BETRAYAL OF CLOSEST FRIEND IN JAY ASHER’S NOVEL
“THIRTEEN REASONS WHY”

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ABSTRACT

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Background: One of the negative actions in human relationships is betrayal. It is not a new problem in human relationships. In this era, the phenomenon of betrayal often occurs around us. Betrayal can also occur in all types of human relationships i.e. marriage or romantic relationships, friendships, the world of work, etc.

Aim: This study discusses betrayal in the novel Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher. This study aims to reveal the types of friends' betrayal and to describe the impacts of protagonist's friends.

Method: The researcher uses Larson's theory (2021) which took about the types of betrayal and Reis and Spencer's theory (2009) about the impacts of betrayal. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to reveling the data. The data is originally taken from the Thirteen Reasons Why novel.

Findings: In this research found five data to reveal the type of betrayal and twelve data to describe the impacts of betrayal. The results of this study indicate that there are two types of betrayal received by Hannah, i.e., intimate partner betrayal and interpersonal betrayal. The researcher also found that the impact that Hannah as a betrayal of her friends received is a loss of trust, a loss of relationship/friendship, and a loss of self-esteem.

KEYWORDS

novel, betrayal, friends, trust

INTRODUCTION

Humans are social creatures and live on earth side by side. As social beings, human behavior in society is full of positive or negative actions (Biglan, 2015; Fiske, 2018). Therefore, humans cannot be far from others and have attachments to each other (Baumeister & Leary, 2017; Lewicka, 2011). For survival, humans must take positive actions and avoid those that are detrimental, inappropriate, and might hurt others. However, humans do not always take positive actions and negative actions are also inevitable (Ali & Mann, 2013; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005).

One of the negative actions in human relationships is betrayal. It is not a new problem in human relationships. Betrayal can occur in all types of human relationships i.e. marriage or romantic relationships, friendships, work, etc. (Chambers & Kravitz, 2011; Shackelford, 2014). Everyone has all betrayed or been betrayed and we have many words to describe it, an indication of its centrality (Schäfers, 2020). Betrayal not only consists of treachery toward the country but experiences of betrayal are often entangled in relations with family and friends (Desplat, 2022; Verwoerd, 2022). They will suffer the consequences of the traitor's acts, sometimes in practical ways and sometimes by the experience of having been left out (Akerstrom, 2017; Kim & Shin, 2022).
The author chose the novel by Jay Asher *Thirteen Reasons Why*. This novel is a young adult fiction genre and was published in 2007. *Thirteen Reasons Why* is a novel that contains the betrayal of friends. This novel tells the story of Hannah Baker, a high school student who has a sad and tragic life story. She experiences acts of bullying from her friends. Consequently, she decides to commit suicide. However, before she ends her life, Hannah makes seven cassettes containing voice recordings. The voice recording contains thirteen reasons why she decides to end her life. It is sent to her friends whom she feels have contributed to her suicide decision. The recording, reveals the evidence that is the reason for Hanna's suicide, and the evidence shows betrayal, harassment, and bullying, which happens to Hannah.

A research by Pane and Suhendi (2023) discusses the protagonist’s friends’ betrayal in the novel “Thirteen Reasons Why” by Jay Asher. The study aims to reveal the types of betrayal of the protagonist’s friends and to describe the impacts of the protagonist’s friends’ betrayal. It is found that there are two types of betrayal received by Hannah, i.e., intimate partner betrayal and interpersonal betrayal. It is also found that the impacts Hannah received as a result of the betrayal of her friends are loss of trust, loss of relationship/friendship, loss of sense of security, and loss of self-esteem. However, the research did not specifically state the research design used.

There are three reasons why this topic was interesting to investigate and discuss. First, this novel contains problems that occur in teenagers, such as bullying, depression, romance, etc. Second, the betrayal theme in this novel is related to the writer’s life. Third, this novel contains beneficial moral values. Hence, with the research, the author hopes that it can contribute to the knowledge of problems related to betrayal problems in real life.

**METHOD**

The author used descriptive qualitative method as research design through qualitative approach. The researcher used documentation as the data collection technique since the data were collected from mainly the novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* and other documents such as books and articles. For data analysis technique, the researcher used Miles and Huberman (2014) technique which includes data reduction, data display, and concluding.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Intimate Partner Betrayal**

In psychologically intimate relationships, strong commitments and bonds are formed. The bond that is owned will explain that the partner will be understood, valued, and accepted unconditionally. However, betrayal by an intimate partner violates core human wants and needs. This kind of betrayal occurs when a partner lies, cheats, chronically criticizes, blocks, yells at, or abuses. The intimate partner betrayal of the protagonist, Hannah, will be proven through the data below.

“No. A rumor based on a kiss ruined a memory that I hoped would be special. A rumor based on a kiss started a reputation that other people believed in and reacted to. And sometimes, a rumor based on a kiss has a snowball effect.

A rumor, based on a kiss, is just the beginning. And Justin, honey, stick around. You’re not going to believe where your name pops up next.” (Asher, 2016: 30-31)
The quotation above shows the lies and slander done by Justin against Hannah. Justin and Hannah can be said to be lovers, they are attracted to and like each other. One night, they make an appointment in a park, where they kiss and hug. Justin wants more than a kiss, but Hannah refuses him. That is it and they are both back home. However, then their relationship is strained and Justin starts spreading negative rumors about Hannah. Just because of a kiss can give rise to rumors that impact Hannah’s life.

**Interpersonal Betrayal**

Interpersonal betrayal refers to the breach of trust from someone known and close. Interpersonal betrayal occurs when you are betrayed by a friend for the sake of another friend or when your friend does not defend you when there is a fight with other people. In the novel, Hannah is betrayed by her school friends. They slander, bully, use, and abuse Hannah. The interpersonal betrayal of the protagonist, Hannah, will be proven through the data below.

“Okay. I just looked over every name—every story—that completes these tapes. And guess what. Every single event documented here may never have happened had you, Alex, not written my name on that list. It’s that simple.

So, to back up a bit, this tape isn’t about why you did what you did, Alex. It’s about the repercussions of what you did. More specifically, it’s about the repercussions to me. It’s about those things you didn’t plan—things you couldn’t plan.” (Asher, 2016: 41-42)

The data above shows the betrayal done by Alex Standall, namely slander. Justin and Alex committed the same betrayal, namely spreading negative rumors and slander about Hannah. Alex, who is consumed by Justin's slander, then made a “Worst Ass in the Freshman Class” list. He put Jessica's name as the worst, which is completely contrary to reality because Jessica is very pretty, and put Hannah's name as the best. Alex does not know that his actions impact much trouble to Hannah. One of the impacts is people always judge Hannah by her body. Furthermore, interpersonal betrayal is done by Tyler. This can be proven through the data below.

“And I feel a little creepy telling it, too. Why? Because I’m trying to get closer to you, Tyler. I’m trying to understand the excitement of staring through someone’s bedroom window. Watching someone who doesn’t know they’re being watched. Trying to catch them in the act of…

What were you trying to catch me in the act of, Tyler? And were you disappointed? Or pleasantly surprised?

Okay, a show of hands, please. Who knows where I am?” (Asher, 2016: 75)

The quotation above shows the betrayal done by Tyler, i.e. stalking and photographing without Hannah’s permission. Previously, Hannah supposes that Tyler is a good friend, even though they are not close. However, she is wrong because he secretly does bad things behind Hannah. He takes a picture of Hannah through the open window of her room on the second floor. She shudders and wonders why Tyler does this. However, she concludes that people became interested in her (in a bad way) because of the list made by Alex.
The Impacts of Betrayal of Protagonists Friends

Loss of Trust

Trust is a person's hope and belief in others about honesty, kindness, and loyalty. In a relationship, whether in a love relationship or friendship, trust is absolute. With trust, we can imagine a future together, can depend on, and can follow the decisions and beliefs of the trusted person. However, belief is an attitude, so it is not always true nor is it a guarantee of truth. Sometimes trust will be destroyed because of an attitude against the truth such as betrayal. The victim will definitely lose trust in the traitor. The impact that is usually shown by the victim are difficulty trusting new relationships or people, always questioning his decisions, depression, shaking, etc. These impacts are also shown by Hannah Baker in the novel *Thirteen Reasons Why* by Jay Asher, and this will be analyzed in detail through the explanation below.

“I pretended not to notice him. Not because I had anything against him, but because my heart and my trust were in the process of collapsing. And that collapse created a vacuum in my chest. Like every nerve in my body was withering in, pulling away from my fingers and toes. Pulling back and disappearing.

I sat. And I thought. And the more I thought, connecting the events in my life, the more my heart collapse.” (Asher, 2016: 159-160)

The data above shows that the impact that Hannah feel as a result of betrayal is difficult to trust new people. This is shown through Hannah's attitude that ignores Zach who is sitting in front of her. It's not that she is not interested, but she thinks that Zach just wants to seduce her. The data above also reveals that loss of trust can result in depression. Depression means feeling helpless and unable to think and act logically. This characteristic shows when Hannah feels her life and trust have been shattered. Also, she feels that the reality and conditions of his life cannot be changed, so she feels sadness and emptiness. The emptiness and pain she feels are the manifestations of a powerless mind.

Loss of Relationship/Friendship

A relationship, whether romantic or friendship can end for various reasons. One reason is betrayal. It can be one of the most difficult phases in a person's life, because of the many precious moments and memories that have been passed. However, because of betrayal, the relationship will end in separation. When betrayal occurs, it can be difficult to continue the friendship. Even though it can be forgiven, betrayal will be difficult to forget and the pain will still make an impression. In line with the explanation above, Hannah is betrayed by her friend. Loss of relationship/friendship gives several impacts on Hannah. The impacts will be explained further through the data below.


No return engagements. No encore. And this time, absolutely no requests.

I hope you're ready, because I'm about to tell you the story of my life. More specifically, why my life ended. And if you're listening to these tapes, you're one of the reasons why.

I did make copy of these tapes. Those copies will be released in a very public manner if this package doesn’t make it through all of you.” (Asher, 2016: 7)
The data above shows the revenge that Hannah does to her friends. She does this by making a tape record containing thirteen reasons why she committed suicide. It tells how, why, and her friends betray her, and everything is explained in detail in it. The explanation above of course refers to one of the characteristics of loss of relationship/friendship, namely the desire to revenge. The anger that Hannah feels culminates in revenge and she wants to assert that they would reap what they sowed. She also wants her friends to know that their betrayal has a big impact on her. The tape recorder will also backfire on them. The explanations above confirm that betrayal can turn friends into enemies.

**Loss of Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem is defined as how much a person appreciates, respects, and likes himself regardless of the conditions experienced. Assessment of self-esteem can affect behavior and beliefs in life. Loss of self-esteem means loss of trust and value. The results are decreased self-esteem, experiences of stress, anxiety, and depression.

**CONCLUSION**

There are two sorts of betrayal in Thirteen Reasons Why, according to an analysis of the closest friends. They are interpersonal and treachery between intimate partners. When Justin Fooley betrays Hannah by making false accusations against him, it is an example of intimate relationship betrayal. When Hannah's friends betrayed her in different ways, interpersonal betrayal was evident. The Who's Hot/Not Who's list founder Alex Standal is one of her friends. The list creates a bad reputation for Hannah and allows others to objectify her, b) Tyler Down, who stalks Hannah and takes her photos without her consent, and c) Courtney Crimsen, who uses Hannah for her "angelic" reputation and befriends her, and there are repercussions of betrayal in Thirteen Reasons Why. The narrative touches on issues like loss of faith, loss of trust, and self-esteem.

Three findings demonstrate the effect of betrayal by friends on the loss of trust. She finds it challenging to trust others since her trust has been betrayed, she finds it challenging to start dating Clay Jensen, the boy she likes, and she struggles with depression as a result of disappointment, which is so terrible that it haunts her continuously. Three findings illustrate the loss of a relationship or friendship: (a) Hannah's desire for vengeance, which led her to record a tape detailing her friends' betrayal; (b) Jessica and Hannah's loss of friendship as a result of Alex's pitting them against one another; and (c) Hannah's loss of respect for Courtney repeatedly. Self-esteem loss is

**REFERENCES**


Betrayal of Closest Friend in Jay Asher’s Novel “Thirteen Reasons Why”


