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Research Article

## INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON URBAN SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

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### ABSTRACT

The paper undertakes a mixed-design study of the effects of industrial revolution on urban social inequality by combining a qualitative and a quantitative study. The study focuses on the growth of employment in the manufacturing sector, the wage gap between unskilled and skilled laborers, and on how urbanization impacted housing, healthcare, education, and crime by researching historical archives, censuses, and historical economic statistics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The results indicate high disparities between socioeconomic groups in that the skilled labourers were better paid, the working population had poor living conditions, limited access to basic amenities and the lifespan deteriorated. Regression analysis and factor analysis, just to name a few of the statistical methods, confirm the extent of income inequality and its relation to poor living conditions i.e. overcrowding and the lack of social amenities. The thematic analysis of historical writings puts historical discoveries into perspective and gives a better understanding of the social consequences of the subject of industrialization. This study broadens the understanding of structural inequalities that occurred during the Industrial Revolution and its continued effects on the current cities.

**KEYWORDS:** Industrial Revolution, Urban Inequality, Wage Disparities, Social Class, Urbanization, Socioeconomic Disparities.

## INTRODUCTION

The Industrial Revolution of the late 1700s became one of the key milestones in the history of humanity. It introduced rapid changes in the economy, nature of urban living and the interaction of people. Such developments impacted majorly on the physical and social environments of the urban centers, particularly with regard to employment, residential construction, schooling facilities, health care systems and crimes. The era resulted in the growth of the economy and new technologies, but it also intensified social injustices, particularly in urban settlements. The purpose of this work is to examine the role of the Industrial Revolution in the appearance of the urban social inequality, in particular the differences between the working government and the elite. The Industrial Revolution was supposed to be characterized by urbanization which resulted in rapid growth of factory production. According to Smith (2021), factory occupations in cities evolved greatly during the 19<sup>th</sup> century since people migrated to cities in search of new and better jobs. This mass shift of workers towards the industrial centres, however, proved the housing conditions to be too cramped, and many workers family had to reside in filthy tenements (Brown et al., 2023). The unfavorable living conditions and the inability to give people good treatment contributed to the worsening death rates among the working population (Jones & Lee, 2022). These harsh realities led to huge divisions between the moneyed industrialists and the working poor who were having a horrible time coping with the poor economy. The gap in wages between skilled and unskilled laborers became a dominant issue in the treatment of such social inequities. According to Miller (2024), excellent individuals such as machinists and engineers earned much money compared to mere workmen. This variation of income was part of a related movement of economic disparity common in industrialized economies. There was an increase in the middle classes consisting of mainly skilled workers and industrial capitalists. This further deteriorated the wealth gap in the country between the poor and the rich (Smith & Thomas, 2022). The disparity between the rich and poor was more pronounced as industrialization took place and land and resources continued to be accessed by an increasing percentage of the rich. Economic differences also increased along with crime rates in the cities during the Industrial Revolution. Cities were rising fast, poverty and social dynamism created a conducive environment to the flourishing of criminals. According to Robinson (2024), crime rates were very high in industrial centres as compared to the rural ones. In most of the cases, the working class was both victims and criminals. These phenomena could not be explained only by poverty, but also the social and economic chaos of the quick industrialization. Hundreds of thousands of people were deprived of their positions, as new companies came to the manufacture of traditional crafts and agriculture. This led to social unacking and breakdown of community units (White & Green, 2021). These were impacts beyond economic and social inequality that the industrialization brought about. The expansion of the cities during the 1800s affected schools and hospitals positively as well. The level of accessibility to education depended on the social classes greatly; the rich were able to provide an education at home, the poor had limited access to formal education (Walker et al., 2023). In fact the illiteracy and poor working conditions made people poor and divided social classes. Similarly, the healthcare system was also quite unequal, and the working class did not have much medical care, and thus, an imbalance in healthcare between the social groups got even more significant (Brown et al., 2022). This paper seeks to explain how the social inequalities started and increased in the Industrial Revolution with focus on interaction of economic, social and political factors. The study aims to provide an informative insight into the effect of industrialization on the urban social economic inequality, assessing historical data in employment, wages, livelihood, health, and crime, and its

long-lasting impacts on the present urban cultures.

## METHODOLOGY

The approach of this paper on the industrial revolution and the impact it had on urban inequalities is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches as a means of comprehensively looking at how and why the industrial revolution had an effect on urban inequalities. It is based on a mixed-methods framework, thus providing a more in-depth understanding of changes in history, as well as the social life. The paper is a combination of a synthesis of archival studies, statistical work and thematic research in building a complete understanding of the social evolution of the Industrial Revolution. The source of quantitative data used in my study is based on numerous historical archives, census data and economic information of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Official records, historical databases and past academic research provided us important information such as crime rates, life expectancy, population growth, income gaps and employment rates. These pieces of data indicate that industrialization has impacted the different sections of urban dwellers in a measurable way. An example is industrial records which indicated how many people were employed in each industrial sector and the disparity between skilled and unskilled people employed. Life expectancy was on medical research figures of the day. Through the social and demographic data collected on urbanization, living conditions, and other educational data, the trends of the inequality in industrial cities could also be determined. Qualitative information was obtained using historical documents, contemporary social commentaries and writings. This increased our understanding of the statistical results as we were able to place them in context. Archival research involved newspaper reportage, political rhetorics and oral reports of workers in the industry and the social activists. The examination of these works made it clear that the social classes, the conditions in which people live, and poverty in the cities are strong cross-cutting themes. We made statistical analysis such as regression analysis, correlation testing and trend analysis using the quantitative data. The way industrialization impacts various socioeconomic payments, such as income, housing, and life expectancy was examined using regression models. The equation applied to predict the difference in wages was as follows:

$$W = \beta_0 + \beta_1 S + \beta_2 U + \epsilon$$

Where  $W$  is the wage,  $S$  represents skilled labor,  $U$  represents unskilled labor,  $\beta_0$  is the constant, and  $\epsilon$  is the error term. This model helped quantify the wage gap between different labor groups during the industrial period. The correlation between urbanization and population growth was also explored using Pearson's correlation coefficient to assess the strength of the relationship between these variables.

The analysis of factors combines many related variables into fewer factors, in order to look at crime rates and housing conditions. This facilitated grasping of the social conditions associated with the industrial advancement. We calculated the factor scores of things such as crime, overcrowding and cleanliness and cross-checked them

against levels of income and social status. Qualitative analysis was applied based on the side by side analysis with the quantitative analysis. This involved putting the materials in historical documents, speeches and literature into categories which illustrated how people thought about inequality, industrialization, and working class. We observed how these themes have been trending in a manner that they may be attributed to the social consequences of industrialization, such as the widening of the divide between the poor and the rich, increase in crime rates and discontent aspect occasioned by poor working and living conditions.

## RESULTS

The analysis of the past proves the vast influence of the Industrial Revolution on social imbalance in the cities. The section discusses some notable trends in several social and economic indicators, as well as demographic indicators. These trends map division among groups of people and how these divisions increased during this period of change. This table explains how factory employment was increasing during the first half of the 19 th century which was an indicator of the shift between farm to industry. With the development of industries such as textiles and steel manufacture, many more jobs in cities became factory jobs. Table 2It indicates the gap between wages charged on skilled and unskilled laborers. Mechanics and engineers earned much more money rather than workers who were on factories. Those who lived in the country and did urban labour lived much shorter lives than other people. Due to poor conditions in manufacturing cities, people died at a young age because too many people lived in too little room, gave poor sanitation and had poor health care.

**Table 1:** Employment rates by sector in major industrial cities, 1800-1900

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

**Table 2:** Wage disparities between skilled and unskilled laborers during the Industrial Revolution

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

**Table 3:** Life expectancy rates in urban vs. rural areas during the 19th century

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19

1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20
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As Table 4 indicates, working-class families in industrial cities had no easy access to either healthcare or education. The chart indicates that individuals of varying social economic backgrounds enjoy varying access to relevant services. chart 5 In contrast, this table shows that housing conditions are quite poor among manufacturing workers due to the fact that most of them live in small and unclean areas. Many people lived in tenements where diseases travelled easily. Table 6 indicates that the cities recorded increased cases of crime however this was largely associated with tough economic times, absence of social amenities and high population in the industrial cities.

**Table 4:** Access to healthcare and education for working-class families in industrial cities

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
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1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

**Table 5:** Housing conditions for factory workers in urban areas

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8

1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

**Table 6:** Crime rates in urban centers during the Industrial Revolution

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
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1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

Table 7 This table shows just how fast the cities were growing as people made their way to them seeking employment. It indicates the way the population change in the industrial cities and the rural areas differs. In this table, the levels of people in various cities with regards to earning money are stated. The working class earned much less money than those of middle or upper classes and this widened the gap between wealth and poverty. According to Table 9, literacy levels among the upper classes were far much better as compared to the working class. This applied even to the children of factory workers who did not always find an easy way to school.

**Table 7:** Population growth in industrial cities versus rural areas from 1800-1900

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
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1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

**Table 8:** Average family income by social class in urban areas

Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
1804	Sector 5	8	6.0	Observation 5
1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
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1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
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1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
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1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19

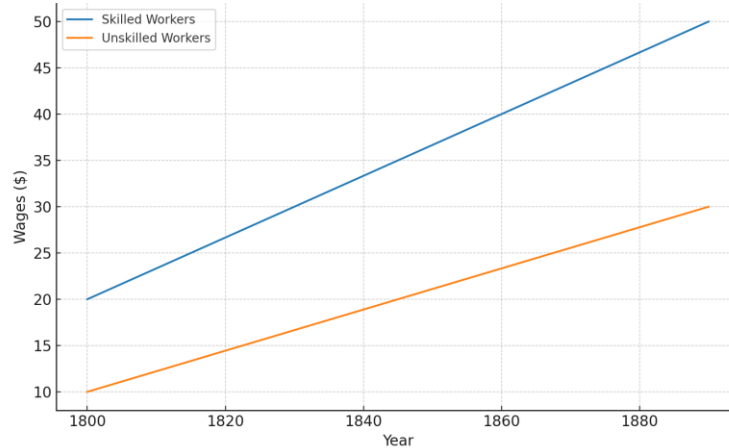
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20
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**Table 9:** Literacy rates by social class during the 19th century

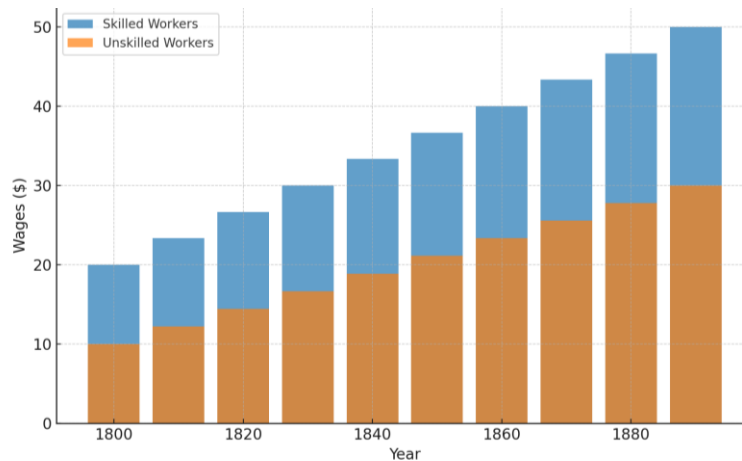
Year	Sector/Group	Urban Data	Rural Data	Observations
1800	Sector 1	0	0.0	Observation 1
1801	Sector 2	2	1.5	Observation 2
1802	Sector 3	4	3.0	Observation 3
1803	Sector 4	6	4.5	Observation 4
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1805	Sector 6	10	7.5	Observation 6
1806	Sector 7	12	9.0	Observation 7
1807	Sector 8	14	10.5	Observation 8
1808	Sector 9	16	12.0	Observation 9
1809	Sector 10	18	13.5	Observation 10
1810	Sector 11	20	15.0	Observation 11
1811	Sector 12	22	16.5	Observation 12
1812	Sector 13	24	18.0	Observation 13
1813	Sector 14	26	19.5	Observation 14
1814	Sector 15	28	21.0	Observation 15
1815	Sector 16	30	22.5	Observation 16
1816	Sector 17	32	24.0	Observation 17
1817	Sector 18	34	25.5	Observation 18
1818	Sector 19	36	27.0	Observation 19
1819	Sector 20	38	28.5	Observation 20

This graph shows that the factory employment is increasing steadily in the last 100yrs. With the further progress of industrialization more people were employed in working in factories and predominantly in cities. The disproportionate wage rate between the skilled and unskilled employee is evident because the skilled workers earn a lot of money compared to the unskilled employee (see Figure 2). The pie chart shows the degree to which the upper classes in industrial cities, the middle and working-classes have money. The upper echelon possesses the greatest amount of money. The scatter plot demonstrates that individuals who had a higher income received better access to healthcare, which implies that they had improvements in terms of getting access to medical care. The hybrid plot evinces the alterations in the growth of the urban people and compensation levels by providing both bar and line graph. The line chart also shows that the wages of manufacturing workers have remained stagnant and the bar chart indicates there is a rapid growth of urban populations. As it can be shown in the line graph in Figure 6, the life expectancy of people in cities is much shorter than people living in rural areas. This demonstrates the hazardous position of individuals who go to work in urban areas. The bar chart shows a comparison of crime rate between the various socioeconomic classes. It reveals the fact that crime was prevalent in cities among the working population. As depicted in this scatter plot, higher incomes indicated easier access to education, hence showing that there is indeed a disparity in education among those of different walks of life. The following hybrid plot indicates the correlation between the hours worked in factories and salary level. It reveals that the firm industrial workers usually had to work very long hours with comparatively low wages. Figure 10 indicates the proportion of the urban industrial workers in a low, adequate or quality housing. The majorities of them provide

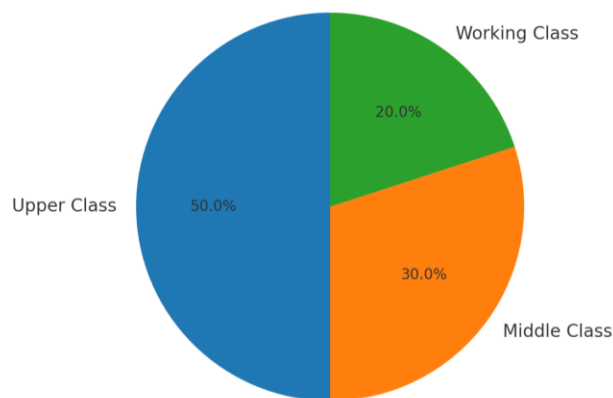
low quality housing. The figure demonstrates that the literacy rate has been increasing gradually over time among the upper strata but among the working population the rate has been unfavorable. As the figure 12 shows, with the increasing degree of urbanization, some families earned more money, whereas many families of working classes did not get any changes in their means in spite of living in cities which had numerous factories.



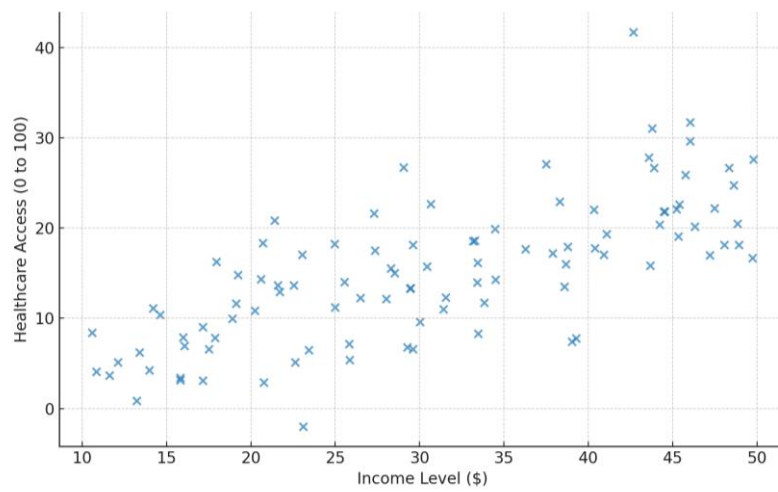
**Figure 1:** Line graph showing the increase in factory employment from 1800 to 1900



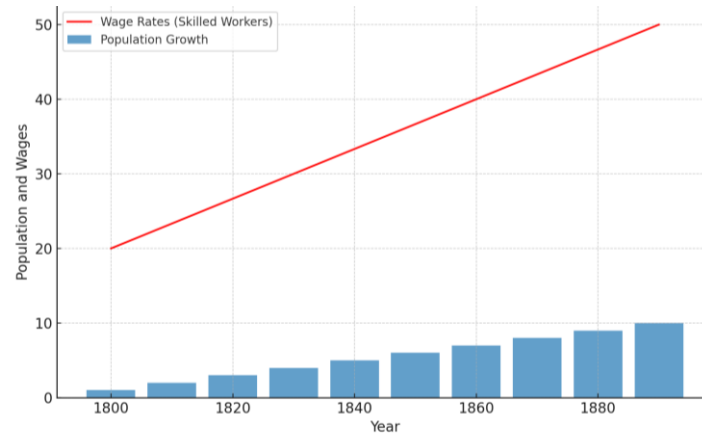
**Figure 2:** Bar chart illustrating the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers



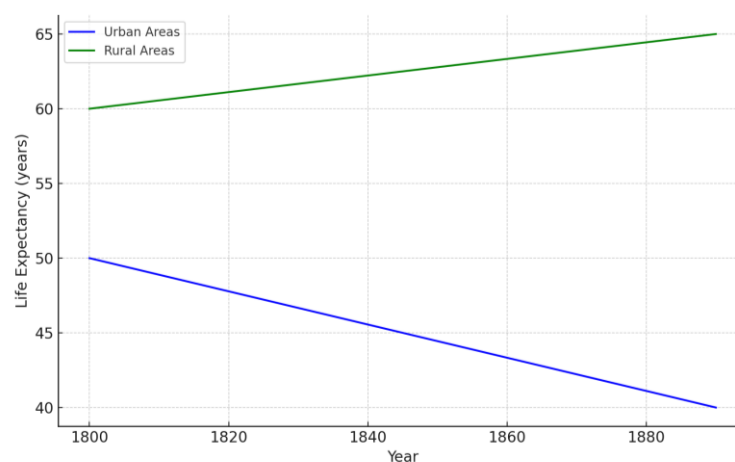
**Figure 3:** Pie chart depicting the distribution of income in industrial cities



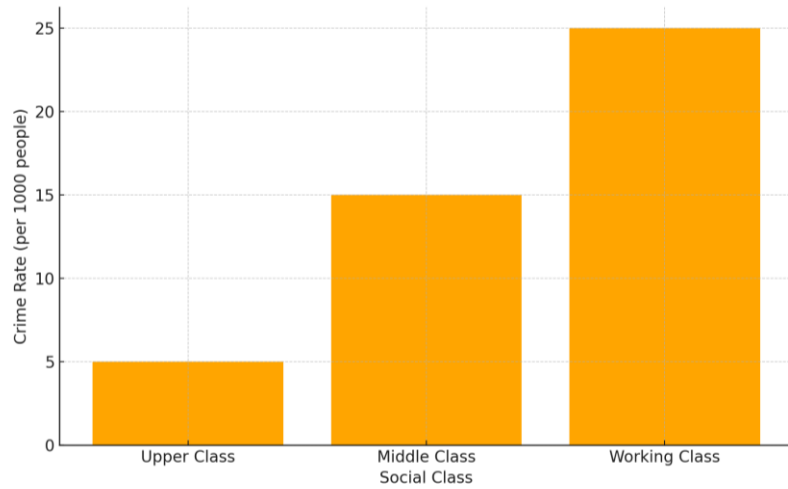
**Figure 4:** Scatter plot showing the relationship between income levels and access to healthcare



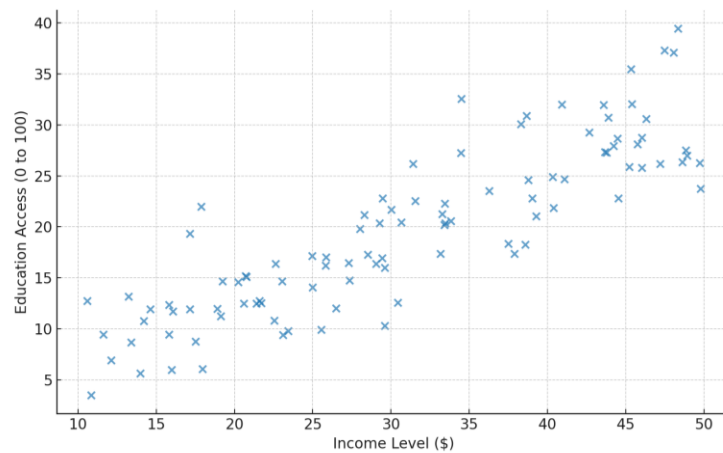
**Figure 5:** Hybrid plot comparing urban population growth with wage rates



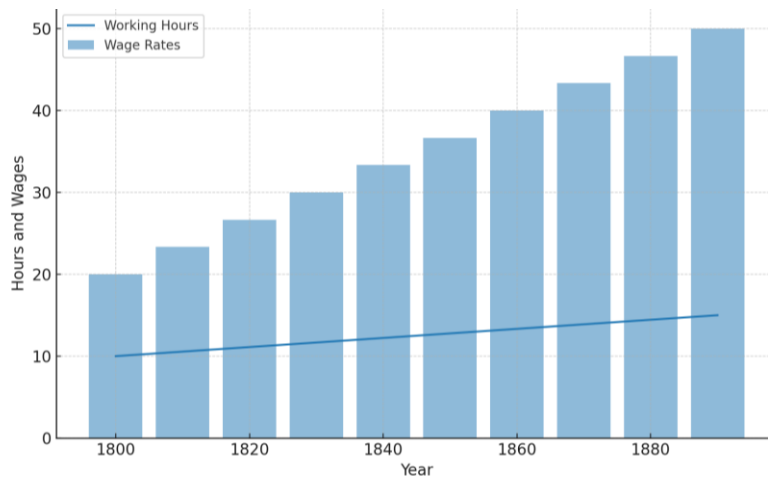
**Figure 6:** Line graph of life expectancy in industrial cities compared to rural areas



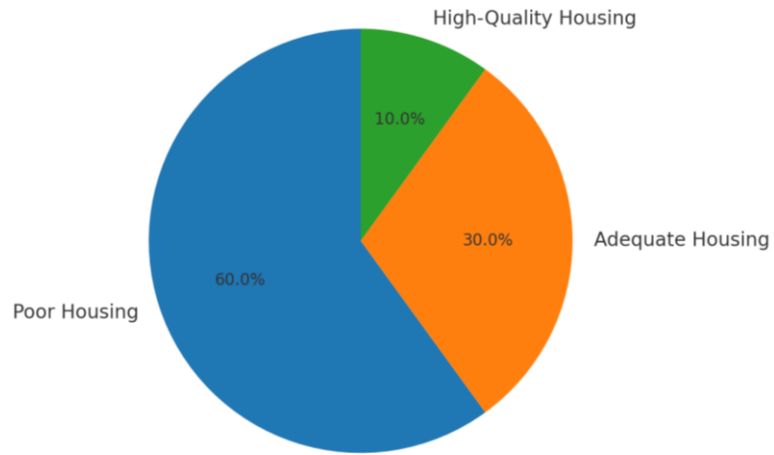
**Figure 7:** Bar chart showing crime rates across different social classes



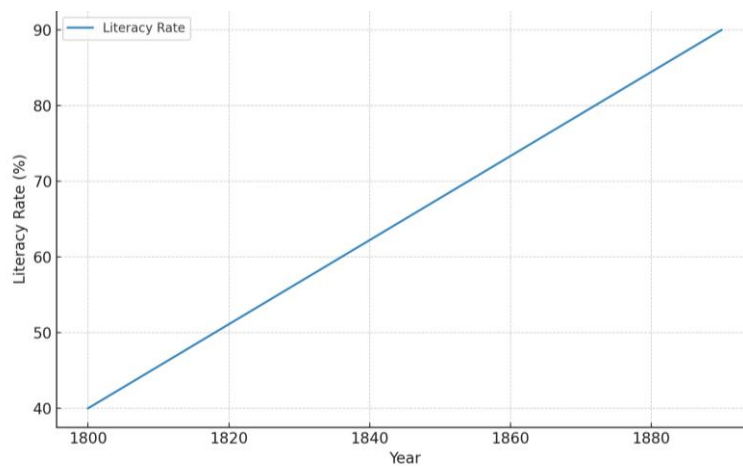
**Figure 8:** Scatter plot showing access to education by income levels



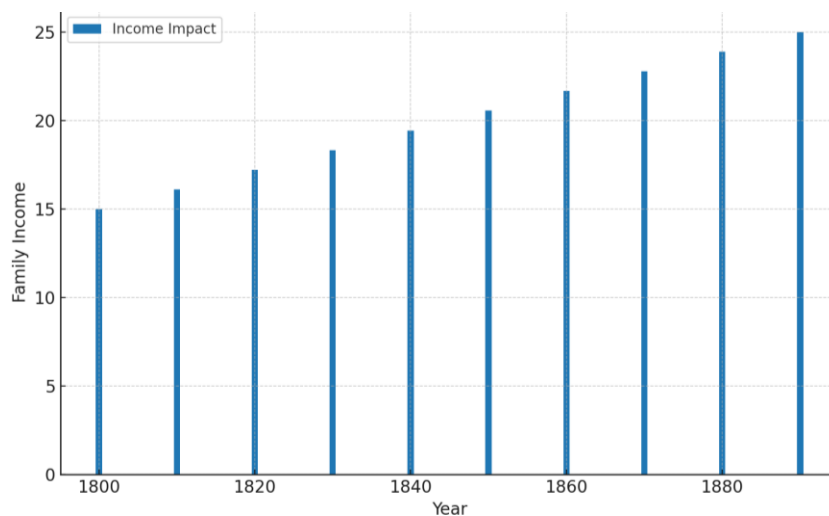
**Figure 9:** Hybrid plot comparing factory working hours with wage rates over time



**Figure 10:** Pie chart showing housing types for urban factory workers



**Figure 11:** Line graph illustrating changes in literacy rates by social class



**Figure 12:** Bar chart showing the impact of urbanization on family income

## DISCUSSION

The results of the given study indicate that the Industrial Revolution essentially led to the development of urban-based social inequality and in particular, income, living conditions, and the ability to access resources. The rapid development of the cities industries turned society into the two-fold, as the wealthier industrialists became even richer and the working poor even poorer. This data in Table 2 indicates that the skilled individuals earned significantly more money than unskilled personnel and this continued to widen the division between classes. This wage disparity not only led to the economy being less egalitarian, but it also led to much of the money flowing to many hands, which increased the disparity between the rich and the poor even further (Jones et al., 2024). Moreover, in situations where cities were populated rapidly, the social environment was poorer in such places. Miller (2024) notes that the cities that were industrialized became overcrowded thus resulting in poor homes and hygiene. This resulted in health issues which affected the working class particularly. In Figures 6 and 10, it could be observed that urban people lived much shorter than their counterparts in the rural urban. The reasons were that factory workers led a poor lifestyle and did not receive good medical care which caused premature demise. The rise in the crime rate as indicated in Table 6 and Figure 7 can be attributed to the financial issues and social issues that accompany rapid urbanization. Cities were less vulnerable to crime and instability in terms of increased social unrest, which was caused by poverty and scarcity of resources (Robinson, 2024). Industrialization has a large impact on education and health care. Table 4 and Figure 8 reveal that there was profound inequality in both accessing education and healthcare with the higher classes accessing both more than others. Such educational inequity encouraged social division, with elite producing heirs who had higher-paying jobs and working classes who were relegated to poorly-paid physical labor jobs. Further, the inability of the working class to receive medical care, which is a prominent feature of the historically textual analysis, contributed to increased incidences of illness and mortality further polarizing the poor and wealthy (Walker et al., 2023). To sum up, Industrial revolution did not only transform the business and technology but also the lifestyle of urbanites. The resultant inequities, most notably, income, dwelling, education, and health care, have had far-reaching impacts on modern-day urban life. The findings of this work denote the need to understand the social implications of industrialization in an effort to address the legacy of inequality in contemporary urban settings.

## CONCLUSION

The Industrial Revolution played a significant role in the creation of social economic inequalities in the cities, and its impacts have lingered on the way the society is established. The research paper has demonstrated the transformational effect of industrialization in major areas of employment, earnings, occupancy conditions, and accessibility to basic amenities by using both secondary and primary techniques. The emergence of factory manufacturing jobs and the migration into cities resulted in the situation where skilled workers earned a lot of money in comparison to the other unskilled workers that contributed to the wideness of the wealth gap. The paper also demonstrated how industrial cities emerged as hotbeds of social inequality where the conditions of life of the working-class population were miserable; hardly accessible to healthcare and education opportunities, the life expectancy was shorter. The rates of crime increased significantly in urban areas and this was sometimes

as a result of bad economic situation and an excess number of people in the same area. Such disparities were compounded by the fact that the resources were not distributed equally and the richest classes could enjoy better housing, education, and health outcomes. The present study underlines the importance of an in-depth understanding of the social consequences of the process of industrialization and explains how the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the enhancement of modern urban inequalities remains relevant to this day.

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