

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Hedonism derives from Greek word ἡδονή (hēdone) which means "pleasure, enjoyment, delight and also relates to the word hēdys which means "sweet" (Harper, 2020). Moreover, according to Hornby (2000) in Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, and Oxford Learner's Dictionary Online (2020) hedonism is the belief that pleasure is the most important thing in life. Therefore, this concludes that hedonism is pleasure or enjoyment that is "sweet" and important to be pursued or enjoyed.

As in moral philosophical approach, Veenhoven (2003) states that hedonism indicates the perspective that a good life should be pleasurable. Moreover, physiologically, pleasure seeking is a main trigger in human behavior. This regards hedonists (people embracing or practicing hedonism) as the people who are positive about pleasure. The opposite of hedonism is asceticism, which contrastively imply the acts of hedonism such as pleasure rejection and abstinent behaviour.

Opposite to hedonism, the English term of asceticism derives from the Greek askēsis, which means "to train" or "to exercise" specifically in the sense of the training and self-denial that an athlete undergoes to attain physical skill and mastery over the body (Smith, 2020). The people who practice asceticism is called ascetics. According to Finn (2009:94-97) ascetics have probabilities to either

withdraw from the world for their practices or continue to be part of their society with adopting the frugal lifestyle which characterized by denial of material possessions and physical pleasures and tend to spend time on practice of religion or other spiritual matters.

This paper is a study about Freddie Mercury, the protagonist and one of main characters in the movie *Bohemian Rhapsody* (2018) of his hedonism behavior. This movie chronicles Freddie Mercury who is a lead singer of Queen band that starts his role from his pre-success to his success stages of his life and Queen itself that span from the year 1970 to 1985.

Mercury was assumed to be a hedonist because of his behaviour that always to pursue bigger opportunities for example, at the beginning of the movie he was seen working as a baggage handler in London's Heathrow Airport then later he changed himself to be a singer in a band named "Smile" by showing his joy and talent even though the band was unconvinced about his large teeth before agreeing him. Moreover, he even referred himself as 'musical prostitute' as his career was to be a musician and singer to either make him or everyone or both happy.

Various hedonism acts conducted by Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody* (2018) movie are worthy of investigation since they are seemingly done in two different types of hedonism consisting of which according to Audi (1999), are, psychological and ethical hedonism. Psychological hedonism deals with avoiding pain and solely orienting in achieving pleasure (Sober & Wilson, 1998). While ethical hedonism concerns with what human should or ought to act and desire in getting pleasure (Lillie, 1957). Moreover, both psychological and ethical

hedonism possess two classifications, inferential and reinforcement hedonism (Garson, 2016) and egoistic and universal hedonism (Lillie, 1957) respectively. Both psychological and ethical hedonism acts which had been done by Freddie impacted positively and negatively towards him especially in his character developments and the movie plot. An example of the positive impact is when he conducted his hedonism acts, he helped himself and people around him, especially his band, family and lover, attain happiness from the lowest level to highest and even conflict resolutions among them. While the negative impacts happened when Freddie pursued happiness with egoistic behaviors that ruined his friendships, health, moral, etc.

Several recent researches that span around the year 2015 to 2020 about hedonism on literature show only on researching novels. However, among those mentioned researches, **Torkashvand & Jamili (2016)**'s *Psychological and Ethical Hedonism in Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray* influences majorly in this study especially in the hedonism and its types explanations and the object that have been being studied which is novel as one of literature products. Torkashvand & Jamili (2016)'s study investigates both hedonism types in Oscar's Wilde *The Picture of Dorian Gray* as an unsatisfying method of living which deals with the pursuit of happiness through start of seeking and experiencing kinds of pleasure with artistic and aesthetic ways. It also investigates the transformation of the protagonist (Dorian Gray) details through hedonism acts he conducts which possesses ups and downs of the character developments and also the benefits and consequences of his hedonism. Even though it is influenced

by Torkashvand & Jamili (2016)'s study mentioned earlier, this research differs in its literature product analysis object in which it will analyze the *Bohemian Rhapsody* (2018), a movie which is as the new breakthrough in hedonism on literature analysis.

The reason of choosing movie as the object analysis of hedonism is because movie itself is one of literature products as stated by Trianton (2013) defines movie as a result of a creative, process of the filmmaker that combines various elements such as ideas, values ideas, value systems, and ways of life, beauty, norms, human behaviors, and technological devices. Moreover, it will be done to renew and enlarge the hedonism analysis objects. The renewing and enlargement of hedonism analysis concerns about the adding a quantity and the originality of this research. Adding a quantity of a recent research of hedonism will be done by conducting research in the current year (2020) . While the originality will deal with the conducting a new breakthrough in hedonism analysis which will deal with using movie as a data analysis as well as with historical-biographical approach as a supporting theory in order to analyze the biography of a famous figure.

In addition, this research is based on movie that tells the life story of Freddie Mercury, this research will apply historical-biographical approach theory by Guerin et al (2005) who define that this theory utilizes author's life and times of the character in the work and its parameters by Fleischman (1983). This additional information suggests that hedonism acts of Freddie Mercury found in the movie

are sorted out based on available historical-biographical sources describing their date, explanation and references.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Based on background of the study, the problems of the study are summed up into these followings :

1. What are the types and each of types' classifications of hedonism of Freddie Mercury performed in the movie *Bohemian Rhapsody*?
2. How are hedonism acts portrayed by Freddie Mercury in the movie *Bohemian Rhapsody*?

1.3 The Scope of the Study

The limit of this study will be in the extent of hedonism portrayed only by Freddie Mercury as one of main characters in the movie *Bohemian Rhapsody*. The hedonism acts portrayed by Mercury will be distinguished theoretically based on two types, psychological hedonism (Sober & Wilson, 1998) and ethical hedonism (Lillie, 1957). Moreover, this research is oriented to historical-biographical approach theorized by Guerin et al (2005) which reflects the correlation of available historical or biographical references Mercury's hedonism acts in the movie.

1.4. The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study concern of activities and objects which will be analysed based on the problem analysis. There are two objectives in this research analysis.

1. To find out types and each of types' classifications of hedonism of Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody* movie.
2. To find out how Freddie Mercury's hedonism acts are done in *Bohemian Rhapsody* movie.

1.5 The Significances of the Study

The significances of this study are purposed to expect advantageous practical and theoretical academic purposes. Practical purposes show that the result of this analysis will be helpful to add more supplies of hedonism study in a new platform of analysis leading to the usage as reference to other future studies. While on theoretical purposes, it concerns about the enlarging the study of hedonism in extent of using a movie as its object of analysis.