



HEDONISM PRACTICES AS REFLECTED THROUGH MAIN CHARACTER IN THE WOLF OF WALL STREET MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research were to find out the hedonism practices through main character dialogues in The Wolf of Wall Street movie based on Weijers's theory of hedonism and happiness which consist of six types of hedonism, they were folk hedonism, value and prudential hedonism, motivational hedonism, normative hedonism, hedonistic egoism, and hedonistic utilitarianism. This research used descriptive qualitative method to analyze the data. The data were taken from the main character dialogues in The Wolf of Wall Street movie. The result of the research showed that there were five types of hedonism practices found in the main character dialogues of The Wolf of Wall Street movie, they were folk hedonism, value and prudential hedonism, motivational hedonism, hedonistic egoism, and hedonistic utilitarianism.

INTRODUCTION

A movie can be an entertainment to human being, but it also can use to get useful information of other cultures and historical information that contained in it. A movie also can be a medium to illustrate social issues by director or the scriptwriter that related to the issues in the present time or from the different time. One of social issues that remain exist in the society is hedonism. The activities of hedonism lifestyle aimed to seek the pleasures of life, and the point of doing such activities is to become the center of attention in his or her surrounding (Armstrong, 2003).

Pleasures has become a benchmark for a hedonist, the more pleasures someone get means that the happier that he or she achieved in their life. The person that adopt

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this lifestyle eager to do things that can keep themselves happy in order to feel alive, therefore, they do not hesitate to justify any means to reach their happiness. There are two aspects underlying this research, first is to explore hedonism in general and specific, and second is the impact of hedonism itself to a hedonist.

According to Weijers (2012: 15) the term hedonism comes from the Greek word *hēdonismos* which means for pleasure. This term refers on how we should behave, how to avoid the bad to get the good thing, and what motivate us. Despite the meaning of hedonism is for pleasure, the theory also identify pleasure and pain as the only important elements of whatever phenomena they are designed to describe. Hedonism defined as the way of seeking for pleasure, but also negatively as the avoidance of displeasure (Onfray, 2015). Some relate this behaviour as natural and also healthy, but others define the hedonism with overindulgence and moral decay. On one hand hedonism is associated with good taste and the art of living well, on the other hand with addiction, superficiality, irresponsible behaviour and short-sighted egoism.

Brax (2009: 17) describes pleasure in hedonism as a kind of experience that are regularly distinguished by how they feel. The very least pleasure that can be experienced by a hedonist might be the content or the object, or the general term of it is called mental states. In general, mental states can not only be distinguished by how they feel but by their content or by their function, so if the distinctive feeling view fails, there are other options.

Hedonism also can be view as a way of life that characterized by openness to pleasurable experience (Veenhoven, 2003). Hedonism is also a kind of values in the moral that appreciated of enjoyment. Moreover, Simon Blackburn and Gregory Pence in Weijers (2012) stated that hedonism is specifically normatives theory which claims that pursuing our own pleasure should be the goal of all our actions without mentioning any other types of hedonism. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the main goal of hedonism is pleasure, and hedonist race themselves to pursue the pleasure no matter what it takes.

Weijers (2012) proposed six types of hedonism, namely (1) folk hedonism, (2) value and prudential hedonism, (3) motivational hedonism, (4) normative hedonism, (5) hedonistic egoism, and (6) hedonistic utilitarianism.

- 1) Folk hedonism. This type argues that people have to reach their own happiness with thinking what would happen in the future or other people.
- 2) Value and Prudential hedonism. This type of hedonism explain that all pleasure is valuable and should be pursue even if it did not lead to any benefit.
- 3) Motivational hedonism. This type of hedonism means that a behaviour that is done continuously and created by desire to get happiness and avoid pain.
- 4) Normative hedonism. This type of hedonism explain of how a pleasure should be pursue and the pain should be avoid.
- 5) Hedonistic egoism. This type of hedonism explain that a person willing to do everything to get their happiness even if they have to sacrifice others people's happiness.
- 6) Hedonistic utilitarianism. This type of hedonism explain about how a person getting their happiness not only for himself or herself, but also for everyone.

The hedonism practices cannot be separated from the life around us, from buying things impulsively to fulfil their desire and reach their happiness, or sacrifice someone else happiness for their own sake. Related to explanation above, this research tries to find out the hedonism practices through main character

dialogues, Jordan Belfort, based on Weijers (2012) theory of hedonism and happiness.

METHOD

This research using the qualitative method. The qualitative method used as a broad explanation for behaviour and attitudes (Creswell 2014: 96). This research focused to analyzed the dialogues of the main character, Jordan Belfort, and find out types of hedonism in *The Wolf of Wolf Street* movie. In relevant with the explanation, descriptive qualitative method is the most suitable for this, because the objective of this research is to deliver and describe the types of hedonism which use in *The Wolf of Wall Street* movie.

The source data of the research is from *The Wolf of Wall Street* movie, and the data comes from the main character dialogues from the beginning of the movie until the end.

The data is collected by the researcher through several steps, first is by watching the movie repeatedly. Second, download the English subtitle to help the analysis process Third choose and write down the main character dialogues. Then fourth, identify the types of hedonism based on the main character dialogues. Fifth classify the data from the dialogues which contains the types of hedonism.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the six types of hedonism, the researcher found out five types of hedonism in the main character dialogues, Jordan Belfort, from *The Wolf of Wall Street* movie based on Weijers's (2012) theory. The researcher found 47 data that contains the types of hedonism namely, folk hedonism, value and prudential hedonism, motivational hedonism, hedonistic egoism, and hedonistic utilitarianism.

Folk Hedonism

Table 1. Data 3

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
3.	0:02:48	I drink like a fish. I fuck hookers maybe five, six times a week.	Drink alcohol and changing sex partners without thinking about the effect of it in the future.

In the scene of the movie, Jordan is explaining about his habit of using drugs, gambling, and drinking. While explaining that, he also using drugs and having an intercourse with someone. Based on the dialogue above, it can be concluded that the dialogue contains folk hedonism and it implies that Jordan only focusing on his own happiness even though his bad habit; gambling, drinking, using drugs, and having intercourse with different sex partners every single time can cause him bad result both health and financial. It fits to folk hedonism because Jordan is only think about his happiness without thinking about what might happen in the future.

Table 2. Data 4

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
4.	0:03:25	Relax! Just relax!	Jordan risking his life by flying a helicopter while drunk.

One night, Jordan went home with his pilot using a helicopter. The one who is flying the helicopter is not the pilot but Jordan himself. He was drunk while flying the helicopter, which is very dangerous and risk not only his life but also the pilot's

life. Jordan laugh and say “Relax! Just relax!” to his pilot, and he hit the ground very hard after saying that. Luckily both of them are save. Based on the explanation above, Jordan do not care about the pilot’s life, Jordan only focus on his own happiness and it can be seen that he is laughing in the scene. In conclusion, this dialogue contains folk hedonism.

Value and Prudential Hedonism

Table 3. Data 7

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
7.	0:04:54	Money doesn't just buy you a better life, better food, better cars, better pussy.	Money is an example of instrumental good and Jordan describe about things that money can buy.

In the beginning of the movie Jordan tells about how success life and bring a lot of joy and happiness to him. An example of his happiness is money, and Jordan explain about how money can make you live a better life, better food, better cars, and ofcourse girls that hanging around you. Moreover, from the money that you have, you can give it to the church for charity, or even a political party. Money is an example of value and prudential hedonism where money can bring us pleasure or help us to avoid pain. From those explanation, it can be concluded that this dialogue contains value and prudential hedonism.

Table 4. Data 96

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
7.	0:46:22	Expensive champagne and We had to buy champagne.	Expensive champagne is an example of what money can buy.

Jordan’s father, Max, come to his office when he found out the company expenses reach 430,000 dollars in just a month. Max was so furious when he found that Jordan spend his money on unnecessary things such as expensive champagne and side dish that cost the company 26,000 dollars. Moreover, Max found that some of that money is use for prostitution. It can be concluded that those expenses do not lead to any benefit for Jordan and his colleague, but it is still good to experience. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that this dialogue contains the type of hedonism which is value and prudential hedonism.

Motivational Hedonism

Table 5. Data 6

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
6.	0:03:55	On a daily basis I consume enough drugs.	Jordan consume drugs daily in order to stimulate him to work better.

Waking up in the morning after flying his helicopter by himself last night, Jordan explain how he “conquer” the world of investing through his daily habit. Jordan consume drugs in a large dosage which will harm his health and his body, and he repeat this habit every single day that later on become a behaviour for him which actually it should be avoided. Jordan done this thing continuously on his

daily basis, it means that it is Jordan behaviour to avoid pain and get his happiness, therefore this dialogue is considered as motivational hedonism.

Table 6. Data 104

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
104.	0:50:49	We liked to get as fucked up as possible during our business powwows.	Getting as high as they can during business meeting to achieve the best business idea.

Straton Oakmant is having a close party only for the employee of the company. Jordan, Donnie, and others founding father of the company is looking for a company that is going for their Initial Public Offering or IPO with Straton Oakmant. While they keep thinking which is the right company, they like to do it while they high, by keep drinking alcohol and consume ludes just like a choco chip, keep swallow it on and on. Jordan and others founding father like to get as high as they can during their business trip or meeting in order to get the best idea, and this means that this dialogue contains motivational hedonism because Jordan keep doing it as a behaviour in order to reach his happiness by getting the best idea.

Hedonistic Egoism

Table 7. Data 43

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
43.	0:19:47	By the way, John, our analysts indicate it could go a heck of a lot higher than that. Your profit on a mere \$6,000 investment would be upwards of \$60,000!	Jordan try to convince his customer to buy pink sheet stock despite the real fact is not as what Jordan say.

Jordan had his first job since he lost his job because of Black Monday. This job is basically the same as his last job, a stock broker, but the difference between his new job and previous job is that now Jordan had to sell pink sheet, cheap stock, a stock where normally people avoid because the price will be stuck. What makes Jordan interested in selling this stock is because the pink sheet give 50 percent commission, which is bigger compared to his previous job, only 1 percent commission. So Jordan call his client right away, offer him a company called Aerotyne. Jordan persuade and convince the buyer that the price of this stock will keep getting higher and higher, which actually only a lies. Jordan focuses on how to get the 50 percent commission no matter how, even if he had to lie to his customer, he does not care about it. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that this dialogue contain hedonistic egoism.

Table 8. Data 45

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
45.	0:21:31	I was selling garbage to garbage men and making cash hand over fist.	Jordan succeed to convince his customer to buy the stock and get the commission, while Jordan do not care whether he will get profit or not.

Jordan made his first sale as a broker in his new firm. He made 2 grand by just persuading and convincing his customer to buy stock of a company, which basically is there is no clear background information about the company. Jordan main goal is how to get his customer money and do not care about the rest that will happen to his customer. From Jordan's dialogue it can concluded that this dialogue contains hedonistic egoism

because the fact that Jordan sacrifice his customer money to buy pink sheet stock and from the commission money, he pursue his own dream by saying that he knew how to spend the money better than his customer.

Hedonistic Utilitarianism

Table 9. Data 72

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
72.	0:30:17	In no time, I'll make them rich.	Jordan wants his colleague to be like him, success with a lot of money.

In order to build a company, Jordan can not do this alone. Because of that, Jordan call his old friends to join them. Jordan clearly understand that all of his old friends has no economic study background or experience, especially stock market, but Jordan has the power and will to make his friends understand about it, and become a wealthy person from it. From here Jordan understand that he can not build a company by himself so he needs a help from his old friends, and not only that, Jordan wants his friends to understand and become a wealthy person from it, he not only think about himself but also about his friends. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that this dialogues contains hedonistic utilitarianism.

Table 10. Data 86

No.	Time	Source	Data Interpretation
86.	0:37:49	Send in the stripes!	Share the joy of great sale by sending stripes to all his employee.

After making a great sale in the current month, Jordan announce about their sale report that month to all his employee. The profit that the company got is all from the pink sheet stock which is 28,7 million dollars. To celebrate it, Jordan offer one of his employee, Danielle, to shave her hair for 10,000 dollars and those money will be use by Danielle for her breast surgery. In addition to that, Jordan also send the stripees to the office to make his employee happy and enjoy the achievement they have done. From here, Jordan wants to share his happiness after achieving a great sale to all his employee. Based on the explanation above, this dialogue is considered as a hedonistic utilitarianism.

The data of the explanation above is taken from the main character dialogues. A dialogue can be concluded into each types based on the dialogue itself and the correlation between the dialogue and the scene of the movie when the dialogue occurs, and the researcher match the dialogue to the types of hedonism. From the total of 47 data, hedonistic egoism is become the most common type found in the dialogues with total of 17 data. The main reason of it is because Jordan wants to pursue the maximum happiness of his life even if it is has to sacrifice someone else happiness and it is in correlation with the definition of hedonistic egoism by Weijers (2012).

The desire to pursue happiness and to get satisfaction from it lead to bad impacts in the long term of Jordan's life. Using drugs lead Jordan into an addict, swallow the pills until he lose his motor skills and consciousness, and moreover it can cause damage to his health organs. The other bad impact of hedonism as reflected by Jordan how seeking for pleasure can lead into a greedy person and it will ruin the life of its own. Hedonism might bring pleasures in a short term, but when it comes to a long term but will slowly but sure take all the good things that Jordan have, from his marriage to his career.

CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis of hedonism practices found in Jordan Belfort dialogues as the main character in *The Wolf of Wall Street* movie, the research found that there are 47

data that contains types of hedonism. 13 data employ folk hedonism, 2 data employ value and prudential hedonism, 4 data employ motivational hedonism, 17 data employ hedonistic egoism, and 11 data employ hedonistic utilitarianism. Hedonistic egoism is considered as the most common type found in the main character dialogues because Jordan wants to pursue the maximum happiness even if it has to sacrifice someone else happiness.

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