

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This part will discuss studies of related literature and theoretical framework of the research. Related literature in research function as reference and theory studies. Furthermore, theoretical framework functions as the workflow of how theories can be applied to the research. This research contains existentialism approach, existentialism discourses, and freedom in existentialism as the theories. In addition to that, previous studies are also mentioned in order to maintain novelty of this research.

2.1 Existentialism Approach

Philosophy is reflection of concepts that make sense of how experience led human through life and beyond. With it interpreting human experience, further leads it to meaning of human existence, hence the birth of Existentialism. Existentialism is essentially philosophy attained by philosopher in the early nineteenth century. Soren Kierkegaard is said to be the pioneer who held light to existence of existentialism. Jean Paul Sartre comes in hand to provide his philosophy and theory in existentialism. The work of existentialism then has become a collective works of philosophers that comes from different point of view.

Existentialism is said to be a study of existence, in how oneself tries to find a meaning in this meaningless life. The philosophy attained by philosophers further discusses more in what efforts a man will makes in order to make meaning in his

life. As Panza & Gale (2008) mentioned, existentialism is a study of existence and to exist. They argued that this study is induced by human desire in finding meaning when they lost in the thought of meaningless life.

As mentioned before, each of philosophers has tried to make their own insight on existentialism throughout their works. Each has different opinion and perspective, which can further cause difficulties in understanding it. Even so, there is a middle line where philosophers agree regarding the meaning of existentialism. Jean-Paul Sartre in (Setyaningrum et al., 2020) characterised existentialism as a moral philosophy that put freedom as the core of the human existence as its fundamental value and prioritise it above all value. This means with the realisation of human absurdity; it lets human to have a conscious freedom which to be uphold highly as the main source of being exist.

Sartre in Sunarso (2010) mentioned existentialism as a study on what makes human existence possible. Existentialism is also a study that affirms that every truth and action contain scope and subjectivity of human. And lastly stated that existence comes before essence. This means, existentialism focuses on human studies and affirms existential problems encountered by human such as anxiety, alienation, and freedom.

Suyitno in Wirahadi (2008) pointed that existentialism is a philosophy that emerged in response to the modern life. The modernisation that brought problems such as nothingness and despair which believed to be solvable with individual's freedom. As human has the mind of acting and thinking of what is more preferable as the solution to anything.

With the general outline of existentialism as study of human existence and its relation to freedom, it can be said this study is used to clarify human existence struggles that found in individual or caused by the modernisation of life. However, existence is not complete as argued by Lacey in Wirahadi (2008) that men develop their essence in continuous form and not based on what essence they have determined with. The act of thinking and acting further let human to his ultimate belief of freedom. Hence, the existentialism and freedom is much related.

2.1.1 Existentialism Discourses

The collection of study in existentialism discourse has many different aspects to focus on. There are several elements of existentialism discourse mentioned in Bigelow's (1961) journal. Bigelow (1961) took the elements from several philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Soren Kierkegaard where the agreement of aspects is met. He mentioned in his book that the variation of -ism is reckless.

In Bigelow's (1961) journal, he divided existentialist philosophies into two categories which are theistic and atheistic behaviour in facing existentialism. The theist believed in the existence of God who created essence and human existence. This idea presents that human lives are predetermined by the creator, God. The theory presented by the theist philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard; human existence phase where there are aesthetic phase, ethic phase, and religion phase. The atheist philosophers however, believed the existence of God would harm the human freedom, as the ultimatum of God will restrict the journey to find human existence meaning. Due to the many theories available, Bigelow (1961) found the particular agreed aspect of Existentialism discourse.

2.1.1.1 Existence Precedes Essence

Sartre (2012) *existence precedes essence*”, becomes the pillar of many existentialisms discourse. What Sartre proposed was, in every existence, the essence comes after and subjectivity is the starting point. Panza and Gale in (Aminatuzhriyyah et al., 2016) mentioned that subjective is caring more towards oneself. Sartre argued:

“First of all, man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and, only afterwards, defines himself. If man, as the existentialist conceives him, is indefinable, it is because at first he is nothing. Only afterward will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be.” (Sartre, 2012, p. 3)

Along the lines argued by Sartre, it can be said that a man was born to exist rather than born with predetermined essence –on what he will be. A man will go along a journey where he finds the meaning he would strive for. His existence would be nothing but with the essence found made by himself will then determine his existence further.

A man existence can be defined into two particular sides, which are inside and outside. Where inside a man is defined by his own view towards the world and the never-ending experience in finding meaning. Whereas from the outside, a man is just a normal being. This further put subjectivity as main of Existentialism where the search of meaning will be personal interest over impersonal objectives. It is believed all men are born equally the existence and how they search for meaning will surely be different from others.

Man is said to be live as a being which has existence, not as what he is – as in having essence, and it is believed that every journey of a man’s life is different from another. The experience from the journey can only be understood by his

involvement in it (Bigelow, 1961, p. 172). Thus, in conclusion from all the agreement within the existence precedes essence is that the existence of man is left in the man's hand, where he decides his own life meaning based on what he chooses to be.

2.1.1.2 Alienation or Estrangement

As existentialist believed in subjectivity –caring for himself— it opposes rationalism of human. Rational thoughts that bring human to arrive in achievement in their life. This rationalism of human further allows threat to human life due to the tendency of man joining a group to be acknowledged by people. Kierkegaard in Wirahadi (2008) mentioned, conceptually, a crowd is the untruth by reason of the fact that it renders the individual completely irresponsible or at least weakness his sense of responsibility by reducing to a fraction. This means human relies his responsibility and rationalise his behaviour in a group to minimise wrong way of life. This can cause struggle as existentialism believes in caring for himself.

Alienation or estrangement is the result of individual when he feels he has lost his own existence. Bigelow (1961) mentioned that in dealing with life existence, there are four conditions of alienation. The four alienations are alienation from God, alienation from nature, alienation from others, and alienation from himself.

Alienation from God is caused by questioning the existence of God and disbelief in existence of God. This happens as human feels unfairness in god's favour. The unfairness where God is believed to be a saviour but not yet help a being out of sufferings. Alienation from nature is considered a danger in modern

man's life as the civilisations began to develop. When big buildings are made and shutting man away from a nature it is considered as danger due to human consciousness to relate himself to the nature.

Alienation from others happens in social scale. As human is said to be a social creature and will always need to interact with others. Though being a social creature helps in finding the meaning of own existence, there is always a barrier which impose threat to existence. Laws and social norms can be a barrier when a man feels overpowered and overwhelmed with it. This leads humans to estrange himself from others. Lastly the alienation from own self. This alienation of man in its own nature and true self are often times worries the spiritual self.

A human faith in some aspects is lost as he feels alienation from nature, others, himself, and God. This collective alienation further sums up into the feeling of powerless and faceless. Alienation further becomes one of the Existentialism discourses.

2.1.1.3 Fear and Trembling Anxiety

Supardi in (Kristianto, 2018) mentioned anxiety and fear is a reflection of insecurity and the inferiority which is usually triggered from fear of not being able to reach a certain goal, not able to fulfil social demands, and not being able to solve his own problem. This struggle of anxiety will cause hindrance in human ways in finding life meaning.

Putri et al., (2016) stated a man will think about his existence when anxiety happens. The existence of himself on whether can he do an important action or questioning his ability in dealing with the situation. This statement goes along with

Sartre principle of a man is nothing else but what he makes of and decides for himself. However, this act of deciding for himself will cause further fear and anxiety because when a man decides he does not only decide for himself but can also affect all men involved. Moral choice has to be made on his own responsibility. As mentioned in Bigelow (1961), each of us must make moral decisions in our own lives which involve the same anguish.

Keikergaard in (Bigelow, 1961) mentioned the necessity in making a moral decision makes life unique as it is nearly impossible to speculate or form a generalisation of human life. He theorised this as man is inevitably on his own feet and do anything that he is passionately driven with.

2.1.1.4 The Encounter with Nothingness

Nothingness can happen when a man is alienated from God, other men, himself, and nature as he has nothing to hold on. Men's existence is not separable from the elements of life completely. As a result, that human cannot estrange himself from other aspects of life, such as God's existence, the existence of other men, nature, and oneself. Nothing is gained from man estranging himself from society, empty life and lastly unable to benefit from societal existence.

Nothingness comes with the sense of despair and pessimism. As detachment from the society brings emptiness and the feeling of pointless and meaningless causing despair in itself. Sartre in (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003) mentioned the realisation of limitation beyond one's ability further bring despair in human existence. We cannot expect more from our existence than the finite probabilities it possesses. Which means when the possibility in resolving life problem is nearly

impossible, existing becomes meaningless. It is impossible to turn around nor to stop. Nothingness will make him feel as if he has been living for vain, as if he has no cause to live and freedom is not attainable.

2.1.2 Freedom in Existentialism

Freedom is the crucial aspect in existentialism aspect. Sartre believes that freedom has value above all as freedom fortify the need of finding self-authenticity in human pursuit of existence (Sartre, 2012). Thus, putting freedom at high stake. Man has limitation of what he can do due to the external factor such as alienation, fear, and nothingness. This high stake however, is what makes self-authenticity authentic. Passage below confirms how freedoms of oneself is reliant and concerns to others freedom.

“When I declare that freedom in every concrete circumstance can have no other aim than to want itself, if man has once become aware that in his forlornness he imposes values, he can no longer want but one thing, and that is freedom, as the basis of all values. ... We want freedom for freedom's sake and in every particular circumstance. And in wanting freedom we discover that it depends entirely on the freedom of others, and that the freedom of others depends on ours” (Sartre, 2012)

2.1.2.1 Acknowledgment

Acknowledgement born from being free, free from dishonesty, free from deterministic values, free from what stopping him in making choices. As Sartre argues in his book,

“If we have defined man's situation as a free choice, with no excuses and no recourse, every man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passions, every man who sets up a determinism, is a dishonest man... Dishonesty is obviously a falsehood because it belies the complete freedom of involvement... Suppose someone says to me, "What if I want to be dishonest?" I'll answer, "There's no reason for you not to be, but I'm saying that that's what you are, and that the strictly coherent attitude is that of honesty." (Sartre, 2012)

Sartre believes in any circumstances when a man fails to acknowledge his freedom, primarily freedom of choice, and relies his existence on pre-determined essence—deterministic— instead of believing human essence is made after existing, he is dishonest. This dishonesty contradicts to the freedom. A man who has attained his freedom does not live in the deterministic excuses. He who has obtained his freedom will continue thrive in his free will in making himself as human in the sense has the never-ending progress in betterment. Hence, the birth of acknowledgment is made when man admit to the truth and exist in freedom. This acknowledgement of oneself means that he is conscious that freedom of choice is done without any obstruct from others. It can also be acknowledged by others as he has stated his freedom of choice and this further correspond to self-authenticity.

2.1.2.2 Self-authenticity

Sartre (2012) believes that freedom is a choice which man creates for himself at his own possibility and responsibility. Sartre in (Nurbudhiati, 2015) mentioned that freedom is not just freedom in doing something. One is free when he succeeded in acknowledging his consciousness that something is not present in his life, which then influenced him to attain stronger purposes. This freedom of choice will define him, proving his existence to be authentic.

2.2 Previous Research

Several previous researches are found and listed for the purpose of comparison with current research and as references. The first research is by Nurbudhiati (2015), who had researched on existence from rebellion against authority figures. The data of the research is taken from a novel *“To Kill a Mocking*

Bird” written by Harper Lee. This research focused on main character’s behaviour in reflection of existentialism and utilised the existentialism philosophy theory by Jean-Paul Sartre. The researcher concluded the existentialism that are reflected in the novel are freedom and authenticity.

Putri et al. (2016) had investigated on existentialism found in a literary work. The data provided were collected from a novel with the title “The Trial” that is published in 1925, written by Franz Kafka. This research applied existentialism discourse from philosophers and aims for reflection from the main character. The results of the research showed the existentialism that are found in the research are; anxiety and authenticity, freedom, absurdity, existence, situatedness, and the crowd.

Aminatuzzuhriyyah et al. (2016) explored existentialism studies in several short stories written by the same author, Anton Chekhov which are “*The Bear*”, “*A Marriage Proposal*”, and “*A Tragedian in Spite of Himself*”. Each study was focused on the main character of the novels. The researchers took existentialism theories from several philosophers in order to analyse the data. The results of the research is existentialism is reflected by opposition of positivism and rationalism by being subjective.

Hamidy (2016) conducted research on existentialism reflection in the literary work “*For Whom the Bell Tolls*” by Ernest Hemingway that was published in the year 1940. This research focused on the reflection of existentialism spirit by using the theory of existentialism philosophy proposed by existentialist philosophers. The results of the research concluded by the researcher is the reflection of existentialism spirit which included togetherness and love, death, and alienation.

Kristianto (2018) discussed the main character's existentialism that is reflected in a short story titled "*Joyoboyo Penyair Berteman Sunyi*". This research is mainly done by using philosophy and discourse proposed by Jean-Paul Sartre. This research had concluded that existentialism is reflected by anxiety of the main character, which meant that anxiety had represent oneself. In addition to that, the researcher also concluded that existentialism reflected in the short story are philosophical suicide and physical death.

Nuri (2018) discussed the existentialism studies which focused on the main character in a novel. This research used novel "*The Alchemist*" by Paulo Coelho as the data source, which was first published on 1988. The data of the research were taken and collected using existentialism discourses by Jean Paul Sartre. The researcher had concluded that the existentialism that were found in the novel are freedom of choice, anguish, responsibility and alienation.

Mardiani et al. (2021) investigated on existentialism reflected in literary work. Findings presented are collected from the novel "*Demian: The Story of Emil Sinclair's Youth*" written by Hermann Hesse, and was first published in 1919. This research focused on the main character and applied existentialism theory proposed by Jean-Paul Sartre. The researchers concluded the existentialism reflected in the novel are alienation from God, despair, and anguish.

Previous studies and research regarding the case of existentialism in previous research are found to use the same theory proposed by existentialist philosophers but most often includes Sartre's theories. The similarities between this research and the earlier research are that data collected in previous research are similarly in the

scene of literary works and used the existentialism theory by Sartre. As for the difference, previous research this research will be using different literary works which is "*Life of Pi*", focusing the research on the way main character defend his existence and the aftermath of defending it. Furthermore, theories proposed by Bigelow (1961) and freedom discourses by Sartre, (2012) as secondary theory to differentiate it from other researchs.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

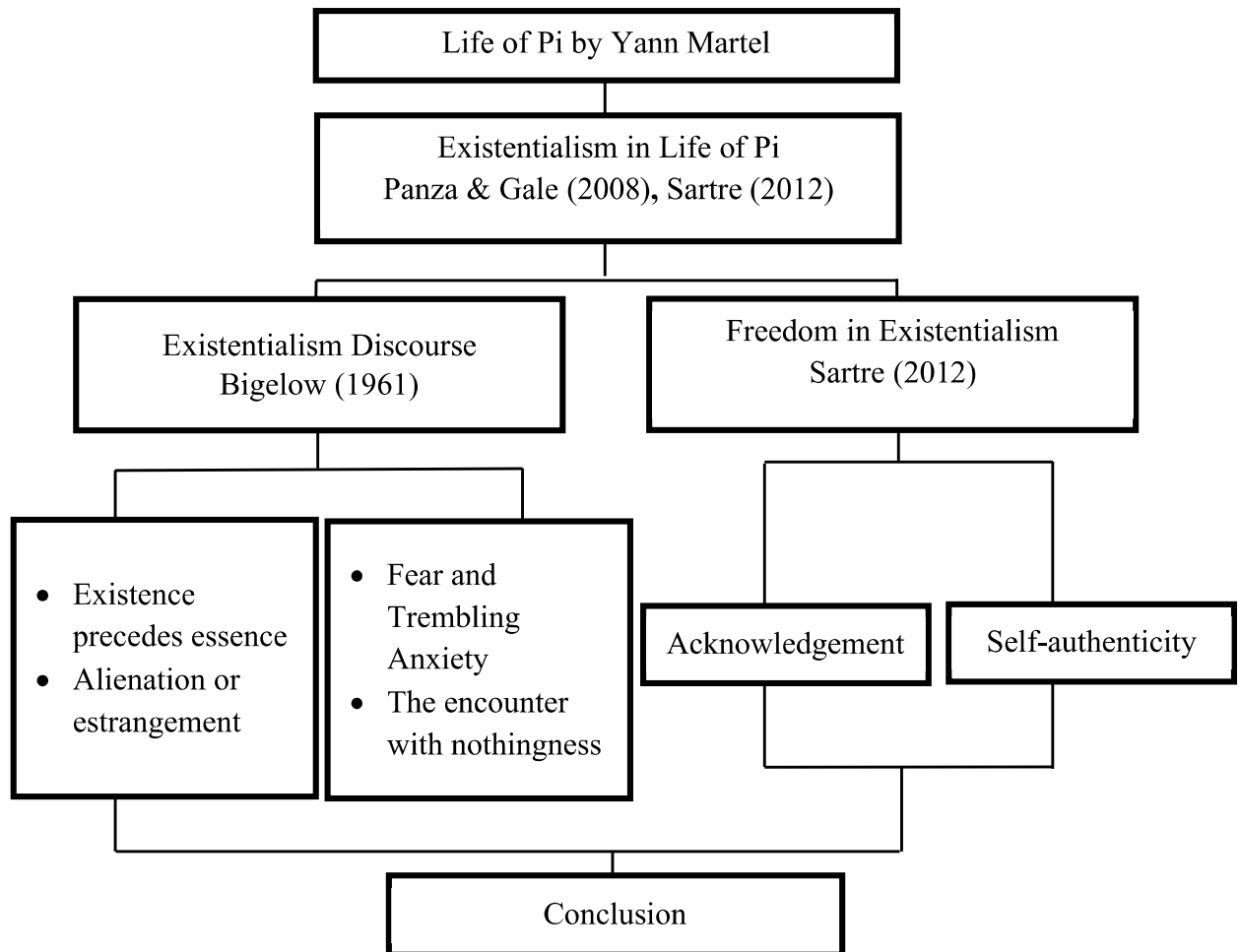


Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This research is conducted by using existentialism approach. The researcher took existentialism as the object of the research. Additionally, the focus of this research are existentialism discourse and freedom relation in existentialism. The theory of existentialism discourse used is proposed by Bigelow (1961). It contained the discourse of existence precedes essence, alienation or estrangement, fear and trembling anxiety, and encounter with nothingness. Meanwhile, the second focus of the research is using the freedom theory in existentialism by Sartre (2012). The

theory consisted of two which reflected on freedom, they are acknowledgement and self-authenticity. Both of the theories are utilised to analyse *Life of Pi* novel as the data source of the research.