

**Tribhuvan University**

**Freedom of Choices in Eugene O'Neill's "*Long Day's Journey into Night*"**

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of the Requirement of the Degree of Master of Arts in English

by

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**Letter of Approval**

The Thesis entitled "Freedom of Choices in Eugene O'Neill's, *Long Day's Journey into Night*", submitted by Khumananda Wagle to the Department of English, Ratna RajyaLaxmi Campus, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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## **Abstract**

The present research is about the Tyrone family's hopeless review of their past, the circumstances, choices and actions that have shaped the course of their lives and relationships to the present dismal realities troubling them. The thesis is more about the freedom of choices of individual characters as a single person is responsible for life. Society, community or religion do not play important role to make one's life. The research work also studies how the certainties and scientific reasoning that ruled the nineteenth century smashed into anxiety, absurdity disintegration, chaos, and uncertainty. As existent beings, each character identify with the world through their thoughts and perceptions. Hence, the research deals with how an individual character develop a unique understanding a sense of awareness of the nature and destiny of man. According to existentialism, truth is not what it is but what appears to a particular person. Therefore, as the theory implies, one truth has innumerable aspects depending on the type of person because individuals finally must make their own choices without any help from external standards as laws, ethical rules and traditional philosophy. Using existentialism as a framework, this thesis will focus on solitariness, suffering and creativity, all of which point to the importance of individual consciousness choices and actions that have shaped the course of their lives and relationships to the present.

## DECLARATION

I hereby declared that the thesis entitled "**Freedom of Choices, in Eugene O'Neill's** *Long Day's Journey into Night*" is my original carried out as a Master's student at the Department of English at Ratna RajyaLaxmi Campus except to the extent that assistance from others in the thesis's design and linguistic expression are duly acknowledged.

All sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree at Tribhuvan University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement made in thesis.

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Khumananda Wagle

Date-----

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## 1. Introduction to Existentialism

The research work deals with the freedom of choices of human beings despite the absurd of life with the help of existential theory as a main tool to study Eugene O'Neill's play *Long Day's Journey into Night*. According to the theory, every human being is an individual person who has to face the challenge in his/her own way. Life is full of struggle from cradle to coffin. However, it is the choice of human beings how they take the life like. A mythical character Sisyphus is a symbol to inspire human beings that every tedious work should be taken as a foundation stone to step ahead. Human beings should think that struggle and adversities are not hindrance but they are a means to progress further. In this way, absurdity should be taken positively. The thesis deals with the meaningless talk among the characters in the play. They remain in one place and talk blaming each other. During their conversation, they do not reach a conclusion but they revolve around one meaningless topic like Edmond's illness. Moreover, they do not have trust with each other. The researcher attempts to answer the questions how the characters in the play begin talking, what they talk about and why they are not happy with their life.

*Long Day's Journey into Night* is about the Tyrone family who inside the house and make conversation about their daily and repetitive work. While Jamie and Edmund are offstage, Tyrone and Mary enter and embrace. Tyrone and Mary talk about Edmund's health condition and believe that they know about his problem more than each other. Nevertheless, Tyrone tells Mary that she must take care of herself and focus on getting better rather than getting upset about Edmund. At the meantime, Edmund and Jamie laughing in the next room about which Tyrone gets angry thinking falsely that they are making of his jokes.

Tyrone is a sensitive person who resents everyone in small matter such as the

family members talk about his snoring habit. Tyrone then turns on Jamie, attacking him for his lack of ambition and laziness. To calm things down, Edmund tells a funny story about a tenant named Shaughnessy on the Tyrone family land in Ireland, where the family's origins lie. Edmund coughs again and others think that he may be suffering from tuberculosis but Mary. She thinks that doctors may be wrong and he has mere a bad cold because he is coughing frequently. Mary reflects on her faded beauty, recognizing that she is in the stages of decline.

Likewise, Jamie and Tyrone argue over Edmund's doctor, Doc Hardy, who charges very little for his services for which they say that he does not have quality to examine patient so he takes least fee. Tyrone retorts that Jamie always thinks the worst of everyone, and that Jamie does not understand the value of a dollar because he has always been able to take comfortable living for granted. Tyrone blames that Jamie only squanders loads of money on whores and liquor in town. Tyrone accuses Jamie of laziness and criticizes his failure to succeed at anything.

As the members of the family discuss in the play, the characters do not reach the concrete conclusion but they only waste time. They do not have specific purpose for talking; rather they spend time blaming each other. Their life is full of absurdity doing or performing same task repeatedly. Many critics talk about the play in several ways. Michael Billington says that O'Neill's world does not have permanency. The characters bring one idea and they change to another. Billington states:

O'Neill presents us with a vertiginous world in which any statement may be cancelled a second later. One of the play's few fixed points is James's horror at Mary's relapse, after two clean months, into her old drug-taking habit, and Irons charts excellently a dismay that is born out of true love. Initially James is all joshing breeziness as he cuddles



Mary and hymns her newfound weight. There is, however, a chilling moment when he realizes his wife is back on the hard stuff and he stares at her with a look that blends accusation and remorse. (2)

He, therefore, analyzes the play having tug-of-war among the characters. They do not trust each other. Love is alienated world for them because they are alienated from each other.

Likewise, Paul Taylor focuses on the loneliness of Mary because she does not have her proper home. She suffers from being alienated from her own self. The people who live in society, they feel that a home is the most important part of identity. There is also competition among people who have houses. She is product of the society. Therefore, it is natural to have such feelings. Taylor says:

Mary affectingly complains of loneliness and of never having had a proper home, as the wife of a touring actor, but she has an addict's irritable need to be on her own, away from the watchful gaze of her family. There's a piteously forced vivacity to the garrulous girlishness of her diversionary tactics and a terrible frustration of religious fervor to her idealized memories of her convent school. (3)

Thus, Taylor criticizes that they talk because the characters want to satisfy themselves by doing so.

Moreover, Dominic Cavendish expresses the sad pictures of the characters who hover around and around without reaching the certain destination. Cavendish sees many characters in the play being confined in one place. The characters think that they are spending their burden life. They do not have any hope to live in their life happily. Cavendish explains:

I can't help observing, though, that while each actor brings their own

stamp to the part, you need to feel that Tyrone has spent a lifetime hammily treading the boards. Plausible as he is, Irons gives the impression of a forlorn, sniping, refined man about the house rather than a prowling, growling survivor of too many nights on the road. (2)

Yet, Cavendish comments that the boring types of lives have taught the characters invaluable lesson to the characters. They have become stronger as they have undergone many difficulties.

Absurdist idea interprets human being as an isolated individual existence into an alien universe. It faces the doctrine that human being is a manifestation of absolute truth. Especially after the Second World War, many thinkers started to support this doctrine and they did not believe in traditional concepts like rationality, morality, unity, value, and even Christianity. The certainties and scientific reasoning that ruled the nineteenth century smashed into anxiety, absurdity disintegration, chaos, and uncertainty. About absurdism, Harold Bloom postulates from the idea of Albert Camus's *The Stranger*. He says:

In *The Stranger*, the world of the protagonist expresses Camus's view of the absurd. The protagonist, Meursault, continually states that things do not matter, not only to him personally but in the world at large. In short, while people around him feel the world has some innate logic guiding it, Meursault does not see it that way. This perspective is what leads him to say, for example, that working in Paris or getting married really has no significance. (14)

As a person finds the world absurd, the person does not see any value in the world. Material things do not attract him or her as Meursault is not fascinated by the matter.

Various critics have commented on the individual life through existential

theory. According to the theory, the individual people are responsible for their life. Whether they are happy or sad, it depends upon them not the outside world. Soren Kierkegaard believes in the freedom of choice through individual life. Kierkegaard is determined about individuality as he remarks:

According to Kierkegaard rather than searching for the Truth with capital 'T' it is more important to find the kind of truths that are meaningful to the individual's life. It is important to the 'truth for me'. He thus sets the individual, or each and every man, up against the 'system'. (379)

He emphasizes the individual choice at a moment. Most of the existentialists follow him in this respect. He thinks that man makes free decisions and choices to project himself. Taking example of Kierkegaard, Ellmann and Fiedelson remark:

By choosing even by choosing wrongly it that is done with earnestness and struggle, we became new selves that could not have existed until the choice was made. [Choice in relation to God] Beyond ethical choice religious is the use of freedom to surrender it back to divine giver. (805)

Thus, one cannot remain without making decisions. By making decisions, he goes on establishing his existence. There are two options for the individual to choose: either he has to choose God and get redemption from the angst, an ethic-religious choice or he has to respect God and go to prediction, and atheistic choice.

Kierkegaard believes that one is free to make choices. In addition, one exists up to the point of making choice. The concept of 'subjective truth' is dominant in his writings. Any systems, rules and regulations cannot determine an individual and his freedom. Instead of single truth, there are many truths, which are personal. What is right and what is wrong depend upon one's own decisions and thoughts.

Nietzsche support individuality and subjectivity of truth. An objective man is nothing more than a slave who is very much submissive. Man should be active and subjective for the sake of his individuality. Man is master of himself. Thus, he should exercise his individual power. In his views, moral values are not objective and universal.

The individual's starting point is characterized by what has been called a sense of disorientation and confusion in the face of an apparently meaningless or absurd world. He proposed that each individual is solely responsible for giving meaning to life and living it passionately and sincerely. In the next section, the researcher brings theoretical parts in detail showing the relevancy to the text taking the help from many critics such as Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Camus and many more as per their ideas are related to freedom of choices.

In this way, many philosophers think in different ways from common people. Common people think that problems are burden for them. If they have to face the challenges, they are sad and do not find meanings in their life. However, the philosophers think from other perspectives. They think that adversities make people stronger and stronger. Many philosophers think that individual choice makes people to know themselves and what they should do in their life to live meaningfully. About the challenges and adversities, the researcher likes to bring the issues of other philosophical ideas in next section.

## 2. Individualism as the Freedom Fighter

Existentialism is one of the modern philosophies to interpret human existence. It interprets human being as an isolated individual existence into an alien universe. It opposes the doctrine that human being is a manifestation of absolute truth. The existential thinkers and writers find the world totally absurd and alien. According to them, an individual is free to choose and create truths himself/herself. One can create truths or her/his own personal interest and use freedom of choice. Therefore, an existentialist stresses on concrete individual existence, freedom and choice.

Existentialism emphasizes on freedom. However, unlike Renaissance thinkers who took freedom positively, the existentialists take freedom as a curse as Sartre says: "We are condemned to be free" (qtd. in Tarnas 56). This existentialist concept of freedom and value raise from the view of the individual, Sartre in his book *Existentialism and Human Emotion* says "since we are all ultimately alone, isolated island of subjectivity in an objective world, we have absolute freedom over internal nature and source of our value can only be internal" (23). Due to this freedom, there is none to dictate us what to do and what not to do.

Joseph P. Leddy argues that existentialism is very vague term as it is related to humanism. There are two aspects existentialism works: protest against determinism and freedom of man, according to Leddy:

The term 'existentialism' is extremely vague as is the term 'humanism',. However, existentialism may be generally characterized as a protest against moral or physical determinism in regard to man. And 'humanism', in its most general application may mean any system centered on the concepts of dignity and freedom of man. Thus Jean Paul Sartre makes his existentialism a humanism through the

fundament of human freedom. He does this by drawing from and synthesizing notions of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger. The result is a unique concept of freedom. (iii)

In this way, existentialism is devoted to the interpretation of human existence. It lays stress on concrete individual existence, freedom and choice. The term is not complete by the idea of one person but several philosophers are required.

Existentialists do not take them with the traditional attempt to get the ultimate nature of the world but they really concern to the problem of men. They focus on what it is like to be an individual. Existentialism focuses on the nature of truths, by saying that focus on what it is true to one may be false to another because individuals finally must make their own choices without any help from external standards as laws, ethical rules and traditional philosophy. In this sense, individuals are free to choose and also they are completely responsible for their choice. One critic Macintyre argues: "Even I do not choose I have chosen not to choose" (140). Therefore, existentialism concludes that human choice is subjective and an individual is free to choose for his authentic existence.

The existentialists are mainly influenced by the subjectivism and individuality. By challenging traditional ideas about absolute being, they stress on human existence. The possibility of human existence is the anticipation, the expectation and the projection of the future. Existence is always stretched out towards the future. Existentialism has become one of the prominent theories at present and is applied in many literary texts. Although existentialists have many similar ideas, their viewpoints are conflicting and sometimes contradictory and it can be divided into two groups: theistic existentialists and atheistic existentialists. Referring to existentialists,

Richard Tarnas postulates that human beings have to go through all kinds of problems. He says:

The anguish and alienation of twentieth-century life were brought to full articulation as the existentialist addressed the most fundamental, naked concerns of human existence—suffering and death, loneliness and dread, guilt, conflict, spiritual emptiness and ontological insecurity, the void of absolute values or universal contexts, the sense of cosmic absurdity, the frailty of human reason, the tragic impasse of the human condition. Man was condemned to be free. He faced the necessity of choice and thus knew the continual burden of error. (282)

Thus, freedom of choices comes from the problems; human beings have to face in the adversity of life.

Atheistic existentialism totally denies the existence of God but rather it focuses on existence of human beings and freedom of choice. In this helpless universe, nobody is ready to help them. Atheistic thinkers regard human beings as optimistically free, forlorn and support-less creature. It is necessary to make separate on some prominent existential philosophers and their concepts.

Friedrich Nietzsche, the nineteenth century German philosopher, one of the forerunners and chief source of inspiration for existentialism, has influenced the development of the idea of human existence. He made a critique on Christianity. For him, western philosophical tradition and Christianity snatches away authentic individuality and happiness of people. Nietzsche observes, “Both Christianity and traditional philosophy had turned away from the real world and pointed towards heaven or the world of ideas” (Gaarder 455). It shows that he is in favor of individual freedom.

Nietzsche has made very sharp critique of Christianity and God. For him Christianity is a 'slave morality' and the religion having no truth because God is already dead and Christianity has become a shelter for weak and disabled people that he hated. His proclamation on God and Christianity pushes atheistic existentialism on God that is already dead or there is no more God at all to determine the existence. He tries to clarify his view on religion and on God from his this argument:

The Christian conception of God-God as god of sick, God as a spider, God as a spirit is one of the most corrupt conceptions of the divine as ever attained on earth. It may even represent the low water mark in the descending development of divine types. God degenerated into contradiction of life. Instead of being its transfiguration and eternal, God as the declaration of war against life, against nature and against will to live. (Ellmann and Fiedelson, 818)

For him, to think of God is to go against life, against the 'will to power'. As there is absence of God in the world, the supermen are the Gods. The supermen are the higher men because of their genuine thought to life and heroic spirit. Thus, the man of action is force for human existence for Nietzsche. Nietzsche focuses on the subjective activities of individual. He does not believe the idea of absolute truth.

Nietzsche takes every individual as a free thinker. One individual has his own right to think in his own perspective and to make decisions in his own favor. He clearly expresses:

I say especially that they shall free, very free thinkers, these philosophers of the time? It is certain, however, that they will not be merely thinkers but something more, something superior, greater and



thoroughly different, something that does not want to be misjudged or mistaken for something else. (Ellmann and Fiedelson, 815)

In this way, he provokes the idea of existence of human being and individual freedom. For human individual is greater and more powerful than society.

Heidegger shows positive response for his subjectivism. Although there is a sharp contrast between phenomenology, which tries to objectify the unobjectifiable, and existentialism, Heidegger's relationship with Husserl is unavoidable. For Heidegger we cannot realize being in normal situation rather we can realize it in the period of suffering. Therefore, he says in his essay "What is Metaphysics?"

No matter how fragmented our everyday existence may appear to be ... It irrupts when one is bored, profound boredom drifting here and there in the abysses of our existence like a muffling fog, removes all things and men and oneself along with into a remarkable difference this boredom reveals being as a whole. (4)

Hence, we can find his close relation to existentialism, which he directly rejects to reveal. In very difficult moment of life one can recording to him.

According to Heidegger, the universe is alien to us and we shall face explicitly the problem of being as we create our own existence making choices. He is interested in the study of particular way of existing. He believes that one has to determine his own existence by creating his own existence by creating his own possibilities and making choices and commitment, which shows that man, is what he tries to be or to make himself.

Thus, Heideggerian existentialism emphasizes on existence, boredom, choice and freedom but in freedom, also there is suffering, or angst that compels human being to select and take change of his being. He also stresses that there is no absolute

force to govern a man. That is why; an individual himself creates his own essence. So, the main focus of Hedger is to investigate for individual, especially for man's being.

Sartre, one of the eminent French existentialists and the leading figure of Existentialism, became popular after the Second World War for his existential theory. For him, "existentialism is humanism" (7) as included by Gaarder in *Sophie's World*. Sartre put himself in the group of anti-religious existentialists. His philosophy mainly focuses on personal freedom and personal responsibility. He thinks that there is no fixed human nature or essence and so the individual has to choose his being. Along with Albert Camus and Samuel Beckett, he developed the existentialist philosophy to its farthest point. Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger are the chief philosophers who have left much impact upon this thinker. Every human being has his own right to do thing or select his best. In this respect, he made an existential choice when he rejected to take Nobel Prize for literature in 1964.

An individual is free to choose the course of life. He is responsible for his action in life. He never disclaims the responsibility. Sartre further says:

To choose between this or that is at the same time to affirm the value of that which is chosen: for we are unable ever to choose the worse.

What we choose is always better; and nothing can be better for unless it is better for all ... Our responsibility is thus much greater than we had supposed (Ellmann and Fiedelson, 835).

Thus, because of our freedom we can choose either this or that. It is our responsibility to do one or other action. What we have done depends on our choice. We are responsible for choice and action. Like most of the existentialists, Sartre emphasizes on the subjectivity of the individual. He blames those persons who do not use freedom because freedom is used the freedom itself and it is the way of life.

Sartre's concept of human existence is determined as a dominant state.

According to him, there is no such innate nature of man like essence. He argues:

Existence precedes essence . . . . Man simply is not that he is simply what he conceives himself after already existing as he will to be after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. (Ellmann and Fiedelson, 828)

Thus, an individual can create essence which comes after existence of a person. The will of a person helps him to be something of being not the essence. The main focus of Sartre is this idea of human existence. Instead of having an essence by birth an individual is free to choose options either this or that.

He divides living as authentic and inauthentic between these points. He chooses authentic living and says that one must choose and make commitment to exist. Sartre's primary focus lies on existence. For him freedom and existence go together. So, our freedom obliges us to make something of ourselves to live 'authentically' or 'truly'. Thus, as many existentialist thinkers, Sartre emphasizes upon freedom of choice and personal responsibility and action because there is no absolute force like God to govern us to create our own essence. By doing so, we can meet the meaning or essence of life.

Albert Camus takes human being as an isolated existent in an alien universe and the condition of a man is absurd; whatever he searches for life with any purpose is meaningless and fruitless. The world does not possess any inherent truth, value and meaning. In this regard, M. H. Abrams remarks:

Albert Camus views a human beings as an isolated existence who is cast into as alien universe, as possessing no inherent truth, value, meaning and to represent human life-in its fruitless search for purpose

and meaning, as it moves from nothingness when it came towards the nothingness where it must end as an existence which is both anguished and absurd. (1)

Albert Camus has compares modern man to Corinthian king Sisyphus who disobeyed God for his passion of life and suffered external torture heroically. He further says, “This Universe, henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile” (Ellmann and Fiedelson 852).

Camus has reached to the conclusion to declare the condition of man when he realized that the speculative system of past provided on authentic guidance for life. In his views, the awareness that comes within as absurd man of his futile lifestyle, he is naturally filled with anxiety and hopelessness but he does not surrender himself to the authority. Rather he uses his absurd consciousness as a reliable guidance to revolt against it. According to Camus, every individual works in accordance with his thought to choice. No individual surrenders himself in the mouth of death. Human destinies are made by human themselves. In *Creation of Knowledge* it is quoted that “like Sisyphus ... human make their own choices and to that extent are in control of their own destinies” (67). Hence, Camus stands in favor of subjective choice, which is already accepted by other existentialists as well. Like Sisyphus, every human being chooses whatever he wants to do. The same action leads him on the pathway of absurdity even though he is happy when he gets a chance to choose something. For Camus the idea of choice is optimistic and humanistic. He advocates for freedom of choice.

Comparision and Contrast:

In this way, existential theory focuses on the individual freedom of choice. Many existentialists argue that human beings are alienated beings in this world. The

nature other entities that are available to them are not in their favor. Even human mind is against the human choices. Although people know that we should drive ourselves to the positivity, in reality our mind leads us to the negativity. Despite these problems, we have to face the world boldly and move ahead courageously. Existential theory helps individual to face the anxiety of choosing for themselves and accepting the reality. It is best considered to recognize the ways in which they are not living fully authentic lives and make choices that will lead to their becoming what they are capable of being.

### **3. Freedom of Choices in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night***

This section focuses on the textual analysis of Eugene O'Neill's play *Long Day's Journey into Night* using existential theory. Freedom of choices is a tool, which makes people understand how the life is like. The play takes place in the family room of the Tyrone's summer home in one August morning. The family members have their own problems and they are fighting against them but individually. They seem to be together but their internal difficulty is not understood by anyone else. For example, Mary takes morphine and her son Edmund suffers from coughing. The mother and son are sympathetic to each other and worried but they cannot share the problems. This is the study of existential theory.

The characters are not free from each other because they are trying to control each other. They are victims of existentialism. Although the Mary and her husband think that they are free from responsibility, they are bound to each other and other members of the family. As the play begins Mary and her husband are worried about their son Edmund and Mary says that Tyrone should tell Edmund to eat more because he is weak now. It discloses that she is concerned with her son's problems: "MARY:

James, it's Edmund you ought to scold for not eating enough. He hardly touched anything except coffee. He needs to eat to keep up his strength. I keep telling him that but he says he simply has no appetite. Of course, there's nothing takes away your appetite like a bad summer cold" (19). Mary seems to be sharing problem with her son and shows concerns towards him. However, it is unlikely for her to be able to do so.

The problems of misunderstanding among the characters come from their lack of respecting each other's freedom. Almost everyone in the family wishes to be free and wants to spend his/her life in their own. Although they want freedom of choices, they do not want to respect each other's desires. Mary and Tyrone love each other deeply but they have their own ego because of which they have invisible conflict. They sometimes show unnecessary concern about Edmund, which appears irrelevant. In other words, they are expert in analyzing and interpreting others' problems but they are unable to understand their own. These discussions reveal so:

TYRONE: Yes, it is bad luck. *He gives her a quick, worried look.* But you mustn't let it upset you, Mary. Remember, you've got to take care of yourself, too.

MARY: *Quickly.* I'm not upset. There's nothing to be upset about. What makes you think I'm upset?

TYRONE: Why, nothing, except you've seemed a bit high-strung the past few days.

MARY: Forcing a smile. I have? Nonsense, dear. It's your imagination. With sudden tenseness. (20)

It means the couple show unnecessary concern about her son. They are bound by lack of freedom and they are trying to confiscating the freedom from her son because they

are thinking about him which Edmund himself has to think.

Moreover, for the freedom Tyrone says that he is very much tied with the emotion of Mary. He says that he feels happy to admire her. This type of conversation is a kind of interference to one's internal affair whether knowingly or unknowingly. Let's consider these lines: "Now, now, Mary. That's your imagination. If I've watched you it was to admire how fat and beautiful you looked. I can't tell you the deep happiness it gives me, darling, to see you as you've been since you came back to us, your dear old self again. So keep up the good work, Mary" (20). There are two types of freedom: external and internal. External freedom is impossible for them because they are bound to each other by the society. However, they can keep themselves free internally and they are free to do so.

Individualism, existence and freedom are the ingredients of the drama. The characters are struggling for their happiness in their own ways regardless of their problems. As they experience many kinds of adversities, they realize that they can be happy even at the difficult condition. Edmund, for instance, expresses his view in such way: "EDMUND: No, he didn't beef about anything. He was so pleased with life he even bought a drink, and that's practically unheard of. He was delighted because he'd had a fight with your friend, Harker, the Standard Oil millionaire, and won a glorious victory" (26). He is referring to a person who wishes his house rent lowered but he is very happy in his personal way. The conversation discloses that although they are together and tied to each other, they are individual for their existence, happiness and freedom of choice.

Edmund tells his parents a story about Harker and Shaughnessy and compares their situation with his family.

EDMUND: Harker had as much chance as I would with Jack Johnson.

Shaughnessy got a few drinks under his belt and was waiting at the gate to welcome him. He told me he never gave Harker a chance to open his mouth. He began by shouting that he was no slave Standard Oil could trample on. He was a King of Ireland, if he had his rights, and scum was scum to him, no matter how much money it had stolen from the poor. (27)

These lines prove that Harker and Shaughnessy are together but they want to confiscate freedom from each other. In other words, they are different externally and internally. Externally they are connected to the society and they have to perform according to the rules and regulations. However, they are free to choose anything at their disposal. Shaughnessy opposes being a slave at Standard Oil. It means he prefers freedom.

There is difference between self and other though someone attempts to understand another's problem. That happens as Mary tries to internalize the problems of Edmund. Mary is not happy with doctors and opine that they are all similar. She believes that the doctors do not empathize patients but they do for doing only. It is a gap between a doctor and a patient. It means, the doctors do not know how patients are struggling. This is a simple example, how Edmund is suffering and doctors are not paying attention as much as they should. In the same way, in the world, there are many doctors who do not assimilate the problems like this. They only think of taking money from the patients, Mary means to say:

MARY: *A look of contemptuous hostility flashes across her face.*

Doctor Hardy! I wouldn't believe a thing he said, if he swore on a stack of Bibles! I know what doctors are. They're all alike. Anything, they don't care what, to keep you coming to them.



She stops short, overcome by a fit of acute self-consciousness as she catches their eyes fixed on her. Her hands jerk nervously to her hair. She forces a smile. What is it? What are you looking at? Is my hair—? (30)

Here, we can find out difference between external and internal happiness. Everyone has a choice to live and enjoy his/her life. However, many a time other people like to think about another person's life. It is the study of existentialism. Whatever they are doing, they are attempting to keep them happy no matter how much they have to struggle for that. These characters prove that life is full of struggle and they have to pace ahead as much as they can.

#### Choices and Commitment in Absurdity:

The characters in the drama are not worried about the whole society they live in but they are concerned with individual problems. They are worried how they can keep relation with other members in the family. Moreover, the problems of each character cannot be shared with anyone. Therefore, the life is individual which the essence of existential theory is. Mary, her husband and her two children talk about their problems. Sometimes, they discuss about their relation, their problems, their life and so on. Jamie and Edmund are their children. She is not happy when they make a laugh and tease their father as he snores while sleeping. Mary is not satisfied with such manners and she reminds them of what have changed, as they are growing old. In their discussion, however, we do not find that they blame god. They think that changes are nature and they take place according to the rules of nature. There is not role of god in their life. This thought is one of the features of existential theory. According to the theory, whatever happens in the world, the creatures are responsible not god, as Nietzsche says. Mary makes the dialogue:

MARY: Again embarrassed and pleased. Will you listen to your father, Jamie—after thirty-five years of marriage! He isn't a great actor for nothing, is he? What's come over you, James? Are you pouring coals of fire on my head for teasing you about snoring? Well then, I take it all back. It must have been only the foghorn I heard. She laughs, and they laugh with her. Then she changes to a brisk businesslike air. But I can't stay with you any longer, even to hear compliments. I must see the cook about dinner and the day's marketing. (31)

Mary compliments her husband and scolds her children as they tease their father. It is the good example of existential theory because they find everything within themselves. In fact, they are feeling free internally and they make their relationship close to each other.

Subjectivism is another feature of existentialism. All the characters in the play react as per the feeling they get in their environment. Whatever is happening within the family that is different thing and how the characters perceive that is different. Here, the researcher likes to discover some of the subjective feeling of the characters while they are keeping relationship with each other especially as they deal with among parents and children. There is misunderstanding between Jamie and his father Tyrone in terms of hiring a good doctor for Edmund. Tyrone says that he does not enough money, so he wants to hire a cheap doctor but Jamie does not agree with him. This is the example of conflict between objective and subjective feeling. The lines read:

TYRONE: That's enough! You're not drunk now! There's no excuse— He controls himself—a bit defensively. If you mean I

can't afford one of the fine society doctors who prey on the rich summer people—

JAMIE: Can't afford? You're one of the biggest property owners around here.

TYRONE: That's a lie! And your sneers against Doctor Hardy are lies! He doesn't put on frills, or have an office in a fashionable location, or drive around in an expensive automobile. That's what you pay for with those other five-dollars-to-look-at-your-tongue fellows, not their skill. (33)

As they are discussing, they are expressing their subjective feeling about the situation. Jamie forces his father to hire a good doctor but Tyrone does not think in such way. Rich people have their different perceptions about the same situation while poor think in another way.

Sickness is a kind of hindrance to the existence for Edmund. There are many circumstances in the world in which people are struggling for their life. They are trying to keep themselves happy but they are not able to do so. Here, the characters are separated from the outside world. They are submerged to their problems in such a way that they cannot think about the outside world. The outside world does not show concern about them either. There is reciprocal relationship between their lives and the world.

TYRONE: *With rising anger.* No, you can't. You've taught me that lesson only too well. I've lost all hope you will ever change yours. You dare tell me what I can afford? You've never known the value of a dollar and never will! You've never saved a dollar in your life! At the end of each season you're penniless! You've

thrown your salary away every week on whores and whiskey!

(34)

Therefore, the world is full of conflict and adversity from which people who experience learn so many things as Tyrone has learned so much thing from Jamie. Although there are many negative things he has given to his father, Tyrone has learned lesson to move ahead. The father regards his son penniless because he does not understand the value of money. There are two types of understanding by two of them. However, reality is beyond their perceptions. This is the feature of existential theory.

There is a conflict between Jamie and his father. The father wants him to be an actor but Jamie reveals that he does not want to be so. There is a gap in understanding their life. Tyrone seems to control his son's life and wants to make him as per his wish but it is not possible to occur. Similar thing applies to the faith on god. The people who believe in god, they want to do as per the choice of god or religion. However, the people who do not want to believe in the invisible power like to make their life free from force and compulsion. Jamie is the example who wants to define himself and makes his life meaningful one. Jamie's view is expressed below:

JAMIE: I never wanted to be an actor. You forced me on the stage.

TYRONE: That's a lie! You made no effort to find anything else to do. You left it to me to get you a job and I have no influence except in the theater. Forced you! You never wanted to do anything except loaf in barrooms! You'd have been content to sit back like a lazy lunk and sponge on me for the rest of your life! After all the money I'd wasted on your education, and all you did

was get fired in disgrace from every college you went to! (34)

Here, Jamie feels alienated and alone in his own family. Now he realizes that there is nothing in the world that belongs to us. Even our body does not belong to us. His father regards him to be burden in the family. Therefore, his individual perception is more than others. There is no any attachment to the outside world with him.

#### **4. Conclusion: Struggle for Existence**

The thesis is about the struggle of life from birth to death. The researcher came to the conclusion that life becomes meaningful only with the various kinds of experience. Although people think that they want to spend their happy life, its importance can be understood only after the bitter struggle. Every individual is free to choose his/her type of life. With freedom to choose, every individual must also accept the responsibility for directing the lives. It takes courage to discover center of self being and to learn how to live from the inside. Through self-awareness, every individual choose actions, and therefore can partially create their own destiny. No one else has right to control another's life. Moreover, the researcher finds out that life is like a routine without doing any new thing. Almost all works are repeated in one way or another. Thus, every human being is an individual person who has to face the challenge in his/her own way. Human modern life can be compared to a mythical character Sisyphus inspiring human's tedious work as a foundation stone to step ahead. They should think that struggle and adversities are not hindrance but they are a means to progress further. Therefore, absurdity should be taken positively.

Existentialism is a theoretical tool used in the thesis that helps us to interpret human existence. It interprets human being as an isolated individual existence into an alien universe. It opposes the doctrine that human being is a manifestation of absolute truth. The principle stresses on concrete individual existence, freedom and choice.

Existentialists do not take them with the traditional attempt to get the ultimate nature of the world but they really concern to the problem of men. They focus on what it is like to be an individual. Existential theorists focus on subjectivism and individuality against traditional ideas. Moreover, the theory denies the existence of God but rather it focuses on existence of human beings and freedom of choice. Likewise, the universe is alien to us and we shall face explicitly the problem of being as we create our own existence making choices. Existential theory postulates that the awareness which comes within as absurd man of his futile lifestyle, he is naturally filled with anxiety and hopelessness but he does not surrender himself to the authority. Consequently, every individual works in accordance with his thought to choice.

*Long Day's Journey into Night* revolves around a family which talks about almost about one topic: the sickness of Edmund. There is conflict and misunderstanding among the family members and they quarrel for a while. After sometimes, they are united. From them we can understand the structure of the human world. Tyrone is a sensitive person who resents everyone in small matter such as they talk about his snoring habit. All characters spend time talking about themselves, telling a story and adjusting their difficulties. What their life is plays lesser role than how they perceive the life as. Likewise, Jamie and Tyrone argue over Edmund's doctor, Doc Hardy, who charges very little for his services for which they say that he does not have quality to examine patient so he takes least fee. Tyrone replies that Jamie always thinks the worst of everyone, and that Jamie does not understand the value of a dollar because he has always been able to take comfortable living for granted.

Each character tries to solve the problems, but they increase them especially by blaming each other. Mary, for instance, the mother of Edmund and Jamie, seems to

be sharing problem with her son and shows concerns towards him. Almost everyone in the family wishes to be free and wants to spend their life in their own. The existentialist position encourages the increasing of one's self-awareness. This leads to an emphasis on choice and responsibility and to the view that a worthwhile life is one that is authentic, honest, and genuine. It takes courage to discover of our being and to learn how to live from the inside. Through our self-awareness, we choose our actions, and therefore we can partially create our own destiny. Mary and Tyrone love each other deeply but they have their own ego because of which they have invisible conflict. Mary feels alone even she is at her home and with her family members. The life is dull and repetitive doing same thing again and again in the play.

In this way, the researcher proves that everyone has to struggle for the existence and the whole world is full of adversity. The seemingly close people are not actually near us but they create problems to each other one way or another. Yet, all the characters realize that life is full of struggle.

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