

# SEXUAL AND CYBER BULLYING IN JAY ASHER'S *THIRTEEN REASONS WHY: AN ISLAMIC ANALYSIS*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper is entitled "Sexual and cyber bullying in Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why: An Islamic Analysis*". The objectives of the paper are: 1) to identify the types of bullying as seen in the novel, and 2) to explore sexual and cyber bullying experienced by Hannah Baker. The subject in this paper is the novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher. The object in this paper is the bullying experienced by Hannah Baker. This paper can be categorized into library research and applies descriptive qualitative method. The findings are: first, types of bullying in the novel as follows: (1) written bullying, (2) sexual harassment, (3) cyber bullying, (4) social bullying, (5) physical bullying, (6) verbal bullying, and (7) psychological bullying. Second, Bryce Walker and Marcus Cole did sexual harassment; then Justin Foley did cyber bullying to Hannah Baker.

**Keywords:** *bullying, thirteen reasons why, library research, Islamic approach*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bullying frequently happens in our daily life, such as in school. It is an unending problem that affects all of the students, especially the victim who became a subject of a bully, the person who bullies, and the person who become witnesses of bullying. Bullying including verbal, jokes, threats, mocking, criticizing, insulting, physical attacks, and facial expressions (Afroz & Shafqat, 2015: 43).

Bullying has many kinds, from physical attack (physical bullying); verbal insults, and intimidations (verbal bullying); eliminating, taunting, and rumour-spreading (social bullying); electronic provocation using texts, emails, or internet media (cyber bullying). Although physical, and cyber bullying is often of major concern, verbal and social bullying are more experienced by learners (Hymel & Swearer, 2015: 295).

In the United Kingdom, according to The Annual Bullying Survey (2017: 26), 42% reported being cyber bullied on Instagram, while 37% in Facebook, 31% in Snapchat, 12% in WhatsApp, 10% in Youtube, 9% in Twitter, and 3% in Tumblr. Although Instagram had a system to filter negative words, this system cannot filter so many negative words in the

comments because it has too many negative words written by the user from Instagram. So, it is not effective at all.

According to Girlguiding's Girls' Attitudes Survey (2017) in Department for Education (2018: 6), discovered that 64% of girls aged 13-21 had encountered inappropriate behaviour at school or university in the previous year. This situation included 39% having their bra strap pulled by a boy and 27% having their skirts pulled up in the recent week. National Education Union and UK Feminista (2017: 2) says that 37% of female students and 6% of male students at mixed-sex schools encountered inappropriate behaviour at school while 24% of female students and 4% of male students experienced unwanted sexual desire at school (National Education Union and UK Feminista, 2017: 2).

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

This research can be classified into library research because all of the information is taken from the library. Library research can be interpreted as a series of activities which deals with the method of collecting library data, reading, recording, and processing materials research (Zed, 2003: 3). The data in this research is done by examining or exploring several journals, books, and document or other sources of the data related to the research.

The data of this research is collected by reading some books or journal in the library that related to the bullying. According to Zed (2008), there are four steps of library research as follows:

1. The first step is preparing the equipment like a pencil, a pen or a paper note
2. The second step is to arrange a working bibliography.
3. The third step is organizing your time wisely.
4. The fourth step is reading a novel and make research notes.

After the data is collected, the data is analyzed using a descriptive qualitative method. According to Moleong (2007: 11), the data are words, pictures, and not numbers which means that all of the data will be explained by the researcher using some descriptions, statements, and quotations.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **A. DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

According to Hornby (2010: 187), bullying is to hurt a weaker person, to use your strength or power to make somebody do something. Wolke & Lereya says that bullying is the systematic abuse of power by an individual that is done more than once, and implies an imbalance of power (Wolke & Lereya, 2015: 1). Bullying is redundant, monotonous, and destructive, power-based student's behaviour. There are many kinds of bullying, for example, name-calling, hitting or threatening others, and distributing fake rumour (Afroz & Shafqat, 2015: 43).

#### **B. TPYES OF BULLYING**

According to Van der Wal (2003: 1312), bullying can be categorized into two, namely direct (overt), and indirect (covert). Direct bullying, such as threats, insults, and name-calling are the examples of physical and verbal abuse. Indirect bullying includes manipulation of personal relation, such as disregard, exclusion, and backbiting (Van der Wal, 2003: 1312).

#### **C. LITERARY REVIEW**

An undergraduate thesis by Intan Kurnia Sari (2018) entitled "Bullying Dalam Al-Qur'an. Studi Tafsir Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia". Her thesis uses descriptive analysis to analyze the data. Her primary source is from Tafsir Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. Her secondary source is from the book, another research, and some article which is related to bullying.

A paper by Raden Muhammad Ali (2015) entitled "Hypocrisy in George Orwell's Animal Farm: An Islamic Analysis". The paper is categorized as library research and applies descriptive qualitative research and Islamic approach. The concept of hypocrisy are the verses of the Qur'an and the hadiths.

A book entitled "Ihya Ulumuddin" is one of the most popular books written by Al-Ghazali. This book was composed in the Arabic language in the 11th century. *Ihya Ulumuddin* (The Revival of Religious Science) divided into 10 chapters as follow: (1) Acquisition of Knowledge, (2) Foundation of Belief, (3) Mysteries of Cleanliness, (4) Secrets of prayer, (5) Secrets of Zakat and charities, (6) Secrets of Fasting, (7)

Secrets of Pilgrimage, (8) Excellent of the Qur'an, (9) Zikr, and invocation, (10) Actions after division of Times. Ihya Ulumuddin gives a significant contribution to human and society, especially about Islam.

#### **D. ISLAMIC APPROACH**

According to Subhan (2010) in Ali (2015: 64), the basic foundations of Islamic Approach are the verses of the Qur'an which consist of 30 sections, and the hadiths (Ali, 2015: 64). Hadith can be described as the sayings or the actions from our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) or his partner together with the tradition of its chain of transmission (Ali, 2015: 64). This research applies Islamic Approach, so the Qur'an and the hadiths will become the basic concept or the theory to analyze the novel.

#### **4. ANALYSIS**

The aims of this paper are: 1) to identify types of bullying in the novel and 2) to explore sexual and cyber bullying experienced by Hannah.

##### **A. TYPES OF BULLYING IN THE NOVEL**

Types of bullying in the novel are (1) Cyber bullying, (2) Written bullying, (3) Physical bullying, (4) Sexual harassment, (5) Verbal bullying, (6) Social bullying, and (7) Psychological bullying. In this paper, the researcher focuses on sexual and cyber bullying.

##### **B. SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

This person who always prioritizes their sexual desire/evil desire for their pleasure can be described as a "pig". His mind always controlled by his sexual desire. He always greedy, high desire to have sexual desire, high appetite, and more again (Al-Ghazali Jilid 3, 1974: 31). Quran says in Surah Al-Jatsiyah chapter 45 verse 23:

"Have you seen someone who has taken as his God his desire, and Allah SWT has sent him astray, then set a seal upon his hearing, his heart, and his vision a veil? Who will guide him after Allah SWT? Will you not be reminded? (The Qur'an, 2010: 440).

He does what he desires for his lust. Allah SWT let this person go astray because Allah SWT knew that this person would not accept the instructions given to him. So, he cannot hear the instructions and never understand. Then, he cannot see guidance from Allah SWT. No one can give him guidance except Allah SWT. The Prophet (ﷺ) states that:

“Allah SWT angry to the people who worship his sexual desire as his God” (Al-Ghazali, 1963: 139).

It means that he worshipped his sexual desire that he learned from his ancestor’s religion. Then, he tends to follow a bad habit from his ancestors. Allah SWT let this person go astray, and he cannot see the light because of his act (Al-Ghazali, 1963: 139). Qur'an says in Surah Sad chapter 38 verse 26:

“O Daud, We have created you a successor on earth, so judge individual in reality, and do not pursue your desire, as it will lead you astray from the way of God.” Indeed, those who go astray from the way of God will have several punishments for having forgotten the Day of Account” (The Qur’ān, 2010: 392).

It means that Allah SWT gives an instruction to prophet Daud (PBUH) that Allah SWT made you (prophet Daud PBUH) a khalifah/ruler in the earth. So, give a good decision to human according to shari’a. Do not follow your desire in making decisions so that it makes you get out from the right way. In the Day of Account, he/she will get a painful punishment because of their careless.

Yusuf (PBUH) is one who got sexual bullying (seducing) from Zulaikha, his stepmother. Zulaikha is a wife of King Al-Aziz. As she saw him day by day, Zulaikha love Yusuf (PBUH) too. She started to seduce Yusuf (PBUH). When Yusuf (PBUH) was alone with her in the palace, Zulaikha tried to seduce him. However, Yusuf (PBUH) denied it and ran away from Zulaikha.

Sexual harassment is a form of bullying that happens when an individual or group harass others through comments, and actions in sexual. The examples of the sexual harassment are requesting for sex, try to seduce someone, being touched sexually, or being forced to do sexual.

## **1. BRYCE WALKER**

Because of Alex writes the worst ass for Jessica and the best ass for Hannah, Hannah got sexual harassment, which is from Bryce.

"My ass was smacking with a cupped hand. Then, Bryce said "Best Ass in the Freshman Class, Wally. Standing right here in your store!" (Asher, 2007: 47-48).

It can be explained that Bryce tries to smack Hannah's ass to prove that Alex's list is correct or not. When Bryce touch Hannah, suddenly, Hannah got angry, and Bryce did not say sorry to Hannah. After that, Hannah leaves that store, and she looks sad.

## **2. MARCUS COLE**

Marcus Cole is a student president of Liberty High School. Marcus got Hannah on Dollar Valentine event. Marcus asks Hannah to date at Rosie's dinner, and Hannah accepts his request. Marcus makes Hannah waiting for a long time at Rosie's dinner over 30 minutes. It can be seen in the novel page 139:

"Thirty minutes is a long time to wait for Valentine's date. It also gives you plenty of time to wonder what happened. Did he forget?" (Asher, 2007: 139).

After waiting for a long time, Marcus sat down on the chair next to Hannah, and say sorry. He apologized to Hannah because he had something to do before he met Hannah at Rosie's dinner. Hannah, at that moment, almost given up, and left Rosie's dinner because she was waiting for a long time. Marcus offers Hannah to rebuy milkshake and apologize again. Hannah accepts his apology. Then Marcus started to seduce Hannah. It can be seen in the novel page 141:

"The hand keeps flashing, and his hand touched my knee. I stopped breathing. Marcus. There was your hand, on my knee.

What are you doing? Hannah whispered. Do you want me to move it? Marcus asked. Hannah did not answer ..." (Asher, 2007: 141).

It can be illustrated that Marcus grabs Hannah's knee. Marcus tries to move his hand, and Hannah started to become angry. So, Hannah pushes Marcus off to the floor. After this accident, Marcus quickly left Hannah at Rosie's dinner. Hannah just sat there and cannot do anything for a moment.

### **C. CYBER BULLYING**

Qur'an says in Surah Al-Hujurat chapter 49 verse 12:

"O you who have believed, avoid negative assumption. Indeed, some assumption is a sin. Do not spy or backbite each other. Would you like to consume your brother's dead flesh? You would hate it. Fear Allah SWT; indeed, Allah SWT is Accepting of repentance and Merciful (The Qur'ān, 2010: 461).

O believers, avoid bad prejudice against the people who do good manner. Allah SWT will be angry at the people who always have a negative assumption to each other. Then they will hate this act because it looks like consume the flesh of their brother when dead. In fact, Allah SWT is Accepting of repentance of those people who are willing to repent. Suspicion, gossip and spying can be categorized into evil deeds, and Islam bans these acts. Send images, content messages or black e-mail that intended to hurt someone may destroy oneself shall be held liable according to Islamic law (Hasniza & Asyraf, 2013: 218).

Cyber bullying means that someone is exposed to text messages, emails, or online posts, for example, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, blogs, or other websites. These messages are sometimes abusive, threatening, defamatory (making statement that are not valid), and intentionally deceptive. Even though cyber bullying appears to be little, but it spreads too fast, and the adolescent also

more exciting in the internet where they can control anyhow they need it (Antiri, 2016: 132).

### **1. JUSTIN FOLEY**

"I am sorry. That was not fair. Ready, Mr. Foley? When you reach the end of this tapes, Justin, I hope you will understand your role now. Because it seems like a small role now, but it is a problem. In the end, everything matters. You had no idea what you were doing – what you were truly doing" (Asher, 2007: 12-13).

Justin is Hannah's boyfriend. He also Hannah's first kiss. They meet each other and getting closer after Kat's party. Then, they decided to become a couple. Eisenhower Park was the first place where the rumour started. It can be seen in the novel page 30:

"A week has passed by, and I heard nothing. But eventually, as they always will, the rumours reach me. Everyone knows you cannot disprove a rumour. A kiss? A rumour based on a kiss made you do this to yourself?" (Asher, 2007: 30).

We can see in Justin's case when he showed his friends a photo of Hannah that he took from the bottom of the slide when Hannah wants to slide down wearing a skirt. At the same time, Justin is ready to catch Hannah. Hannah's big feet did not step on Justin's small feet when she jumped, and they were made for each other. Their lips were getting closer, and closer, and .... They were kissing each other! However, Justin said to his friends that they were had sex in a park. Bryce takes Justin's phone, and spreads it on the group then started that rumour.

"Hannah took off her shirt and Justin put his hands up her bra. That is it. That is what I heard happened in the park that night" (Asher, 2007: 25).

That is a rumour made by Justin. He also shows his friends a picture of Hannah when they were in the park. Not long after that, Hannah heard that rumour, and she was shocked.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The first point of the discussion is about the types of bullying in the novel. Types of bullying in this novel are (1) Cyberbullying, (2) Written bullying, (3) Physical bullying, (4) Sexual harassment, (5) Verbal bullying, (6) Social bullying, and (7) Psychological bullying.

The second point of the discussion is about sexual and cyberbullying experienced by Hannah Baker. Bryce smack Hannah's ass and Marcus grabs Hannah's knee (sexual harassment). While Justin shows a photo of Hannah that they were had sex in a park, then Bryce spreads it on the group (cyberbullying). There are many verses in Holy Qur'an and Hadith that described the prohibition of bullying like Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurat chapter 49 verse 12, Qur'an Surah Al-Jatsiyah chapter 45 verse 23, Qur'an Surah Sad chapter 38 verse 26, and more again. Bullying can occur when there was an imbalance power between the person who bullies and the victim of being bullied, he/she does not like the person, bullying is fun, and they think that it will make them more popular. Islam, as a religion that against discrimination is not allowed that evil deeds (bullying) no matter the reasons behind it. Allah SWT says in Qur'an Surah Al-Isra chapter 17 verse 36 that said "The hearing, the sight, and the heart will be questioned (The Qur'an, 2010: 229). It means that every single thing that we say and we do will be questioned on the Day of Resurrection. May Allah SWT give us such iman and taqwa, where we are so eager to gain the forgiveness of Allah SWT by forsaking anything in this Dunya. Aamiin ya rabbal 'alamin.

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