THE NEED FOR LOVE AND AFFECTION: MASLOW'S HIERARCHY PERSPECTIVES IN ARIS' BEHAVIOUR IN THE FILM *IPAR ADALAH MAUT*

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Abstract

Humans, as social beings, have a fundamental need for love and affection that is important for their psychological well-being. This study explores how the fulfillment of this need is portrayed through the character Aris in the film "Ipar adalah Maut" (Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse). The purpose of this study is to describe the fulfillment of love and affection within the hierarchy of needs in Abraham Maslow's humanistic psychology theory. A qualitative descriptive method was used, with the film "Brother-in-Law Can be a Curse" as the primary data source. Data were collected through literature review and observation-note techniques. The findings of the study show that the need for love and affection in the character Aris is fulfilled through his social interaction with Rani, his sister-in-law. The fulfillment of these needs is evident from the closeness that is established because they live in the same house, the intensity of meetings on campus, and the attention and emotional support given by Rani, especially when Aris's need for affection is not fully fulfilled by his wife, Nisa. This illustrates the shift in the object of Aris's affection, which has an impact on the dynamics of the relationship in the story.

Keywords: *maslow's hierarchy perspective, humanistic, affection, needs, psychology*

INTRODUCTION

Literature as a work of human beings, reflects the experiences, emotions, and values that arise in everyday life. According to Ahmadi (2023) literature is a form of creative expression that not only presents reality, but also interprets and constructs meaning from various social phenomena. Through complex narratives, literature offers a deeper view of the human condition and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. In relation to this study, the literature function is further seen as a mirror that reflects various aspects of human needs, including the need to be loved, accepted, and connected to others.

Abraham Maslow, a famous psychologist, developed a hierarchy of needs theory that divides human needs into five levels. These are physiological needs, safety needs, love and affection needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1987). The need for love and affection is at the third level, and is considered very important because it serves as the basis for healthy social relationships. This need includes the desire to get attention, love, and recognition from others. Love is indeed an inner bond that can arise at any time and with anyone. When the need for love and affection is unfulfilled, it can lead to emotional distress and conflicts in relationships, such as feelings of inequality and dissatisfaction in

romantic relationships (Nurwahidah, 2023). The phenomenon of infidelity, for instance, can be understood through Maslow's theory–when individuals feel emotionally neglected, they may seek affection elsewhere, often at the expense of existing relationships.

Several studies related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs have been previously conducted, as observed by the researchers. For instance, Rahmadania (2023) examined the implementation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory to enhance learning motivation at the Cahaya Generasi Islam Foundation in Bengkulu. Moreover, Rafi (2023) analysed the hierarchy of needs of the main character, Dr. Tono, in the novel "Belenggu" by Armijn Pane. Furthermore, Sunarya (2022) discussed the relevance of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory within an organisational context.

The gap in this research lies in the differing focus of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory as applied in previous studies. Earlier works (Sunarya, 2022; Rahmadania, 2023; Rafi, 2023) primarily explored the theory within the contexts of education, literature, and organization by emphasizing its role in increasing learning motivation, character development, and productivity in organizations. Meanwhile, the current study introduces a deeper emotional dimension by applying the theory in a more specific analysis of fictional film characters on the need for love and affection, an aspect that has been less explored in previous studies. This offers new insight into the application of Maslow's theory within more complex psychological and social contexts.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on connecting Maslow's theory with the emotional behavior of film characters that has rarely been explored in earlier studies. This research is important because there are still limited literary studies that specifically analyze the fulfillment of love and affection needs within socially deviant relationships, especially in popular works such as "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse". Using Maslow's humanistic psychology theory, this study attempts to answer how the emotional needs of the character Aris are fulfilled through extramarital relationships, and how this affects household dynamics and relationships between characters. This study is expected to contribute to the study of literature with a psychological approach, as well as to enrich the understanding of emotional needs in interpersonal relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human needs are a basic concept in psychology. It describes the fundamental needs that motivate human behavior (Purwaningsih, 2023). In this study, these needs can be categorized into various types, such as physiological needs, safety needs, love and affection needs, esteem needs, and actualization needs (Maslow, 1987). Human needs are not only individual, but also have significant social and cultural impacts, especially in the context of interactions and relationships between humans.

One of the psychological sciences is humanistic psychology. According to Amiruddin (2016), psychology is defined as the science that studies the soul or behavior. Humanistic Psychology, which is often referred to as humanitarian psychology, is an approach that focuses on understanding human behavior through experience and emphasizes the importance of individual self-actualization. This approach seeks to explore human potential to develop and achieve the highest goals in their lives that examine from within humans. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a

psychological theory that classifies human needs into five levels (Maslow, 1987). This theory proposes that individuals are motivated to meet lower-level needs before they can move to higher levels.

According to Maslow, human needs are divided into five levels arranged hierarchically, starting from the most basic needs to the highest needs, as follows, (1) Physiological needs: These needs include the basic things needed for survival, such as food, drink, shelter, and sleep. Fulfillment of these needs is a top priority, because without adequate fulfillment, individuals cannot carry out life activities optimally. (2) Security needs: After physiological needs are met, individuals begin to seek a sense of security and stability in life. These needs include protection from physical and emotional threats, including financial security, health, and assurance from danger or uncertainty. (3) Love and affection needs: At this level, individuals need connectedness with others. These needs include loving relationships, emotional support, and a sense of acceptance within the family, friendships, and broader social relationships. (4) Needs to be appreciated: These needs are divided into two categories: appreciation from others, such as status, prestige, and recognition and appreciation from oneself, such as self-confidence and personal pride. Fulfillment provides a healthy sense of competence and self-esteem for individuals. (5) Self-actualization needs: The highest level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs refers to an individual's efforts to develop their potential to the maximum. These needs include the search for meaning in life, creative self-expression, personal growth, and the achievement of ideal goals.

The purpose of focusing on Maslow's hierarchy of needs in this study is to provide a deeper understanding of human motivation through a framework that categorizes needs into five interrelated levels that must be met. The theory begins with basic needs, such as physiological, and progresses to self-actualization, describing the journey an individual takes to meet their needs to reach their full potential. Using this hierarchy, one can see how each level of need influences an individual's behavior, and how deficiencies in one level can hinder the achievement of higher-level needs. Overall, Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides important insights into how the interaction between an individual's needs can influence their decisions and behaviors in everyday life. By understanding this theory, individuals and organizations can better design interventions or policies that aim to meet human needs holistically, which in turn can improve individual well-being and performance across a variety of life contexts.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach with a content analysis method. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the characteristics of literary research that prioritizes in-depth interpretation of the object of study, in this case, film. According to Ahmadi (2019), qualitative research involves data interpretation and presentation in the form of narratives and descriptions, making it highly relevant for analyzing audiovisual works such as films. The film analyzed was entitled "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse", which premiered in theaters on May 16, 2024 with a duration of 131 minutes. The story in this film depicted the destruction of a household due to an affair between a man named Aris and his sister-in-law, Rani.

The focus of the research was on the character 'Aris' and how Maslow's hierarchy of needs is reflected through his behavior and life dynamics throughout the

film. The data sources in this study are scenes, dialogues, and storylines in the film that show efforts to fulfill the five levels of human needs according to Abraham Maslow's theory, namely physiological needs, security, love and belonging, appreciation, and self-actualization. Data collection techniques in this study were conducted through literature studies and note-taking. Literature studies involved examining relevant theories, such as Maslow's theory and film analysis approaches. Meanwhile, the listening-noting technique was applied by actively watching the film and noting down important information related to the focus of the research. This technique integrated attentive viewing and writing skills to identify scenes that align with the theory.

The data collection process was carried out intensively by repeatedly watching the film to gain a thorough understanding of its content and underlying meaning. . During this process, the researcher recorded important information, including actions, dialogues, and conflicts experienced by the character Aris. The collected data was then selected and sorted based on the five categories of needs in Maslow's theory. Subsequently, the data was arranged systematically to facilitate the analysis process. The data analysis technique employed in this study was interpretive, focusing on interpreting the meaning behind behavior and events in the film that reflect either the fulfillment or lack of fulfillment of the character's needs. Thus, this analysis was expected to reveal a complete and comprehensive understanding of the representation of Maslow's theory in the film "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse" through the character Aris.

DISCUSSION

Humans, as social beings, who have reason and intellect, always need help, support, and interaction with others in living their lives and facing various daily activities. The basic nature of humans that leads to togetherness and cooperation with other individuals is an important foundation in fulfilling various needs that are needed so that they can survive and thrive in life. In living their lives, humans not only have material needs or those related to physical things alone, but also have needs from psychological and emotional aspects that also play an important role in their overall well-being.

The life needs in question cover various aspects. Basically, humans need everything that can support physical well-being, from clothing to protect the body, food to fulfill the body's nutritional needs, to shelter or a place to live that provides a sense of security and comfort. In addition, other physical needs can also include means of transportation, household appliances, to technology that facilitates daily activities. However, human needs are not only limited to external or physical aspects, because humans also have needs that come from within themselves or internal aspects, namely needs that support their emotional and psychological balance.

One of the essential internal needs for humans is the need for love, affection, and attention from others. This need plays a role in providing feelings of acceptance, love, and appreciation, which ultimately forms emotional balance and improves their quality of life. Without the fulfillment of the need for love and affection, humans may feel lonely, empty, or alienated, which can ultimately affect their mental health and happiness in the long term. Therefore, fulfilling needs from both external and internal aspects is very important for humans as social beings, because all of these needs work synergistically to create a harmonious, balanced, and quality life.

One of the fields of science that specifically studies the internal aspects of humans, including thoughts, emotions, and behavior, is known as psychology. According to Amiruddin (2016) this science focuses on an in-depth understanding of how a person's mental processes and feelings work, and how these things affect their actions in everyday life. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a psychological theory that classifies human needs into five levels, where the third level, namely the need for love and affection, is relevant to the data used in this study, which is drawn from in the film "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse". The need for love and affection is a human need to establish warm and deep relationships with others around them (Gayarti, 2023). This includes the desire to feel close, accepted, and emotionally connected to other individuals, whether through friendship, family, or romantic relationships. Fulfilling these needs helps a person feel valued and strengthens social bonds that are essential to emotional well-being.

In the film "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse", it is clearly seen that there is a need for love and affection that arises from the character Aris, a husband of Nisa, who is involved in an affair with Rani, his own sister-in-law. This illicit relationship develops because of an emotional emptiness in Aris, which suggests that his psychological needs, especially in terms of love, attention, and affection, are not being met properly in his marriage to Nisa. This dissatisfaction makes Aris vulnerable to seeking emotional fulfillment from others, even though it has serious consequences and impacts their family relationship. It all did not start suddenly, but rather gradually.

Synopsis of the Film Brother in Law is Death

The film "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse" was an Indonesian film based on a true story. This film was directed by Hanung Bramantyo, and premiered in theaters on June 13, 2024 and has reached one million viewers in 5 days of screening. This film tells the story of an affair experienced by someone close to you, even someone of the same blood. Aris is a husband of Nisa who is legally married and has a child named Raya. Their family is very harmonious, plus Aris's attitude as a pious husband who cares about Nisa and Raya. One day, Nisa's mother asked her sister, Rani, to live in the same house as Nisa's family. Because she was embarrassed, Nisa accepted her mother's request with Aris's approval. Everything went as usual until a condition that made Aris' closeness to Rani stronger, which eventually led to an affair between them. Until finally, their affair was discovered by Nisa, which destroyed her household, plus her mother died and the news that Rani was pregnant with Aris' child.

With a captivating narrative and strong emotional delivery, the film successfully creates tension while arousing empathy from the audience. "Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse" is a story that attracts attention, especially because it raises a very sensitive issue and is considered taboo in Indonesian society, namely infidelity with a brother-in-law.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Love and Affection) in the Film Brother-in-Law Can Be a Curse
Awkward Feelings

In several scenes, it shows the fulfillment of the need for love and affection in the character Aris which is obtained from his own sister-in-law. At minutes 14.00-15.44 (Punjabi, 2024) there is a telephone conversation between Nisa and her mother who asks Rani to live in the same house with Nisa's family. Because it was a request

from her own mother, Nisa fulfilled her mother's request with the approval of Aris as her husband.

Moreover, at minutes 22.59-23.59, it shows Nisa allowing Rani to go to campus with Aris because they are on the same campus. Rani as a new student and Aris as a lecturer. However, Nisa did not realize that this could open up other opportunities beyond what Nisa thought. This incident continued to occur, providing opportunities for closeness between Rani and Aris. Nisa could not take Rani because she had to take care of her job as a cake shop owner. By often meeting and interacting with someone, it will foster a different feeling with that person. That's what will happen between Rani and Aris with the situation they are going through.

At minutes 27.28-28.20, when Aris went to the kitchen to drink a glass of water, he was surprised by Rani who also came out of the room dressed sexily and not wearing a headscarf even though she wore a hijab every day. This surprised Aris because every day he saw Rani always wearing a hijab while in that situation Rani was not wearing a hijab. Aris, who was surprised, spilled a drink on his clothes, as if he saw someone different and not his sister-in-law. That made Aris' mind start to be disturbed because there were two women in one house and the new woman began to attract Aris' attention even though she was his own sister-in-law. Aris began to experience feelings towards Rani, making him awkwardly f confused.

Comfortable Feeling

The closeness of Aris and Rani has begun to be seen because everyday Rani goes to campus and returns with Aris in one car. So that the awkward feeling that occurred at the beginning becomes a normal feeling and even begins to feel comfortable. That will be an opportunity between the two of them because every day Aris meets Rani more often than Nisa who is clearly his own wife.

At minutes 32.43-33.50, it adds clarity to new feelings that begin to grow in Rani when Aris, Nisa, Raya and Rani have dinner together, telling the story of the bad events that Rani experienced on campus. Aris gives his attention as an older brother who will protect Rani if something happens on campus. However, Rani considers that attention to be different from the look in his eyes that are glassy as if the attention that Aris gives is specifically for her. Plus Nisa who said "if you are looking for a guy like your brother, you are very attentive". From Nisa's words to Rani, Rani fell silent and pondered her sister's words. From the incident on campus and Nisa's words, Rani felt comfortable with the attention Aris gave her on campus.

Confused by New Feelings That Emerge

Various incidents occurred between Aris and Rani, at minutes 34.00-36.00,Aris was surprised by Rani who had just come out of Raya's bathroom (Aris and Nisa's child) because the bathroom in Rani's room was broken. Rani who was only wearing a towel made Aris speechless and Rani was also shocked and ran into the room. The incident confused both of them until they couldn't sleep at night as if different feelings began to envelop them both. Aris and Rani didn't understand what was wrong with them so they let the feelings continue.

Physical Contact

Even a very unexpected incident was experienced by both of them at minutes 38.04-42.00, when Rani was harassed by her senior on campus and Aris rushed to

save her and took her into the car to calm Rani down. The heavy rain added to the different atmosphere between the two. Aris as a brother and lecturer continued to calm Rani in his arms that his senior would receive severe punishment. Unexpectedly, when in Aris's arms, Rani lifted her head and made their lips touch. The situation at that time was immediately silent and made both of them awkward to the point that Aris forgot the way home. With this incident, Aris, who had not chatted with Nisa for a long time due to their busy work schedules, began to feel curious, and Rani felt the same thing.

The relationship between the two of them grew closer until Aris and Rani could not distinguish whether what they were doing was right or wrong. At minutes 46.50-49.08, Aris and Rani have an illicit relationship in the bathroom. It all happened because from the beginning Aris and Rani met and interacted very often. Their closeness has crossed the line. Aris should have felt that way with his wife, but Nisa was very busy with her bakery so she rarely chatted with Aris. Feeling curious, Aris repeated his actions by inviting Rani to the hotel to have an illicit relationship. Rani, who was clearly Nisa's younger sister, did not reject Aris' invitation because Rani had also received affection from Aris without thinking about right and wrong. The incident was shown at minutes 50.11-55.00.

Aris and Rani consistently find themselves in situations that favor their relationship, particularly when Nisa traveled out of town to manage her new business branch. Her absence leaves only Aris, Raya, and Rani at home. This became an opportunity for Aris and Rani to continue their illicit relationship which was shown in minutes 56.34-59.38.

Love and Affection

The illicit relationship they were in made Rani wonder and ask for clarification from Aris in minutes 1.14.44-1.15.50. In response, Aris expressed that Rani had become deeply valuable to him since her presence in his life. Feelings of love and affection had grown in Aris's heart towards Rani that were nurtured by their frequent daily interactions. In the end, the love and affection that Aris should have received from his wife, Nisa, were instead fulfilled by his own sister-in-law because Nisa was too busy with her work.

The Impact of Aris's Needs for Love and Affection Towards Rani

The illicit relationship between Aris and Rani ultimately entered into a full-blown affair. What makes the situation even more tragic is that Rani is actually the younger sister of Nisa, Aris's lawful wife. It is unsurprising that Nisa was devastated upon discovering that her husband was having an affair with her own younger sibling. In the end, Aris and Rani's relationship was discovered by Nisa, which resulted in a divorce between Aris and Nisa. It is shown at minute 1.26.00- until the end.

CONCLUSION

In the film "Brother-in-aw Can Be a Curse", the need for love and affection as explained in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory plays a central role in driving the actions of the main character, Aris. Aris's inability to fulfill his emotional and affectional needs from his marriage relationship with Nisa makes him vulnerable to other forms of interaction that provide fulfillment of these needs, even though they come from inappropriate relationships, namely with Rani, his wife's own younger

sister. The process of fulfilling Aris's need for love and affection is shown through various emotional stages, starting from awkwardness, comfort, confusion, to physical contact that continues to emotional and sexual involvement. The relationship did not happen suddenly, but developed over time due to the intensity of the interaction and attention given, as well as the lack of emotional intimacy within Aris and Nisa's marriage.

The consequences of these unfulfilled needs are significant , leading to the collapse of Aris and Nisa's marriage and the destruction of family relationships. This case illustrates that the need for love and affection is not merely secondary or optional; it holds powerful influence over a person's decisions, behavior, and moral boundaries. Thus, fulfilling psychological needs within social and family relationships is essential for maintaining emotional well-being and preventing destructive conflicts or moral deviations.

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