

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Studies

Human do their best to survive, whether to survive with their physic life or their mental life. Human tried to get what they want in life to survive and if they cannot do that they tend to run away from the pain from not getting what they want it. The principle of escape should not be used properly and does not pose any problems. If a situation is unsatisfactory, it is common and reasonable for people to avoid it and seek to do so by any means available to them. (Burke, 1984) The act of runaway in human life can be view in escapism theory. Escapism theory is a theory about evasion from the negative aspects of life. Boredom, unpleasant, and scary are some of the examples of these negative aspects. Escapism also can be called as actions by people to relieve their sorrow or depression. The term "escapism," which originated in the post-World War I, is the result of a Great Depression in the United States where people tried to escape the great misery that smashed their lives. The Americans tried to escape or get their way out of the problem despite this depression. They want to forget their depression and their harsh reality in their daily life. People choose to escape from this negative aspect of life. They entertained themselves by enjoying magazines, radio or music and also films, which these actions were later referred to as the escapist phenomenon. (Brinkley, 1998). An escapist may either be a person avoiding recidivism or, as in this case, a person indulgent in an emotional diversion mental by enjoying

themselves or other kinds of leisure activities to avoid or to escape from what is perceived as an inappropriate or undesirable truth. (Konzack, 2017)

The human decision to get away from their reality life is a choice. Everything that human do is a choice and that choice defines Human itself. (Jean Paul Sartre, 1946) In other words, Escapism is also a choice made by human to define them and to show how they were existence in life and this decision that human made is called Existentialism.

However, society created by human also have created rule to restrict their action and not contradicting the society. This rule is called Superego (Sigmund Freud, 1894, 1896). The contradiction of Human need and the rule itself have to be stabilized by Human itself, and this is called Defence Mechanism. (Sigmund Freud, 1894, 1896)

Escapism perspective can be seen in Cormac McCarthy's crime drama novel *No Country for Old Men* (2005). This novel tells us about three main characters, a veteran Sheriff Ed Tom Bell, a deer hunter who found a briefcase full of money Llewellyn Moss, and a psychopath bounty hunter Anton Chigurh. The main story of this novel is about escaping negative aspects in these three main characters, whether is about their escaping from their poor life, their ageing masculinity life and tried to keep up with merciless society.

This novel was adapted into a film by Coen Brothers in 2007 and starred by Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, and Josh Brolin. The film itself won four major awards at 80th Academy Awards, including Best Adapted Screenplay, Best

Supporting Actor for Bardem, Best Director, and Best Picture. (cornacmccarthy.com). The set of this novel is in the 1980s in Mexico-United States border and told the story of a gruesome illegal drug deal and merciless people who involved with it.

Escapism has been explored by many researchers around the world, *Escapism in the Novels of Elizabeth Von Arnim "The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen" and "the Enchanted April"* by Maria E. Samuilova (2015) is one of the examples of this focus being used in research. Samuilova used Escapism to highlight how the character Elizabeth from the novel finding her harmony in her life. Samuilova also finds how the author of the novel used this character as her escape in her real life.

Nensia also has been analysed a corpus using Escapism as the focus which named *"Escapism as Reflected in Tennessee William's The Glass Menagerie"* (2018). In this article journal, Nensia describes how the characters from this stage play by Tennessee William titled *"The Glass Menagerie"* got accustomed with escapism and how a character adapted with escapism in their daily life. Nensia used psychoanalytical of Sigmund Freud's of defence mechanism, problem-solving, and personality structure from anxiety theory.

Swati Chauhan also used Escapism in *"Tendency of Escapism in the Poetry of Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley and Coleridge: A Critical Study"* (2019). Chauhan aimed her paper to justify a strong relation between English Romantic Poetry of 19th century and the tendency of Escapism. She used an in-depth

analysis of how poetry by Keats, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Coleridge have the Escapist tendency in their work. Chauhan examined every word that is used in the poetry itself to determine the tendency of Escapism.

In order to company the escapism theory in this novel the writer will also use Existentialism in this research. Existentialism also has been explored by many researchers around the world such as “Rebellion against Authority as the Essence of Existentialism in Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*” (2015) by Yoan Nurbudhiati. Yoan used Existentialism to find out how rebellion conflict in *To Kill a Mockingbird* portrays the search of existentialism in the main character.

Another study such as “Existentialism in Upamanyu Chatterjee’s Novel ‘English August’” by Shivani Verma, Maa Gayatri Mahavidyalaya, Khamhaul, & Lakhimpur Kheri also talked about Existentialism. In their study, Existentialism is being used to analyse the main character “Agastya” and how he tried to prove himself as an I.A.S officer in the story.

Many previous studies have been exploring this novel such as "*No Country for Old Men: a search for masculinity in later life*" (2012) by Benjamin Saxton & Thomas R. Cole that explored the masculinity of the character Sheriff Ed Tom Bell that wore off over his ageing life. Saxton and Cole used other characters who have similar traits with Sheriff Ed Tom Bell to support their studies such as characters in *The Lone Ranger* and *Indiana Jones*.

Seyed Mohamma Marandi, Hossein Fathi Pishosta, and Zeinab Ghasemi Tari also have been analysed this novel with their article journal "*Frontierman's*

Identity in Cormac McCarthy's No Country for Old Men: A Contrapuntal Reading" (2018). In this journal article, Marandi, Pishosta, and Tari used the contrapuntal reading to analyse how Cormac McCarthy's portrayed Sheriff Ed Tom Bell, a nostalgic character who tried to survive the cruel some world.

Neoliberalism, Anthropology, and Human Possibilities in No Country for Old Men by Jonathan Elmore and Rick Elmore (2016) is also talked about this Cormac McCarthy's novel. In this article journal, Jonathan and Rick found Neoliberalism, Anthropology, and Human Possibilities in the character of Anton Chigurh the main antagonist in this novel.

From the explanation above, none of the previous studies explored escapism in *No Country for Old Men*, therefore writer will propose the how the main characters from free themselves from their real life reality and with existentialism to find the reason or purpose of this character do escapism in *No Country for Old Men*. The writer will use the narratives and the utterances of the main characters with Escapism, Existentialism and Defence Mechanism approach to determine how the main characters free themselves from their real life reality and how do the main characters embrace the reality existence in their real life nothingness.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background above, the writer proposes these following questions:

1. How do the main characters of *No Country for Old Men* free themselves from their real life reality?

2. How do the main characters embrace the reality existence in their real life nothingness?

1.3 Purpose of the Studies

Based on the question above, here are the purposes of this study:

1. To find out how do the main characters of No Country for Old Men free themselves from their real life reality.
2. To find out how do the main characters embrace the reality existence in their real life nothingness.

1.4 Significant of the Studies

Based on the background and the objective of this study the result of this research will be beneficial towards the following:

1. The study findings will provide information about how to use escapism and existentialism to analyse characters in novels.
2. The study may be useful to readers to easily determine how the character's behaviour in facing the escapism and their search for existentialism.