

## LOVE AND BELONGING NEEDS IN ISTIQOMAH'S NOVEL *SERIBU MUSIM MERINDUIMU*

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### Abstract

The aim of the study is to explore the protagonist's effort in fulfilling her love and belonging needs as viewed from Abraham Maslow's theory. There are four different levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs discussed: security and safety needs, social needs, and esteem needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often displayed as a pyramid. The lowest levels of the pyramid of needs are made up of the most basic needs, while the most complex needs are at the top. Once lower-level needs have been met, people can move on to the next level of needs. The researchers identify the characteristics of Reysa as the protagonist in *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* and analyze her fulfillment of love and belonging needs. This novel was chosen because nowadays people think that love is the right of everyone, regardless of their marital status. The researchers use qualitative descriptive analysis to reveal the findings, as the focus of the research revolves around people and their surroundings. The data were collected from the novel and other relevant sources. From the analysis of the novel, the researchers find the four hierarchy of needs. In the context of the hierarchy of needs, she faces obstacles in fulfilling her love and belonging needs because she loves a married man. But in the end, she is able to fulfill her needs for love and belonging after going through various challenges.

**Keywords:** *esteem; security and safety needs; self-actualization needs; social needs*

### 1. Introduction

A novel is a fictional piece of prose that is typically written in a narrative style and presented as a bound book. Novels tell stories, which are usually defined as a series of events described in a sequence. The novel has been a part of human culture for over a thousand years, although its origins are somewhat debated. Regardless of how it began, the novel has risen to prominence and remained one of the most popular and treasured examples of human culture and writing. Its form and presentation tend to change with the times, but it remains an essential part of the literary cultures of nearly all societies around the world.

One of the most interesting novels is *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* by Istiqomah. Istiqomah is a teacher who has written many novels, such as *Tuhan, Malu, Safir Cinta*, and *Seribu Musim Merinduimu*. *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* novel is a romantic novel,

touching the heart and spoiling the reader's imagination. *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* novel is a novel that tells the story of a woman who is the protagonist, named Reysa. Reysa is a girl who is disappointed with a boy named Bram. There is no man she loves other than Bram, until she has to accept the fact that Bram leaves her. Season after season changes, but Bram never comes to propose to Reysa, until finally Reysa meets a man who is already married, Yo. Reysa secretly loves Yo. She feels comfortable being beside Yo, after their meeting at *the durian* shop one night. Reysa feels that Yo could appreciate her with good communication. Until one day, Reysa finds out Yo's true status. Yo is married. But love and the desire to have Yo do not fade from Reysa's heart. It is amazing love.

The *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* novel consists of 236 pages, published by CV. Pustaka Media Guru in February 2020. The aims of the study are to reveal Maslow's theory of love and belonging needs in the novel by means of a literary psychology approach.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Psychology of Literature**

The study is done using a literary psychology approach. Literature is a product of human thought. It can be influenced by the environment of the author, which may even contain the author's way of life. While most people consider that literary works are mirrors of human life, in other words, literary works are used by authors to tell what they feel, see, and face in the social life involving human activities. Literary works are known to people in the written form, those are novels, poetry, and also plays (Arasa, 2014). There is a close relationship between literature and psychology. Psychology helps to clarify some literary problems, and literature presents insights into psychology. To gain a deeper understanding, literature can be studied in various ways, including psychologically. Conversely, the psychologist's manner of conceiving and representing the personality is supported by the intuitive representations made by novelists, dramatists, and other creative writers. It can be seen that there is a mutual relationship between literature and psychology.

The psychological approach leads most directly to the substantial amplification of the meaning of literary works. Discussing psychology and its place in literary works studying the author's imagination. Since all literary works are based on some kind of experience, and since all writers are humans, we need to be caught up in a wide spectrum of emotional problems (caused by experience). Not all psychological paths in the analysis of literary works are done to arrive at an understanding of literary works, to some extent. Literature contains several phenomena related to the human soul. The author reflects the phenomenon through characters in literary works. It makes literature analyzeable using psychological theories that also find the human soul in real life. Literary Psychology is defined as a discipline that views literary works that contain some events of human life played by imaginary characters or even factual characters.

### **2.2 Hierarchy of Needs**

Maslow is perhaps best known for his hierarchy of needs theory, in which he proposes that human beings have certain needs in common and that these needs must be met in a certain order. These needs range from the most basic physiological needs for survival to higher-level self-actualization and transcendence needs. Maslow's hierarchy is most often presented visually as a pyramid, with the largest, most fundamental

physiological needs at the bottom and the smallest, most advanced self-actualization needs at the top. Each layer of the pyramid must be fulfilled before moving up the pyramid to higher needs, and this process is continued throughout the lifespan (Boeree, 2006). Maslow becomes one of the founders and the driving force behind the school of thought known as humanistic psychology. His theories, including the Hierarchy of Needs, self-actualization, and ultimate experience, became the fundamental subjects of the humanist movement. Maslow believes that self-actualizing, people have several key characteristics. Some of these include self-acceptance, spontaneity, independence, and the ability to have a peak experience (Cherry, 2022).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is used to study how humans intrinsically partake in behavioral motivation. This means that in order for motivation to arise at the next stage, each stage must be satisfied within the individual themselves. Additionally, this hierarchy is the main basis for knowing how effort and motivation are correlated when discussing human behavior. Each of these individual levels contains a certain amount of internal sensation that must be met in order for an individual to complete their hierarchy. The goal in Maslow's hierarchy is to attain the fifth level or stage: self-actualization.

Maslow believes that individuals have a natural desire to actualize themselves, that is, to become what they can be. Maslow is much more inquisitive about learning about what makes individuals happy and the things they do to attain that objective. In any case, to realize this conclusion, a number of more essential needs must be met, such as physiological needs, security and secure needs, cherishing and having a place, regard, and self-actualization. If all those needs are not satisfied, human creatures will deviate.

### **2.2.1 Physiological Needs**

Physiological needs are the first of the id-driven lower needs in Maslow's hierarchy theory. These most basic human survival needs include food and water, sufficient rest, clothing and shelter, overall health, and reproduction. Before these physiological needs are met, the next level of needs is difficult to fulfill. These incorporate the wants we have for oxygen, water, protein, salt, sugar, calcium, and other minerals and vitamins (Farlina & Khaleda, 2019).

### **2.2.2 The Love and Belonging Needs**

When physiological needs and safety needs are, by and large, taken care of, a third layer starts to show up. Ruth (2020) states that the need for love or belonging comes into play after the physiological and security drives are satisfied. In our day-to-day lives, we display these needs in our wants to wed, have a family, be a portion of a community, a part of a church, a brother within society, a portion of a group, or a bowling club. It is also a portion of what we explore in a career. Maslow treats the needs for love, affection, and belonging as a single category. These social motivations differ from physiological and safety needs in that they are not absolutely necessary for personal survival. Indeed, many other animals live more or less solitary lives outside the mating season (Caffee, 2013). However, human beings are exquisitely sensitive to cues of social rejection, and they respond to such cues using some of the same neural circuits used to register physical pain (Goble, 2020).

The love and belonging needs included the need to give and receive love from others and to avoid loneliness. Maslow also states that love is a healthy relationship and loving affection between two people, including trust in each other. Humans are social creatures; they need other people in their lives. Humans have a tendency to be together,

to be a part of a group, and to have relationships with other people. The requirement for love and having a place could be fundamental after the requirement for security is adequately satisfied. This requirement is displayed since people, in living their lives, require a great relationship with their family and environment. These needs for love are a driving force for people to have passionate ties to other individuals, both of the same sex and of the opposite sex, within the family environment and within the encompassing community groups. Needs are within the shape of wants, such as the desire to have friends, to have an accomplice or descendant, to be near the family, and to be adored and cherished. This makes individuals feel motivated to fulfill their needs at a higher level (Laeli, 2021).

### 3. Research Method

A descriptive-qualitative method is applied in this study. Qualitative research is a research process to understand human or social phenomena by creating a comprehensive and complex picture that can be presented in words, reporting detailed views obtained from information sources, and carrying out the research in a natural setting (Rijal Fadli: 2021). Qualitative research is research conducted in certain settings that exist in real life (natural) with the aim of investigating and understanding phenomena: what happened, why did it happen, and how did it happen? Thus, qualitative research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of human and social problems (Creswell, 2014).

The first step is to identify the problem or phenomenon of the points of discussion in the novel, followed by a deeper understanding of the plots. The sources of the data consist of two major sources: the novel itself as the primary source, and other relevant sources. The data are taken from the novel in the form of phrases and sentences tending to the points of analysis, love, and belonging needs based on Maslow's theory.

Developing qualitative research requires data that is holistic and nuanced, allowing themes to emerge through careful analysis. In collecting data, the researchers use non-participatory observation. The steps of collecting data are reading and understanding the novel, determining the data dealing with the problem of the research, taking notes of important data to answer the statement of the research, marking the theory of approach and criticism, and evaluating the final data chosen (Wahdi, 2017).

### 4. Discussion

The researchers analyze deeply Reysa's love and belonging needs in *Seribu Musim Merinduimu* Novel using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory. According to Maslow's theory, the drive to fulfill the needs of the hierarchy is what motivates human behavior and personality. Once a need is met, it is submerged, and the next need in the hierarchy emerges as the dominant force. Maslow hypothesizes that these needs appear sequentially. Furthermore, the lower needs are more powerful than the higher needs. The more these needs are satisfied, the better the psychological health of the individual.

#### 4.1 Security and Safety Needs

Reysa manages to get the safety and security needs illustrated below:

*"Berwudhulah. Sudah masuk waktu sholat Zuhur. Kita sholat bareng," ajak ibu. Aku mengangguk. Tuhan, betapa luar biasa cara ibu menghadapi semua itu. Ibu tak membelaku saat aku dicerca*

*Merry. Dengan tatapan matanya ibu memintaku menenangkan diri. Sholat. Begitu dulu yang diajarkan almarhum bapak pada kami anak-anaknya. "Jadikan sholat dan sabar sebagai penolongmu"* (Istiqomah, 2020: 90).

Based on the mother's conversation with Reysa, there is a moral message that we can take from it. Her mother is able to instill in her that prayer will give a sense of security and always be under the protection of God. After physiological needs, such as security and safety, are met, the other need that has to be fulfilled is love and belonging. According to Maslow, love and belonging needs include the desire for friendship, the wish for a mate, children, and the need to belong to a family, a club, a neighborhood, or even a nation. Maslow asserts that love is not synonymous with sex; it is studied as a purely physiological need, and the love needs involve both giving and receiving love. The belonging and love needs cover a sense of trust, love, and compassion. Generally, each individual will desire a relationship of love with others, particularly the need for a sense of belonging within the group, and this is still categorized as security and safety needs.

*"....mendengar suara baritonnya, darahku mendadak mengalir lebih deras. Jantungku berdebar kencang. Suaranya membuatku melayang"* (Istiqomah, 2020: 10).

This sentence emphasizes that Reysa has started to love Yo. It is impossible for our blood to flow freely, if we do not like it. This is what happens to Reysa, even though she liked Yo before she knew him more deeply. However, there is a feeling of comfort in the heart of Reysa.

#### **4.2 Social Needs**

Our social needs include the need for love and belonging. The need for love and belonging consists of a sense of connection, intimacy, trust, and friendship. Human beings have social needs that are just as important as our biological need for food. Just as we may risk death by starvation if we stop eating, those whose social needs are not met may find themselves at risk of a form of extreme emotional pain that leads to thoughts of suicide. If we want to understand human thriving, the social component is essential.

Yo always treats Reysa well, and he makes Reysa feel valuable as a woman. That is how every man should respect a woman as a physical and spiritual unity, because when women are given high and sincere appreciation, they will give their whole hearts.

*"Perih sekali ketika aku menyadari bahwa Yo bukanlah laki-laki bebas yang dapat kuharapkan akan menjadi pendamping hidupku. Pedih sekali mengetahui bahwa di sana, di ibu kota negeri ini ada perempuan yang memanggilmu suamiku dan ada dua anak manusia yang memanggilmu papa. Artinya, perasaan cinta yang diam-diam makin subur ini adalah pintu musibah besar yang akan menerpaku."* (Istiqomah, 2020: 72)

Reysa knows it is wrong to love a married man, but she is helpless. She could not kill her feelings. She thinks that love is a gift from God. She has already wanted to

become Yo's life partner, but after knowing the truth, she could only say that their distance is getting closer but their boundary span is getting longer. By loving Yo, Reysa is attempting to fulfill her social need, meaning that she needs a man for her shelter, but socially, Yo is already married, so she tries to dump his social status and begins to enjoy her love for Yo.

#### 4.3 Esteem Needs

Esteem needs are related to a person's need to gain recognition, status, and feel respected. Once someone has fulfilled their love and belonging needs, they seek to fulfill their esteem needs. Maslow breaks up esteem needs into two categories: the need for respect from others and the need for respect from oneself. Respect from others is related to achieving fame, prestige, and recognition. Respect for oneself is related to dignity, confidence, competence, independence, and freedom.

At this level, it becomes increasingly important to gain the respect and appreciation of others. People have a need to accomplish things and then have their efforts recognized. In addition to the need for feelings of accomplishment and prestige, esteem needs include such things as self-esteem and personal worth. People need to sense that they are valued by others and feel that they are making a contribution to the world. Participation in professional activities, academic accomplishments, athletic or team participation, and personal hobbies can all play a role in fulfilling esteem needs.

People who are able to satisfy their esteem needs by achieving good self-esteem and the recognition of others tend to feel confident in their abilities. Conversely, those who lack self-esteem and the respect of others can develop a feeling of inferiority.

*"Mungkin ia muslimah terbaik yang disiapkan Allah untukku. Bila tidak, mengapa Allah mempertemukan kami di tempat yang suci ini?"*  
batin Yo (Istiqomah, 2020)

Near Hijir Ismail, Ustaz Zul's wife, Fatma, finishes her prayer. She looks at the beautiful girl beside her with a shady gaze. The girl smiled doubtfully. Her eyes stare at her right leg as if to say something. There is a gentle thumping, and there is an anxious hope flashing through the fake-legged girl's heart. The girl takes a deep breath and lets it out slowly. That girl is Reysa. Ustadz Zul's wife hugs Reysa's shoulder; she understands Reysa's anxiety.

After that, Yo comes ini and surprisingly they again meet, Reysa and Yo.

*"Reysa!"*

*"Yo...."*

*"Qobiltu nikaha wa tazwijaha alal mahril madzkur wa radhiitu bihi, wallahu waliyu taufiq,"* (Istiqomah, 2020).

It is like a dream that Allah brings them together in that holy place. Indeed, Allah has arranged everything in the best way. Surely the self-esteem of either Reysa or Yo is heightened. They are now respected by their circles.

#### 5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the research, the safety and security needs can be met. However, at the third level, the hierarchy of human needs according to Abraham Maslow's theory. Reysa faces many obstacles to fulfilling them. Reysa's disappointment

with Bram's promise to come to see her is the beginning of her disappointment with all the men. Reysa and Yo face many problems in their relationship. They are both captive to each other's feelings. After the divorce between Yo and Merry, Yo finally marries Reysa. So it can be concluded that the protagonist in this novel can fulfill his needs for love and belonging.

The basic concept of the theory of love and belonging needs is that once a need is fulfilled, it is submerged, and the next level on the hierarchy of needs emerges as the dominant force. The levels of needs are psychological needs consisting of security and safety needs, social needs, and esteem needs. All of the needs mentioned above are found in the analysis of the novel. Love and belonging needs are the desire for friendship, the wish for a mate, children, and the need to belong to, a family, a club, a neighborhood, or even a nation. Also, the need for love involves both giving and receiving love.

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