

Social Exclusion of Zainuddin's Character in The Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck* by Buya Hamka

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Abstract. Exclusion is one of the social conflicts arising from marginalization or neglect, so individuals or groups become discriminated against and isolated in the social environment. The novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* by Buya Hamka is tangible evidence of the reflection of the reality of life, especially in social exclusion. As the novel's main character, Zainuddin is marginalized in Minangkabau, the birthplace of his matrilineal father. The forms and causes of social exclusion against Zainuddin are two problems discussed in this study. This study aims to identify the forms of social exclusion and reveal its causes against Zainuddin. To explain this problem, the researcher used a sociology of literature approach. The analysis was based on objective interpretation with the help of fiction study theory (Burhan Nurgiyantoro, 2013) and social stigma theory (Erving Goffman, 1963), supported by various related references. The significance of the study lies in understanding the impact of cross-cultural marriage in a society that strictly adheres to customs and lineage. The study's findings reveal that Zainuddin experienced social exclusion through humiliation and isolation within his social environment. This social exclusion resulted from a cross-cultural marriage between his father of Minangkabau descent and his mother from Makassar. This study opens a new dimension from previous studies by offering a different lens of study to understand social exclusion as an impact of cross-cultural marriage which is a specter in society.

Keywords: Cross-cultural, Social Exclusion, *Van der Wijck*, Zainuddin.

1 Introduction

Social conflict is one of the phenomena that often occurs in social environments. How could it not be? Conflict is the background of human interaction as social beings in social space. Social conflict is also not something that happens by itself. Complex factors influence the occurrence of conflict, and one that is currently being hotly debated is the role of customs. A group's strength is greatly influenced by the customary laws that are fundamental to that group and inseparable from its identity. Differences in views between tribes on something are crucial in triggering social conflict.

One of the social conflicts influenced by customs that cannot escape the eyes and ears is social exclusion. According to Munck, social exclusion refers to any situation in which individuals are deprived of the essential resources and opportunities needed for a fulfilling life [1]. Therefore, it is not wrong if social exclusion is considered a bad

asset to the opportunities of a person or group that hinders the achievement of the need for a sense of belonging and social cohesion in the community environment.

Social exclusion refers to marginalization or neglect, where one individual or group discriminates against and isolates another individual or group within a social environment. Social exclusion reflects a lack of social cohesion and integration at the community level. At the individual level, it signifies the inability to participate in expected social activities and to form meaningful social relationships [2]. In summary, social exclusion is a form of breakdown in social ties, characterized by decreased participation, access, and solidarity both individually and communally.

Literary works reflect social reality and communicate pressing issues within the surrounding environment. A prime example is the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*, written by Prof. Dr. H. Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah, widely known by his pen name, Buya Hamka. This masterpiece explores numerous social conflicts, particularly the theme of social exclusion. As such, it will be the primary focus of this research.

This novel is set in the 1930s and explores the Minangkabau customs and social disparities that hinder a young man named Zainuddin from pursuing his dreams and love due to his cross-cultural background. Because Zainuddin's mother is from Makassar, he is marginalized in Minangkabau, which operates under a matrilineal kinship system. In examining the theme of social exclusion, the researcher focuses on Zainuddin's experiences as portrayed in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. The researcher also discusses the factors that contribute to this social exclusion.

In addition to this research, the researcher has identified several studies examining the same novel. Two of these studies are referenced in this research. While they focus on the same material, they address relatively different topics. This distinction highlights how the current research conducted by the researcher differs from previous studies.

The first study, conducted by Kadir and Thaba (2019), entitled "Rekonstruksi Nilai Budaya *Siri*' Masyarakat Makassar melalui Tokoh Zainuddin dalam Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck* karya Hamka Suatu Tinjauan Sosiologi Sastra" [3]. This study reveals that the concept of *siri*' is absolute and non-negotiable. When a person's self-esteem is threatened, they will not remain silent. According to Hamka, maintaining one's self-esteem is the highest moral obligation. Individuals may be willing to sacrifice anything, including their own lives, to uphold their *siri*'.

The second study conducted by Sari and Sumartini entitled "Hegemoni Kekuasaan Pemangku Adat Minangkabau dalam Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck* Karya Hamka: Kajian Hegemoni Gramsci" [4]. The results of this study are in the form of conscious and unconscious hegemony. There are four forms of conscious hegemony:

violence, oppression, coercion, and robbery. The form of unconscious hegemony is provocation.

Related to the two studies explained above, “Social Exclusion of Zainuddin's Character in the Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* by Buya Hamka” opens a new dimension in literary studies. Through this scholarly study, the researcher tried to expand the scope of the study with a new topic of discussion, namely social exclusion on the same material object, in this case, the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. Thus, this study provides a valuable contribution to understanding social exclusion as an impact of cross-cultural marriage, which is a specter in a society that holds tightly to customs and lineage.

2 Methods

This research is a type of qualitative research with a research method using a literary sociology approach. According to Damono, literary sociology is a discipline of literature that considers its societal aspects [5]. The primary data source of this research is Buya Hamka's novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. The secondary data sources were taken from several previous studies related to the research conducted. Then relevant literature sources became supporting references in this research.

The data collection technique in this research was carried out using the note-taking observation technique and conducted by carefully reading *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* which serves as the research object. Subsequently, dialogues or excerpts from the story were marked or noted, specifically those that highlight social exclusion against Zainuddin from the perspective of Erving Goffman. The research data were analyzed using the theory of fiction study theory (Burhan Nurgiyantoro, 2012) to analyze the novel's intrinsic elements. Intrinsic elements are the components that make up a work. In the novel, these elements directly contribute to the story [6]. Besides that, social stigma theory (Erving Goffman, 1963) is used to identify forms of social exclusion and the causes of its occurrence. Stigmatization leads to social exclusion through various mechanisms such as neglect, extermination, marginalization, and shaming [7]. This was done to identify social exclusion against Zainuddin. Based on this analysis, the study explored social exclusion against Zainuddin and investigated the causes of its occurrence. This descriptive qualitative study presents the data through narrative descriptions.

3 Result and Discussion

This section discussed the forms of social exclusion and the cause of its occurrence against Zainuddin in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck*. The analysis was carried out

concerning the theory of fiction study theory (Burhan Nurgiyantoro, 2013) and social stigma theory (Erving Goffman, 1963).

3.1 Forms of Social Exclusion

3.1.1 Humiliation

Humiliation occurs when someone is forced to realize their low position before others, further strengthening social exclusion [7]. Thus, it can be understood that this action is a form of insult or rejection of a person or group in a social environment. The following excerpt from the novel illustrates this.

Bukanlah kau sembarang orang, bukan tampan Zainuddin itu jodohmu. Orang yang begitu tak dapat menggantungkan hidupmu, pemenung, pehiba hati, dan kadang kadang panjang angan angan. Di zaman sekarang haruslah suami penumpakan hidup itu seorang yang tentu pencaharian, tentu asal usul. p.61[8]

In the context of Goffman's theory, the quote above reflects a form of social exclusion in the form of humiliating someone. Zainuddin was humiliated by Datuk Hayati because his mother is not a Minangkabau people. Zainuddin is considered an inappropriate (undesirable) individual because his social status and origins do not comply with the customary rules of the Minangkabau community. This act of public demotion forces Hayati to realize Zainuddin's position, which is considered low in the social hierarchy, simply because his mother is not of Minang descent. Goffman explains that this kind of humiliation gives rise to feelings of being unappreciated, worsens the individual's status, and strengthens the existing social stigma [7].

Ia diusir, perbuatannya dicela, namanya dibusukkan. Seakan akan tersuci benar negeri Minangkabau ini dari dosa. p.63[8]

The above story excerpt reflects the public humiliation that humiliates Zainuddin from the social community. According to Goffman, this exclusion aims to distance individuals from the broader social group, creating feelings of being unaccepted and excluded. This example illustrates how social stigma operates by assigning negative labels in Minangkabau society.

Overall, the two-story excerpts above illustrate the process of social exclusion closely related to Goffman's theory of stigma, where individuals are humiliated and forced to feel their social status is lowered in front of others. Zainuddin is labeled as an individual with an identity crisis because his mother is not of matrilineal Minangkabau blood.

3.1.2 Isolation

According to Goffman, stigmatized individuals often face social exclusion because they are perceived as having "spoiled identities". This stigmatization can result in exile, as these individuals are frequently shunned or removed from their communities [9]. This

perspective suggests that exile is a specific form of social exclusion. Those who experience exile are regarded as unworthy of acceptance in their surroundings.

Consequently, they may be isolated, marginalized, or expelled from their community, which exacerbates their feelings of alienation. An excerpt from a story in the novel can illustrate this dynamic. This can then be seen in the following excerpt from a novel story.

Jiwanya sendiri mulai merasa, bahwa meskipun dia anak orang Minangkabau tulen, dia masih dipandang orang pendatang, masih dipandang orang jauh, orang Bugis, orang Mengkasar. p.26 [8]

The story excerpt in the novel above describes Zainuddin's feelings of feeling "isolated" even though he comes from Minangkabau by saying that he is still seen as a "newcomer" by the Minangkabau community. In Goffman's perspective, this phenomenon reflects a spoiled identity, where an individual's social identity does not meet the norms or criteria accepted in society [9]. In this case, although culturally Zainuddin also comes from Minangkabau, social labels such as "Bugis" or "Makassar" position him as someone who is "different" and causes him to be seen as not on the same level and even shunned.

Seorang pun tidak ada tempat saya mengadu. Saya tidur di surau bersama sama teman. Mereka ketawa, bersenda gurau, tetapi bilamana kuhening kupikirkan, emas tidak juga dapat dicampurkan dalam Loyang, sutera tersisih dari benang. p.41[8]

The story excerpt above describes Zainuddin's painful social experience. He felt isolated and had no place to complain. It can be concluded that this phenomenon indicates a deep sense of alienation because the Minangkabau youth did not fully accept Zainuddin. Friends who "laughed, joked" with Zainuddin, but Zainuddin still felt isolated. It showed an unbridgeable social distance, even though he was physically close to them. Goffman suggests that experiences like this are a form of social exclusion, where stigmatized individuals no longer feel accepted in the majority community, no matter how hard they try [7].

The two-story excerpts above show how social stigma—based on origin or other social status—results in social exclusion. Individuals seen as "not in accordance" with social norms will feel alienated, shunned, and even removed from their community.

3.2 The Cause of Social Exclusion Occurrence

The stigmatization of the cross-cultural marriage between his Minangkabau father and his Bugis mother was the leading cause of social exclusion experienced by Zainuddin. These are two tribes with very strong and very contrasting customs and kinship systems. In the context of Minangkabau society, which highly upholds tradition and kinship,

differences in origin can be considered a factor that prevents someone from being fully accepted. This can be seen in the story excerpt in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* below.

Di Minangkabau, orang merasa malu kalau dia belum orang kampungnya sendiri. Berbini di rantau orang artinya hilang. p.9[8]

From the story excerpt above, it can be concluded that descendants from cross-cultural marriages, especially from mothers not of Minangkabau blood, are not considered part of the Minangkabau group. According to Goffman, in his stigma theory, a person's identity can be contaminated by specific labels or attributes inconsistent with existing social norms [9]. Although Zainuddin is of Minangkabau descent from his father, the Bugis blood from his mother that flows into Zainuddin's body is the main reason for social exclusion in the matrilineal Minangkabau society. This can be seen in the following story excerpt.

Malang nasib anak demikian, sebab dalam negeri ibunya ia dipandang orang asing, dan dalam negeri ayahnya dia dipandang orang asing pula. p.27[8]

Based on the quote above, if the Minangkabau kinship system is from the mother, then in Bugis Makassar, the lineage is from the father. In short, in Bugis Makassar land, Zainuddin is seen as a Minangkabau person, while in Minangkabau, he is seen as a Bugis Makassar person. The Minangkabau community, which highly values the importance of kinship unity and cultural conformity, tends to view Zainuddin as an “outsider” or “immigrant” who does not fully meet their social expectations. This causes Zainuddin to be isolated and unaccepted, even though he is part of the community. The existence of cultural differences in his family background makes him a victim of stigma, which leads to exclusion and alienation in his social environment [7].

4 Conclusion

This research aims to examine how Zainuddin in *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van der Wijck* against social exclusion and the cause of its occurrence. The research result has concluded that stigmatization as an impact of cross-cultural marriage between Zainuddin's parents is the main cause of social exclusion. Being between patrilineal and matrilineal cultures made Zainuddin seen as a stranger in his group, especially in both Makassar and Minangkabau.

Based on the findings, the researchers acknowledge several limitations and offer suggestions for future research. The focus on Zainuddin's experiences of social exclusion resulting from his parents' cross-cultural marriage may not fully represent the broader impact of such unions in different contexts. Future studies could explore the

experiences of other characters or individuals in similar cross-cultural marriages to offer a more nuanced understanding of social exclusion. Additionally, while this study addresses the cultural dynamics between Minangkabau and Bugis-Makassar heritage, it may not fully capture how these dynamics play out in other regions or within different social classes. Future research could examine how intersectional factors such as ethnicity, class, and gender influence the experience of social exclusion in cross-cultural marriages. Furthermore, a comparative study with other literary works or historical case studies could further enrich our understanding of how social exclusion manifests in cross-cultural relationships across different cultural contexts.

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