

Analysis of SMAN 5 Puspanegara's Perception of the Issue of Cyberbullying in the Movie Cyberbully

Muhammad Iqbaal Fadhlurrohman^{1*}, Iman Sumarlan²

^{1,2} Communication Science, Ahmad Dahlan University, 55191, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author's Email: iqbaalfadhlurrohman38@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Keywords

Cyberbullying
Audience Reception
Cyberbully Movie
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This study aims to determine the perception of SMAN 5 Puspanegara students towards the issue of cyberbullying shown in the movie Cyberbully. A descriptive qualitative approach was used in this study by interviewing five students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara as key informants. The interview results showed diverse interpretations among informants despite watching the same movie. The reception of bullying scenes is influenced by personal experiences of being a victim or witness of bullying. Informants who have been victims tend to feel satisfied to see the perpetrators punished. In addition, informants realize that verbal bullying has a broader impact than physical because it affects mentally. Based on Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding theory, the five informants were grouped into three reception categories. The implication is that social experience is important in understanding audience reception and the movie plays a role in raising awareness of the impact of cyberbullying. In conclusion, the meaning of the scene is very subjective but the movie helps raise awareness of the dangers of cyberbullying.

1. Introduction

When the author submits the manuscript, the editor wants to see that the author has provided a The background of the problem raised in this research proposal is the increasing cases of bullying both physically and in cyberspace called cyberbullying (Le Menestrel, 2020). Bullying does not only occur in certain circles but also penetrates into artists / celebrities. Bullying cases that have occurred in recent times have increasingly shown an increase in the number of victims. For example, there was a case where a group of junior high school teenagers bullied their younger siblings until they had to be hospitalized because they were unconscious. Another case also happened to a female student who was stabbed in the eye by her friend for the reason of "joking".

The act of bullying is also indiscriminate, not only happening to the lower classes or those who are less fortunate, but also to famous and successful artists in various fields of entertainment (ZAKIYAH et al., 2017). For example, Korean idol artist Jang Geun-Suk was bullied because he gained weight. Also Japanese idol artist Maria Hamasaki who committed suicide allegedly due to being threatened and bullied by her fans just for not wearing a mask during the pandemic. The impact of bullying behavior is also very detrimental to the victim, it can even threaten the victim's life as experienced by Maria Hamasaki (Amnda et al., 2020) (Hindura & Patchin, 2010).

Looking at the various cases, it is clear that bullying will increase and spread if it is not addressed immediately. Therefore, researchers consider it necessary to further examine this issue, especially related to public perceptions of bullying which has also spread to virtual space or cyberbullying. To that end, the researcher first conducted a review of relevant studies.

Some previous studies referenced include a study entitled "Analysis of Parents' Receptions of Bullying Elements in the Doraemon Animation Series on RCTI" by Miftaql Listiyorini in 2019. This study examines how parents view the bullying elements in the Doraemon cartoon. Another study

entitled “Bullying in Korean Drama (Reception Analysis in Korean Drama True Beauty)” by Rivga Agusta and Elvira Wahyuni in 2020. This study analyzes the audience's reception of bullying in the Korean drama True Beauty. Finally, the research “Student Interpretation of Bullying in Korean Drama My ID is Gangnam Beauty” by Lavia Salsa Bella, Gushevinalti, and Verani Indiarma in 2023, which examines the meaning of bullying actions in the drama for students.

Some similarities between this study and previous studies are that both use film or drama media as the object of research to examine audience perceptions of bullying behavior. The difference lies in the research subject, where this study makes high school teenagers as respondents. While previous studies took parents, students, or teenagers in general as research subjects.

In conducting an assessment of students' perceptions of the issue of cyberbullying, the researcher utilizes the theoretical framework of representation and reception. Representation theory according to Stuart Hall focuses on how various social groups represent and frame meaning through language, including images, sounds, and texts (Alamsyah, 2020). Meanwhile, reception theory according to (Stuart Hall, 1973) states that there are three reception positions, namely dominant, negotiation, and opposition (Tan & Alfrin Aladdin, 2018). This theory is used to analyze the reception positions that students take towards the representation of bullying in the film.

Stuart Hall's reception theory divides audiences into three categories based on how they receive messages: dominant, negotiated, and oppositional. This theory emphasizes that the meaning sent by the sender (encoder) can be interpreted differently by the receiver (decoder) based on their social and cultural context. The three reception positions are dominant, negotiated, and oppositional. The dominant position occurs when the sender uses generally accepted codes, so the receiver interprets and reads the message with generally accepted meanings. The negotiation position occurs when the sender uses codes that are not generally accepted, so the receiver interprets and reads the message with a different meaning. An oppositional position occurs when the sender uses codes that contradict the recipient's culture and values, so that the recipient interprets and reads the message with different and contradictory meanings (Putra, 2022).

Based on the description above, the problem formulation proposed by the researcher is “How is the perception of SMAN 5 Puspanegara students on the issue of cyber bullying in the movie cyberbully?”. The proposed target audience is the students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara in Yogyakarta. The reason for choosing the students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara is because they are considered capable of understanding the problems that the researcher proposed based on the biography and achievements of the school.

The purpose of this research is to find out the students' views on bullying after watching the movie Cyberbully, whether there are solutions or general opinions that can be taken from the results of this research. The expected academic and practical benefits are that it can add to the research references related to bullying, and provide references for further research.

2. Method

The research method to be used is a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive qualitative research method is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of words. This research departs from data and uses theory as explanatory material. Data is obtained from various sources and various data collection techniques. Qualitative data analysis is inductive, which is based on the data obtained, and certain relationship patterns are developed. Research instruments include observation, interviews, and documentation. Research subjects are informants who provide information about the situation and conditions of the research setting (Ruhansih, 2017).

Qualitative research aims to get a holistic picture of students' perceptions of cyberbullying issues depicted in the movie Cyberbully. Data was collected naturally at the research location without measuring numbers. The data collection technique used in-depth interviews with 5 students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara as key informants.

The interviews were conducted in closed session to get honest answers from the informants. The questions asked revolved around the informants' perceptions and meanings of the bullying scenes in

the movie and their implications. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to observe the data in depth.

Data analysis uses reducing data, displaying data, and conclusion drawing. The data reduction process was carried out by selecting, focusing, simplifying data from interviews and field notes. Data display is done by making narratives and quotes to illustrate meaning. Conclusions were drawn by linking the results of the reduction and display with reference to Stuart Hall's reception theory.

The research subjects were 5 grade 3 students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara with the criteria of having watched the movie *Cyberbully*. Generalization of the results is limited to the research subjects, not representing all students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara. This research is expected to be able to understand students' reception of the issue of cyberbullying through movie media.

3. Result and Discussion

Analysis of the Discussion of Interview Data on the Meanings of Teenage Audiences of SMAN 5 Puspanegara towards Cyberbullying Scenes in the Film *Cyberbully*/ In today's digital era, the phenomenon of cyberbullying has become an increasingly important issue to discuss, especially among teenagers who are highly connected to technology and social media. The movie *Cyberbully*, released in 2015, is one of the media that illustrates the complexity and impact of cyberbullying. To understand how the scenes in this movie are received and interpreted by teenage audiences, especially students of SMAN 5 Puspanegara, researchers conducted in-depth interviews with five informants. The results of these interviews provide deep insights into how teenagers interpret acts of bullying in a digital context, as well as the broader implications of their understanding of this phenomenon.

3.1. Presenting the Results

1. Response to Cyberbullying Scenes in the Movie *Cyberbully*

One aspect that stands out from the interview results is how each informant has a unique interpretation and response to the cyberbullying scenes shown in the movie. One informant was satisfied to see Casey's character receive the consequences of her actions. He stated, "When I saw what Casey went through, I felt satisfied/grateful, because everything that is done will have consequences and the consequences are what you sow is what you reap." This response reflects the belief that every action has repercussions and rewards, and illustrates the sense of justice felt by this informant.

Another informant highlighted the difference in impact between verbal and physical bullying. "Verbal bullying, especially in cyberspace, I think has more impact than physical bullying," Said one informant. This statement shows an understanding that verbal bullying, especially in the digital realm, can have a more profound effect on a person mentally and emotionally compared to physical bullying. This is reinforced by the view that a person's center of control is their mental state, which is a key factor in determining psychological well-being.

Another informant emphasized the severity of the bullying depicted in the film, stating that the bullying in the film was so severe that it drove the victim to commit suicide. "I think the severity of the bullying in the movie is very severe because it makes the victim commit suicide," he said. This view shows awareness of the extreme consequences of bullying and its life-threatening impact.

2. Interpretation and Reception of Bullying Scenes

At the time of the bullying scene, the five interviewees had almost similar receptions, but still based on their respective experiences. They perceived the cyberbullying scene in the movie *Cyberbully* in a way that reflected their personal experiences as victims or observers of bullying. One of the informants agreed with the hacker's actions in the movie that called Casey a bully. "I agree with the scene where the hacker says that Casey is a bully too," said the informant. In this case, the informant understood that Casey's actions, even if done under the pretext of joking, still fall under the category of bullying.

One informant highlighted the dangers of verbal bullying compared to physical bullying, stating that the impact is more direct on the victim's mental state. "Verbal bullying is more dangerous than physical bullying because it directly affects the mentality," he said. This view reflects a deeper

understanding of how words and actions online can damage a person's mental well-being, which is the center of human control to stay sane and survive.

3. Impact and Causes of Bullying

The impact of cyberbullying, as explained by one informant, is horrific as it can cause victims to hurt and destroy themselves without the need for physical interaction. "Cyberbully starts as a verbal bully which is then upgraded to a more dangerous version with the help of technology," the informant said. This shows an understanding that technology can exacerbate the impact of bullying, making it more difficult to address and identify the perpetrators.

When asked about the reasons for bullying, all five informants agreed that bullies have no particular reason other than personal enjoyment. "Bullies don't have a specific reason to bully someone because all they think about is having fun," said one informant. This view reflects the understanding that bullying is often done without consideration of the impact on the victim, showing a lack of empathy and understanding of a person's mental fragility.

4. Feelings after watching the movie "Cyberbully"

Four out of five informants felt satisfaction after watching the movie *Cyberbully*, especially because they had experienced bullying and saw the perpetrators get their comeuppance. "What I feel after watching the movie *Cyberbully* is quite happy because I myself am a person who has been bullied," said one of the informants. This view shows how personal experience can influence the reception of scenes in the movie, providing a sense of justice and satisfaction when seeing the perpetrator receive the consequences of his actions."

From the interview with one of the informants, it was found that he felt happy after watching the movie *Cyberbully*. In his statement, the informant stated that he had been a victim of bullying in the past. This personal experience of being a victim of bullying apparently influenced his reactions and receptions to the scenes in the movie *Cyberbully*. Having directly experienced being a victim of bullying, the informant felt that he could better understand the position of the victim faced in the movie. This led to feelings of sympathy for the victim character in the story. In addition, when watching the scene of the bullying perpetrator in the movie receiving consequences or punishment for his actions, the informant felt that he found a sense of justice. This feeling of justice arose because the informant could see the bully being treated the same as he had experienced as a victim in the past. Seeing the perpetrator punished according to his actions gave the informant a sense of satisfaction and relief. His personal experience of being a victim played a big role in influencing the way the informant received and read the meaning of the scenes presented in the movie *Cyberbully*. This shows how a person's background can affect the reception of a work of art such as a movie.

One interviewee gave a more neutral response despite having experienced both verbal and physical bullying. This shows that despite similar experiences, responses to bullying scenes in movies can vary depending on the perspective and the way individuals process their experiences.

3.2. Create a Discussion

In this study, the researcher used Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding theory to analyze the audience's reception of bullying scenes in the film *Cyberbully*. This theory divides audiences into three categories based on how they receive messages: hegemonic dominant position, negotiated position, and oppositional position. (1) Hegemonic Dominant Position: In this category, the audience accepts the messages delivered by the media uncritically. The three informants in this study fall into this category, they understand and accept the message in the movie *Cyberbully* by agreeing that Casey's actions are a form of bullying that deserves consequences. (2) Negotiated Position: In this category, viewers accept some of the messages but reject others according to their personal experience and context. One informant in this study falls into this category, accepting the general message that bullying is wrong, but having exceptions in its application based on their personal background and experiences. (3) Oppositional Position: In this category, the audience rejects the message conveyed by the media and replaces it with their own interpretation. One informant in this study falls into this category, rejecting the message in the movie *Cyberbully* and using their personal experience to oppose the meaning conveyed by the movie.

This research shows that the reception of bullying scenes in the movie *Cyberbully* is strongly influenced by the personal experience and background of each audience member. Experiences as

victims or observers of bullying shape the way they understand and interpret the actions depicted in the movie. This reinforces the idea that media is not always passively received by the audience, but is processed and interpreted according to the social and individual context. In addition, this research also underscores the importance of awareness of the impact of bullying, especially online, which can have serious consequences on the mental and emotional health of victims. The view that verbal bullying can be more harmful than physical bullying points to the need for a more holistic approach in addressing this issue, including education on empathy and the negative impact of bullying actions.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of interviews with five students of SMAN5 Puspanegara who watched the movie *Cyberbully*, several conclusions were obtained regarding their reception and interpretation of the cyberbullying scenes shown in the movie. First, each informant gave different interpretations despite watching the same movie. This shows that audiences do not receive messages passively, but rather process them based on their own perspectives and life experiences. Second, the reception of bullying scenes is greatly influenced by the background of personal experience of being a victim or witness of bullying. Informants who have been victims tend to feel satisfied with the retribution received by the perpetrator in the movie. Third, there is a deep understanding that verbal or digital bullying has a wider and deeper impact than physical bullying. This is based on the idea that human mentality and emotions are more vulnerable to the influence of the digital environment.

From the perspective of Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding theory, these five informants can be classified into three audience reception categories, namely hegemonic dominant position, negotiated position, and oppositional position. Three people were included in the hegemonic category because they accepted the movie's message without criticism. One person was in the negotiated category because they accepted some parts but rejected others based on experience. The remaining one was in the oppositional position because he totally rejected the movie's message and replaced it with a personal point of view.

The implication that can be drawn from the results of this interview is the importance of including elements of social experience in understanding audience reception of a medium. The message conveyed through the movie cannot be separated from the social context of each individual's perception. The relevance of personal experience to the topic discussed was found to have a strong influence in interpreting the story plot and characters displayed. This is based on the understanding that humans will tend to perceive new information through the lens of experience and preconceived views.

In addition, the results of these interviews underscore the importance of awareness of the long-term impact of bullying, especially in cyberspace, on the psyches of victims. Verbal and digital bullying can more easily hurt the self-esteem and mentality of its targets when compared to physical bullying. It is this mental factor that determines the level of health and quality of human life. Therefore, the prevention and handling of bullying needs to emphasize the psychological aspects through empathy education, empowerment of victims, and firm and proportional prosecution of perpetrators.

For the final conclusion, this interview shows that the meaning of cyberbullying scenes in movies is very subjective and influenced by each individual's point of view influenced by life experiences. However, in general, teenage audiences can understand the problematic side and long-term implications of bullying in the digital and real world. The movie "*Cyberbully*" plays a role in raising awareness of the dangers as well as solutions to prevent and handle cyberbullying problems, although the messages captured by each audience will vary.

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