as unequal public participation results when only certain groups hold significant influence in decision-making. Social inequality arises due to differences in resources, opportunities, and power among individuals or groups in society (Watif et al., 2024). This social inequality stems from an economic structure where the

majority of the population works for very low wages (Marx, 1848). Therefore, Max Weber (1978) expanded the concept of social inequality into three dimensions: economic class, social class, and political power.

Social inequality violates social values, thereby affecting various aspects of society. For example, poverty is on the rise because marginalized groups have limited access to opportunities, making it difficult for them to escape the cycle of poverty. Social inequality can also lead to social disintegration, social conflict, persistent inequality, and a decline in public trust in institutions. Max Weber demonstrates that social inequality cannot be understood through a single lens. This is because economic, status, and power inequalities are interrelated and can trigger violations of the values of justice, tolerance, and democracy. Ultimately, this results in complex and long-lasting social impacts. Thus, Max Weber's theory can be used to analyze and describe social inequality as portrayed in literary works. Max Weber's theory can reveal social inequality in multidimensional ways, encompassing economic, social status, and power aspects, thereby helping to understand the social relations and injustices represented in literary texts more comprehensively.

According to Desti & Purwanto (2025), literary sociology focuses on reflections on social conditions, the author's circumstances, and social criticism as a form of interaction between text and reader. In this context, this study examines criticism of social inequality, characterized by economic disparities between the lower and ruling classes. This inequality reflects the unequal distribution of resources and power, which the author articulates through literary works as a representation of social consciousness. The aspect examined in this study is the social values in Widodo Basuki's *geguritan* "Mung Dodol Jare." Social values are considered important because they contain norms and perspectives on what is good and bad, right and wrong, and what is permitted and prohibited. According to Paramarta (2023) values are divided into three categories: values of compassion, responsibility, and harmony in life. The values of compassion are divided into devotion, mutual aid, kinship, loyalty, and care. Responsibility values are divided into responsibility toward family, God Almighty, and society. Values of harmony in life are divided into justice, tolerance, and democracy. This study will discuss social values in the context of life harmony. According Zubaedi (2009), the value of harmony in life is the readiness of an individual or group to live their lives in pursuit of harmony, prosperity, and peace.

Geguritan is one of the literary works most attuned to the social conditions of society, yet it continues to prioritize aesthetic value, as reflected in the beauty of its language. This aligns with the view of Bagaskara et al. (2021), who state that *geguritan* is simply Javanese poetry that employs beautiful language and generally has a more concise structure than other literary works. This is supported by Diviola (2021) who states that *geguritan* can be beneficial if it teaches virtue and captures the reader's attention. Every writer has their own distinctive style in creating the beauty of *geguritan*. This study employs a research-by-consideration approach. It focuses on semantic distortions containing elements of contradiction due to differing interpretations. Contradictions in poetry can be seen in the word choices that employ figures of speech such as irony, paradox, and antithesis (Bintang et al., 2023). The poem "Mung Dodol Jare" represents the social inequality occurring between the lower-class community and the government, which belongs to the economic elite. This contradiction emerges in certain phrases that claim the government cares for the people; however, in reality, the people have yet to feel any tangible change to this day.

Research on social issues in *geguritan* was previously conducted by Arawinda & Darni (2023) In their study, they examined various *geguritan* included in the Serendipiti Astrabrata anthology; the *geguritan* within it present a wide range of social issues. Consequently, their findings indicate that

these *geguritan* contain social criticism directed at the education system, government officials, and societal conditions. Qothrunnada & Sulanjari (2023) employed literary sociology theory to analyze the social issues embedded in the *geguritan* “*Dunga Mungguh Pangkat*”. Their findings revealed that the *geguritan* illustrates methods to ensure that prayers and hopes for a promotion are realized. The first stanza describes how to flatter the ruler to ensure one’s affairs proceed smoothly; those seeking to elevate their status and rank are advised to humble themselves before the ruler, flatter the ruler’s feet, and ensure the ruler’s authority continues to grow. This indicates the presence of social criticism within various social phenomena, encompassing political, economic, social, and cultural issues. Sungkowati (2016) discusses the poems by Budi Palopo and Trinil that contain social criticism of government officials. Her research findings indicate that a hedonistic lifestyle, a desire for luxury, and an abundance of material wealth lead them to justify any means, including flattery, bribery, and corruption. Meanwhile, Trinil’s poems contain similar criticism, particularly in the Surabaya region.

Fatmawati et al. (2024) used Max Weber’s sociological theory of literature to analyze social stratification in literary works; their findings reveal the social stratification depicted in Hamka’s novel “*Di Bawah Lindungan Ka’bah*”. This social stratification gives rise to two social classes: the upper class and the lower class; the upper class comprises wealthy merchants, while the lower class comprises people who are financially disadvantaged. This issue leads to discrimination against certain groups, thereby reinforcing the stereotype that the upper class holds more power than the lower class. Ali & Wirawan (2025) examined social classes in a short story anthology using Max Weber’s concept of social class; their findings revealed social classes based on occupation and environment. Regarding social class based on occupation, 15 data points were categorized into 8 job types, while, regarding social class based on environment, 11 data points indicated differences between elite and middle-class environments. Previous research has generally focused more on identifying types of social inequality than on analyzing violations of social values and their impact on people’s lives.

This study aims to examine social inequality in Javanese poetry using a sociological perspective on literature, specifically Max Weber’s theory of social stratification. Max Weber’s theory of social stratification has rarely been used to analyze Javanese literary works, such as Javanese poetry. Thus, the objectives of this study include (1) analyzing the representation of social inequality in the poem “*Mung Dodol Jare*,” (2) describing the social values in the *Mung Dodol Jare geguritan*, and (3) explaining the impact of social inequality as depicted in the *Mung Dodol Jare geguritan* by Widodo Basuki. An examination of the representation of social reality in *geguritan* contributes to expanding the study of Javanese literature, as this study seeks to present a new perspective by examining the poem as a representation of social inequality that not only reflects differences in status, economy, and power but also reveals violations of values and their impact on community life. Through Max Weber’s approach to social stratification, this study is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between literary works and social reality.

2. Methodology

The method used in this study is a qualitative approach, with the data consisting of written text. Qualitative research is used to investigate scientific conditions, in which the researcher is the primary instrument, data collection techniques employ triangulation (combination), data analysis is inductive, and the results emphasize meaning over generalization (Sugiyono in Safarudin et al., 2023). This view is reinforced by Salam (2023), who states that qualitative methods are designed to help uncover audience behavior and perceptions regarding the topic under study. The object of this study is the poem titled “*Mung Dodol Jare*” by Widodo Basuki, which will be analyzed using literary sociology.

Data sources in research are a crucial component that determines the quality and accuracy of research findings, as each data source plays a specific role in supporting the research (Sulung & Muspawi, 2024). The primary data used is the poem “*Mung Dodol Jare*” by Widodo Basuki, with units of analysis ranging from words, phrases, and lines to stanzas and the entire text, representing manifestations of social inequality. Sampling was conducted using purposive sampling, specifically by selecting a poem by Widodo Basuki, deemed rich in social conditions, namely social inequality. Data collection techniques involved literature review, encompassing reading, note-taking, and analysis. Subsequently, the data were analyzed using the theory of Miles and Huberman, as cited in Qomaruddin & Sa’diyah (2024) with a primary focus on data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through theoretical triangulation, testing the consistency of the findings from the text across multiple perspectives in literary sociology and social inequality theory. The entire research process was carried out through a systematic series of steps, including preparation, implementation, and report writing.

In this study, the researcher serves as the primary instrument in determining the direction and focus of the study, selecting the sample through purposive sampling based on substantive considerations. The researcher then collects data through critical reading and in-depth note-taking and processes it through the stages of reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. Furthermore, the researcher also plays a role in ensuring validity through theoretical triangulation and is responsible for the entire research process, from the preparatory stage to the drafting of the final report. Thus, the success of this study depends heavily on the researcher’s sensitivity, theoretical understanding, and meticulousness in interpreting the data contextually.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Result

Geguritan Mung Dodol Jare focuses on depicting social reality, so the analysis was conducted using a literary sociology approach. Thus, the representation of social inequality, social values, and the impact of the issues depicted in *geguritan “Mung Dodol Jare”* can be revealed. This *geguritan* not only reflects the realities of people’s lives but also contains social criticism of unjust social practices. Therefore, the discussion focuses on three main aspects, namely the representation of social inequality, social values in the *geguritan Mung Dodol Jare*, and the impact of social inequality depicted in the work.

3.1.1. Representation of Social Inequality

Social inequality refers to the unfair distribution of resources, power, and opportunities within a society. This inequality can be seen across various aspects of life, including income, education, health, and access to basic services (Watif et al., 2024). Max Weber (1978) states that the concept of social inequality comprises three main dimensions: economic class, social status, and political power. Thus, the representation of social inequality in *Mung Dodol Jare’s* poetry aligns with Max Weber’s theory. This is because *Mung Dodol Jare’s* poetry reflects the position of the *wong cilik* (the common people) as a group that faces many problems, including economic constraints, low social status, and limited access to political power. Meanwhile, the political elite is depicted as the party that controls resources, social influence, and political authority through promises of power that are not fully realized. The representation of social inequality in Widodo’s *Mung Dodol Jare* is divided into three aspects: economic class, social status, and political power.

3.1.1.1. Economic Class

Economic class differences create a gap between affluent and impoverished groups. Economic class is related to the ownership of economic resources such as income, employment, and access to basic necessities. Differences in the ownership of economic resources are evident in communities at the bottom of society and those in positions of power. This condition is represented in the *Mung Dodol Jare* poem, as evidenced in the following excerpt:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>wong cilik ora butuh kae-kae</i>	ordinary people don't need all that
(2) <i>pentinge mung</i>	what matters is
(3) <i>murah sandhang</i>	affordable clothing
(4) <i>murah pangan</i>	cheap food
(5) <i>urip tentrem, awak seger</i>	peaceful life, healthy body
(6) <i>kuwarasan</i>	sanity
(7) <i>kepenak nggone mergawe</i>	comfortable working environment
(8) <i>dodolan seneng</i>	enjoying selling
(9) <i>bathi sithik ora mamang</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)	a little bit of money is better than none

The above quote describes the condition of the common people in society as a lower economic class. These people do not need many things; they only want their basic needs to be affordable so they can live peacefully and stay healthy. Thus, people can work comfortably and happily because the results of their work can be used to meet their needs. However, the high prices of clothing and food remain an obstacle, as the government sets prices that are not in line with the community's conditions. During the political season, officials compete to make promises to fight for the common people, but after being elected, these promises are nothing more than empty words, with no real implementation. This is evidenced in the quote below:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>ngarepake taun politik, jarene</i>	looking forward to the political season, he said
(2) <i>mula padha rame-rame gawe partai</i>	they all rush to form parties
(3) <i>mengko wayah pemilu bakal</i>	then when the election comes
(4) <i>merjuangake nasibe wong cilik, jarene</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 76)	to fight for the fate of the common people, he said

The above quote shows the condition of the ruling class in government, implementing a strategy during the election by forming a party and promising to fight for the common people's fate. This is not in line with the reality faced by common people, because they have to fight for their own fate. People from low-income backgrounds often have to work harder to achieve a decent

standard of living, and even then, the outcomes are uncertain because they lack access to quality education, health services, and social networks that can offer them a better life (Pasaribu et al., 2024).

3.1.1.2. Social Status

Social status relates to the recognition, prestige, and social position of a person or particular group in society. Status does not always correlate with wealth, but it can determine how a person is treated and valued socially. The social status in *Mung Dodol Jare's* poetry is depicted through social stratification, with the common people and the political elite portrayed in distinct positions. This condition is demonstrated by the depiction of differences in social recognition and social stratification in real society. Social stratification is a system of social positions based on economic, cultural, and political conditions, with society classified into groups such as high, middle, and low (Arbaini, 2022). This issue is in line with the following excerpt from *Mung Dodol Jare's* poem:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>saiki, coba ngungak-a mandhuwur</i>	now, try looking up
(2) <i>mesthi beda karo ing kene</i>	it must be different from here
(3) <i>ing kana panggone</i>	up there
(4) <i>wong-wong lagi mikir negara, jarene</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggalan/hal 75)	people are thinking about the country, he said

The above quote reminds people of a lower social status to look up to, where the differences in living conditions are very striking. Figures with high social status and power consider the country their own, so they seem to be in control. Every citizen has the same rights and obligations, but in reality, those in power receive more benefits or even take away the rights that should belong to the common people. The upper class, as rulers, is often favored, creating a social gap between the upper and lower classes, so that the common people must always be careful not to be easily trapped by the rulers. This is also described in the following quote:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>saben jaman pancen seje</i>	every era is indeed different
(2) <i>simbah sing wis tuwuk mangan uyah</i>	the elders who have tasted salt
(3) <i>tansah paring sesorah</i>	always give advice
(4) <i>ndhuk, le...</i>	my child...
(5) <i>urip sing setiti, ngati-ati</i>	live carefully, be cautious
(6) <i>dalane lunyu akeh enggok-enggokane</i>	the road is slippery and full of twists and turns
(7) <i>mula aja nganti</i>	therefore, do not let
(8) <i>keblithuk wong adol abab</i>	falling into the trap of deceitful people
(9) <i>adol jare</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggalan/hal 76)	they say they sell

The above quote describes Simbah's advice as that of someone who has already experienced the ups and downs of life. His advice is that humans must always be careful, because the path of life has many obstacles to overcome; do not be easily deceived by someone who sells manners, namely a ruler with his sweet promises. The common people must be careful in choosing their rulers, because this can affect their lives. However, even though they are careful, the common people still become victims of the rulers because there are very few rulers who truly fight for the people's rights.

3.1.1.3 Political Power

Political power is the ability of figures to influence public decisions and control policies through positions, political parties, or state authorities. Power inequality occurs when political decisions can only be made by certain groups. Political figures use their positions to dominate civil society through hegemonic power, including acting in a fully authoritarian manner, acting in a capitalist manner, promoting solidarity with identity, and engaging in coercive and threatening actions (Pangestu et al., 2023). The political power described in *Mung Dodol Jare's* poem is evidenced in the following excerpt:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>wong-wong lagi mikir negara, jarene</i>	people are thinking about the country, he said
(2) <i>lagi sibuk main catur</i>	are busy playing chess
(3) <i>rebutan kothak ireng putih</i>	fighting over black and white squares
(4) <i>silih ungkih</i>	taking turns
(5) <i>negara iki kaya-kaya mung dadi duweke</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)	this country is rich, but it's only for him

The above quote describes the condition of political elites who compete for seats or positions, leading them to consider the country theirs alone. The political power imbalance between the common people and officials is clearly illustrated: officials try to take over the country, while the common people are only victims of political promises of "the people's will" displayed during election periods, without guaranteeing real change.

The representation of social inequality manifested through economic class, social status, and political power is interrelated in forming a hierarchical social structure. The common people's economic limitations result in low social status, positioning them at the bottom of the hierarchy. This condition narrows the common people's access to political power, such as in public decision-making and the expression of aspirations. The problems experienced by the common people are in stark contrast to the easy lives of those in power. Political elites tend to maintain their social status and economic interests through various strategies, including manipulating political discourse. The content of *Mung Dodol Jare's* poem confirms the existence of false promises made by the rulers without any real action, which is a strategy to maintain the dominance of the political elite.

3.1.2. Violation of Social Values in the *Geguritan Mung Dodol Jare*

Social values are those held within society through the views of community leaders and

agreed upon by community members. These values exist to foster a readiness to live in harmony and to achieve justice, prosperity, and peace, as stated by Zubaedi (2009) The values of harmony consist of justice, tolerance, and democracy. An explanation of the aspects that build the value of harmony in life in the poem "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki can be seen below:

3.1.2.1. Justice

The social value of justice is a perspective that holds that equal positions have equal rights and obligations and should not be discriminated against on the basis of position (Zubaedi, 2009). In the poem "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki, we found data that did not align with the experts' definition of justice. The data we found violated the value of justice as follows:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>urip jare mung mampir ngombe</i>	life is just a brief stop for a drink
(2) <i>wong cilik ora butuh kae-kae</i>	the common people don't need such things
(3) <i>pentinge mung</i>	what matters is only
(4) <i>murah sandhang</i>	affordable clothing
(5) <i>murah pangan</i>	cheap food
(6) <i>urip tentrem, awak seger</i>	a peaceful life, a healthy body
(7) <i>kuwarasan</i>	good health
(8) <i>kepenak nggone mergawe (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)</i>	comfortable at work

This certainly hurts the hearts of the people described as *wong cilik*. The community's needs are considered limited to physical health and basic necessities. The people are described as needing only physical health to work and meet their daily needs. This is certainly unfair and does not reflect reality. In reality, the community not only needs their daily needs to be fulfilled, but also for all their voices and aspirations to be heard by those in power. People focus only on their survival because they feel they lack the power to control and achieve their goals. People are considered to need only survive and are not entitled to pursue desires that are too high. This is certainly different from the rulers who have everything. State officials have power and freedom as if the country belonged to them. This is reflected in the following data:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>saiki, coba ngungak-a mandhuwur</i>	now, try looking up
(2) <i>mesthi beda karo ing kene</i>	it must be different from here
(3) <i>ing kana panggone</i>	up there
(4) <i>wong-wong lagi mikir negara, jarene</i>	people are thinking about the country, they say
(5) <i>lagi sibuk main catur</i>	they are busy playing chess
(6) <i>rebutan kothak ireng putih</i>	fighting over the black and white squares
(7) <i>silih ungkih</i>	take turns
(8) <i>negara iki kaya-kaya mung</i>	this country is rich
(9) <i>dadi duweke (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)</i>	his property

The above quote explains that the value of justice is not truly upheld. The country's leaders

are busy reflecting on the country, but in reality, they are only busy looking for ways to look good while still seeking profits for themselves. This is reflected in the phrase "busy playing chess to win the black and white squares." This indicates that the rulers do not bother to think about their lives because they are certain to survive since the country is like their own property. The rulers are only busy looking good and bad,, as depicted by the words 'black' and 'white'. Of course, this is different from the people who are busy working to make a living. Both quotes indicate the absence of justice in this country. People who play chess are also seen sitting comfortably, calmly strategizing, playing with their brains, in contrast to the common people who work with their muscles and have to struggle. The rulers are only busy with how to win the game,, and if they lose, they easily start over, as reflected in the saying, "this country is rich, but it's mine." This quote certainly indicates that the leaders do not think about their people, as they consider this country their own.

3.1.2.2. Tolerance

The social value of tolerance is an act of respecting or appreciating others and not seeing a person's position as a prerequisite for respect (Zubaedi, 2009). The value of tolerance focuses solely on respecting everyone regardless of their position. In the poem "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki, this value of tolerance does not exist because, as the data below show, the rulers do not think about the people but focus only on themselves. The explanation is in the data below:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>negara iki kaya-kaya mung</i>	this country is rich, but
(2) <i>dadi duweke (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggang/hal 75)</i>	his own property

This quote explains that this country belongs only to the ruler. Tolerance in this poem has been violated and is no longer respected. The ruler is only busy with himself without thinking about the people who live and have authority over the country, its resources, and its progress. This shows that the ruler has no tolerance for listening to or fighting for the people's rights. This quote is further reinforced by the following data:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>urip sing setiti, ngati-ati</i>	life must be taken care of, be careful
(2) <i>dalane lunyu akeh enggok-enggokane</i>	the road is slippery and has many twists and turns
(3) <i>mula aja nganti</i>	so don't let yourself
(4) <i>keblithuk wong adol abab</i>	don't be deceived by those who sell manners
(5) <i>adol jare (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggang/hal 75)</i>	they say they sell sweet promises

The translation above explains that the path to becoming a good, righteous person, as defined by tolerance, is difficult. Nowadays, we are only asked to believe in the messages left behind by our ancestors, who knew better the bitter taste of life and the difficulties of struggling to survive. Today's rulers make only empty promises, failing to deliver on their commitments. They do not truly care, let alone sincerely fight for the people's rights. This is reflected in the word *adol jare*.

3.1.2.3. Democracy

The social value of democracy is a view of life that emphasizes equal rights and obligations, respects freedom of expression, and recognizes diversity in society (Zubaedi, 2009). As in the researcher's analysis of the previous data, the data presented below also reveal violations of democratic values. The existence of political parties and political years should bring new hope to the community, but in reality, the community must accept sweet promises without any certainty. This data can be seen from the following excerpt:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>saiki, coba ngungak-a mandhuwur</i>	now, try looking up
(2) <i>mesthi beda karo ing kene</i>	it must be different from here
(3) <i>ing kana panggone</i>	ing kana panggone
(4) <i>wong-wong lagi mikir negara, jarene</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 75)	people are thinking about the country, he said
(1) <i>ngarepake taun politik, jarene</i>	looking forward to the political year, he said
(2) <i>merjuangake nasib wong cilik, jarene</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 75)	fighting for the fate of the little people, he said
(1) <i>mula aja nganti</i>	therefore, do not let
(2) <i>keblithuk wong adol abab</i>	trapped by sweet promises
(3) <i>adol jare (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 75)</i>	who sell promises
(1) <i>ndhuk, le...</i>	my child...
(2) <i>delengen bukti nyatane (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 76)</i>	look at the evidence

From the evidence presented above, it is clear that the rulers are only playing politics in this country, making sweet promises. The community has been told by their elders that, until now, these have been only sweet promises without substance. This is evidenced by the reality of social inequality within the small community, which is certainly different from the problems faced by the rulers. The lower classes can only focus on how to survive, while the rulers are only busy with the views or stigma of the people, so they are considered good or right, as shown by empty talk or described as "white box." The value of democracy no longer focuses on equal rights and obligations, but rather on freedom of expression and awareness of diversity in society. The democratic values in this country focus solely on formalities, with no real-world application, as clearly illustrated in the quote above.

3.1.3. The Impact of Social Inequality

The existence of social inequality certainly affects people's lives in various ways. One of the aspects of life most affected by social inequality is the economy. Socio-economic aspects are inseparable. People with low economic status will place themselves in a low social stratum, and it

is impossible for them to have relationships or associations with people from a higher social class. Problems in the economic sector have impacts such as: 1) increasing consumption by providing subsidies, 2) inaccurate data collection resulting in aid not reaching its target, and 3) misuse of aid (Rahayu et al., 2025). These three impacts are certainly inseparable from the political games of the elite, who manipulatively use their authority to empower the small community. Other researchers also note that the impact of social inequality poses several problems. This was conveyed by Alwi et al. (2025), who stated that socioeconomic inequality causes various problems, including: 1) increased poverty and unemployment, 2) limited access to education and health care, 3) increased residential inequality, and 4) increased social dissatisfaction and conflict.

The existence of these two expert opinions in previous studies has made researchers more critical in analyzing the impact of social inequality as reflected in literary works, especially *geguritan*. In the *geguritan* entitled "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki, several impacts of social inequality were found, including the following:

3.1.3.1. Increasing Poverty

In the *geguritan* "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki, it is clear that the *geguritan* reflects that the condition of society at that time was still lacking and only hoped that their needs for clothing and food could be met at economical prices. This is evidenced by the following excerpt:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>murah sandhang</i>	affordable clothing prices
(2) <i>murah pangan (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)</i>	low food prices
(1) <i>dodolan seneng</i>	working with a happy heart
(2) <i>bathi sithik ora usah mamang</i>	a small profit shouldn't make you lazy
(3) <i>yen jik kurang, gampang golek</i>	if it's still not enough, it's easy to find
(4) <i>Utangan (WB/Antologi Jaran Tungangan/hal 75)</i>	Debt

The two quotes above suggest that people are so poor that they do not think about tertiary goods. The people only focus on primary needs, namely, basic needs. Basic needs, known as primary needs, are famous for their three aspects, namely clothing, food, and shelter, but have been reduced by the people who only focus on two basic needs, namely clothing and food. The poor do not care much about where they live because they consider themselves strong enough to live anywhere, even in places that are often considered unfit for habitation. People focus only on continuing to make a living through trade or business. The people in the poem are often depicted as unable to make much profit from their trading or business activities. Their income, which relies on meager profits, does not dampen the community's determination to continue being grateful. People who engage in activities or businesses do not think calmly until their income cannot meet their needs, as they are accustomed to borrowing and lending. Therefore, the poem clearly states that social inequality between the rulers and the common people inevitably leads to poverty, arguing that the common people cannot meet their needs if they rely solely on profits from small-scale trading. This is certainly different from what the rulers experience, who are free to regulate policies and implement regulations that greatly benefit their businesses.

3.1.3.2. Increasing Social Dissatisfaction and Conflict

The existence of social inequality certainly breeds dissatisfaction among the rulers currently in office or occupying government positions, and if the people feel this dissatisfaction, conflict is inevitable. This is also reflected in the poem "*Mung Dodol Jare*" by Widodo Basuki, which can be understood further below:

Quote	Translation
(1) <i>saben jaman pancen seje</i>	every era is indeed different
(2) <i>simbah sing wis tuwuk mangan uyah</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 75)	grandfather, who has eaten salt
(1) <i>urip sing setiti, ngati-ati</i>	life is fragile, be careful
(2) <i>dalane lunyu akeh enggok-enggokane</i>	the road is slippery and winding
(3) <i>mula aja nganti</i>	just start
(4) <i>keblithuk wong adol abab</i> (WB/Antologi Jaran Tunggangang/hal 76)	falling into the trap of deceitful people

The above quote indicates that even though times have changed, the fate of the poor, who continue to suffer in various aspects, remains unchanged. This suffering is reflected in the word "salt," which symbolizes an unpleasant life. A life that does not meet expectations certainly leads to social dissatisfaction, resulting in a grudge that continues from generation to generation because of the message from parents in the past who told the next generation not to trust people who make sweet promises. A motion of no confidence in the government will certainly lead to internal conflict between the rulers and the people. Internal conflicts that continue to occur and are not immediately addressed will threaten the safety of the country because it is considered fragile, making foreign nations feel compelled to come and destroy the country's order. The very dangerous impact of this social dissatisfaction needs to be addressed and resolved as soon as possible, so it does not become a snowball that keeps rolling, causing more and more problems.

3.2. Discussion

The social reality depicted in Widodo Basuki's poem titled "*Mung Dodol Jare*" reflects issues of inequality within the social structure. Poems that address the issue of social inequality serve as a means for the author to convey social criticism of real-life conditions. Literary sociology theory is employed to analyze a literary work that reflects the existing and evolving social conditions; thus, it is appropriately applied to dissect issues related to social life, power relations, and the challenges emerging within the author's social environment. The existence of social inequality gives rise to classes as spatial boundaries intended to group social strata created by the unequal distribution of resources, thereby resulting in varying life opportunities within society. The classes that emerge in Widodo Basuki's *Geguritan* include economic, social, and political classes, which support Weber's 1978 theory of social problems. These created classes or spaces inevitably give rise to boundaries or distinctions between the upper, middle, and lower classes. The social status inequality in *Geguritan Mung Dodol Jare* reflects a social stratification that positions individuals based on background, occupation, or specific status. This representation reinforces the assumption that social structures can lead to discrimination. Weber (1978) is appropriate for analyzing social issues found in literary works and does not align with George Ritzer's theory as discussed in

Maunah (2016), which views society as a social system composed of interconnected parts that form a cohesive whole and maintain balance, whereas the poem “*Mung Dodol Jare*” reveals political domination signaling disintegration among groups.

The issues in the poem reveal hegemonic power dynamics; therefore, from a literary sociology perspective, power can be reflected through language, ideas, and symbols in literary texts. The social inequality depicted in the *Mung Dodol Jare* poem demonstrates that literary works can serve as a social mirror, capturing the realities of economic injustice, social status inequality, and the abuse of political power. The emergence of economic class differences conveyed in the poem indicates a gap between the lower class and the elite. This has led to social problems such as poverty, limited access, and disparities in well-being caused by an unbalanced social structure. The social status inequality in the *Mung Dodol Jare* poem reflects a social stratification that ranks individuals according to their background, occupation, or specific position. This representation reinforces the assumption that social structures can form structured relationships that have the potential to lead to discrimination. The political power depicted in the *Mung Dodol Jare* poem illustrates the dominance of certain groups over others. This issue reflects power relations indicative of hegemonic practices. Therefore, from a sociological perspective, this aligns with the author’s literary analysis of the work.

In his poem titled “*Mung Dodol Jare*,” Widodo Basuki also highlights the violation of values caused by social inequality. In reality, values are positive attitudes that must be upheld and reflected in every action taken; when these values are violated, the fundamental principles of living are disregarded. The findings of this study reveal violations of the values of justice, welfare, and peace. The value of justice is lost due to an attitude that prioritizes self-interest; welfare begins to fade due to intolerance within society; and peace is no longer felt due to the loss of democratic spirit among the people—a finding that supports the theory (Zubaedi, 2009). Violations of the value of tolerance are evident in the neglect of certain groups, particularly the lower classes, as those in power prioritize personal interests and view the state as their private property, thereby demonstrating a lack of solidarity within society. Violations of democratic values are demonstrated by the dominance of power, which limits opportunities for public participation. Violations of the social values conveyed through these genres constitute symbolic resistance against social practices that deviate from society’s ideal values. This study differs from Paramarta (2023) research, which examines the social values in Ki Patih Ganjira’s *geguritan*. Our study offers a different perspective from previous research by examining the violations of values reflected in Widodo Basuki’s *geguritan* works.

Social inequality impacts people’s lives, particularly through rising poverty. The poem “*Mung Dodol Jare*” highlights a structural cycle in society that is difficult to break; for example, people from lower economic classes find it hard to advance and improve their lives. Poverty arises due to several factors, including: 1) increased consumption through subsidies, 2) inaccurate data collection leading to misdirected aid, and 3) misuse of aid. This aligns with the causes of poverty identified by Rahayu et al. (2025) these issues stem from an unjust social system, as social structures and individual fates within society are closely intertwined. These three impacts are undoubtedly linked to political maneuvers by the elite, who manipulatively use their authority to empower the underprivileged. Social inequality also fuels public dissatisfaction with the government, which can trigger conflict and resistance among different social groups. This supports the theory presented by Alwi et al. (2025) which states that socioeconomic inequality has negative impacts on society, namely: increased poverty and unemployment, limited access to education and

healthcare, increased housing inequality, and rising social dissatisfaction that fuels conflict.

Our research findings indicate that social inequality arises from the unequal distribution of resources; therefore, a practical solution is to foster tolerance in community life. A high level of tolerance naturally fosters a sense of harmony. According to structural-functional theory, society should be a system composed of interconnected parts. Our research findings demonstrate to the general public that disintegration leads to negative consequences. Disintegration arises from intolerance. Research on social inequality, as depicted in the poem “*Mung Dodol Jare*” by Widodo Basuki, provides moral support for those in power to carry out their duties more effectively and serves as a reference for other researchers to expand their studies by analyzing a broader range of data sources.

4. Conclusion

Various forms of social inequality have inspired writers to speak out through their literary works. One literary genre that expresses social criticism while preserving the beauty of language in conveying the author’s emotions—making them easily understood by readers—is poetry, or “*geguritan*” in Javanese. One poem that addresses social inequality is *Mung Dodol Jare* by Widodo Basuki. This study examines the representation of social inequality as outlined by Weber (1978) who categorizes society into several classes based on economic, social, and political status. Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that, within the economic class, there is injustice regarding the distribution of resources, income, employment opportunities, and access to basic necessities. This occurs among the lower economic class, who require only affordable food and clothing, as well as good health, to work optimally. Social inequality in social status relates to social recognition and position. People in high political positions are depicted as busy with state affairs and undoubtedly hold prestigious social status; however, none of this leads to improvements. The next form of social inequality exists within the political power class, which relates to state authority held by those in specific positions. The poem depicts people busy playing chess, merely fighting over black and white squares, and portraying the state as if it were their personal property. This, of course, triggers social violations that affect various aspects of society, including justice, tolerance, and democracy. The emergence of these social impacts triggers several new social problems, namely rising poverty and social discontent, which in turn lead to social conflict due to public distrust of state officials who hold positions of power but do not use them properly, instead prioritizing their personal interests.

The researcher acknowledges that, in completing this study, many shortcomings remain, resulting in imperfections in this work. This is evidenced by the limitations of the data used. This study utilized only one data source: a *geguritan* titled *Mung Dodol Jare* by Widodo Basuki. This naturally limits the data we have regarding the social inequality depicted in the *geguritan*. Therefore, the researcher recommends that future researchers conduct similar studies using a broader range of data sources.

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