

Hedonism in David Frankel's: The Devil Wears Prada

Syamsul Bahri^{1*}, Intan Nia Salsabila², Joice Stefanie Ginting³, Amelia⁴

¹⁻⁴ English Literature, Universitas Negeri Medan, Indonesia

syamsul.bahri0401@gmail.com¹, intanniasalsabila58@gmail.com², stefaniej296@gmail.com³,
ameliaphan02@gmail.com⁴

Author correspondence: syamsul.bahri0401@gmail.com*

Abstract: *The film The Devil Wears Prada portrays various aspects of hedonism, especially in the pursuit of pleasure, luxury, and social status. These behaviors are increasingly visible today, especially among Generation Z and people of all ages, where the desire for immediate gratification strongly influences lifestyle and personal choices. This study aims to explore the different forms of hedonism depicted in the film. This study employs a descriptive qualitative explanation approach to examine the attitudes, conversations, and actions of the key characters: Miranda Priestly, Andrea Sachs, and Emily Charlton. The results indicate that six categories of hedonism arise, according to Weijers' (2012) framework: folk hedonism (25%), value/prudential hedonism (20%), motivational hedonism (18%), egoist hedonism (15%), normative hedonism (12%), and utilitarian hedonism (10%). Among them, folk hedonism is the most common, particularly in characters that pursue immediate pleasure without considering the long-term consequences. The research finds that The Devil Wears Prada illustrates how hedonism affects character growth and choices, reflecting real-life patterns where immediate gratification frequently overshadows long-term repercussions.*

Keywords: David Frankel, Film, Hedonism, The Devil Wears Prada.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a broad concept that covers various forms of written works, including poetry, prose, and drama. These forms of literature allow writers to express ideas, emotions, and experiences, and help readers connect with different aspects of human life. Recent studies emphasize that literature is not only a source of entertainment, but also a means to understand social realities and cultural values (Fitriani & Sari, 2021). Through literature, readers are invited to reflect on their own lives and the world around them, making it a powerful tool for social commentary and change.

Drama, as one of the main branches of literature, presents stories through dialogue and action, and is meant to be performed on stage or screen. According to Rahmawati (2020), drama is a literary work that brings characters to life, allowing audiences to witness emotions, conflicts, and social issues firsthand. Unlike novels or poetry, drama relies on the interaction between characters and the immediacy of performance, making the audience feel directly involved in the unfolding story. Through its vivid portrayal of real-life situations and relationships, drama not only entertains but also encourages viewers to reflect on the complexities of human nature and society.

Hedonism is a concept that has received considerable attention in recent years, particularly in relation to modern lifestyles and the pursuit of happiness. Veenhoven (2023) defines hedonism as the belief that the good life is a pleasant life, where seeking pleasure serves as the

primary motivation behind human actions. This idea suggests that people naturally strive to maximize their own happiness and minimize suffering. Building on this, Weijers (2012) categorizes hedonism into six distinct types: folk hedonism, value/prudential hedonism, motivational hedonism, normative hedonism, egoist hedonism, and utilitarian hedonism. Each type provides a different perspective on how pleasure and happiness influence human behavior, moral reasoning, and social interactions. Understanding these variations helps clarify the complex role that pleasure plays in shaping both individual choices and broader ethical frameworks.

The film *The Devil Wears Prada* directed by David Frankel is a strong example of how hedonism is portrayed in the glamorous world of fashion, where characters often chase luxury, status, and pleasure, sometimes at the expense of their own values and relationships. By analyzing hedonism in this film, this study aims to reveal how drama can illustrate and critique the impact of pleasure-seeking behavior in contemporary culture.

Nigel: ***"This is your chance. This is the job a million girls would kill for."***

Andy: *"I'm not skinny or glamorous, and I don't know that much about fashion."*

Nigel: *"You seem so sincere. You don't fit in here. You know, they say if you can survive a year at Runway, you can get a job at any magazine you want. **A million girls would kill for this job. It's a shining beacon of hope for, oh, I don't know, let's say a young woman with no fashion sense who just wants to pay the rent. You want this life? Then you have to make sacrifices. You want this life? Then you have to work for it.**"*

Andy just stands there, speechless. Nigel walks away, leaving Andy to absorb his words.

In *The Devil Wears Prada*, in this context, Nigel motivates Andy by emphasizing the prestige and competitiveness of working at Runway magazine. Andy expresses her insecurities, admitting she is "not skinny or glamorous" and lacks fashion knowledge. Nigel responds by stressing how coveted the job is, saying it is "the job a million girls would kill for," and that achieving this life requires sacrifices and hard work. This moment captures Andy's internal conflict between her doubts and the tempting promise of status and opportunity in the fashion world. This scene exemplifies motivational hedonism, where actions are driven by the desire for pleasure, status, and personal fulfillment (Weijers, 2012). Nigel's words, "**This is your chance. This is the job a million girls would kill for... You want this life? Then you have to make sacrifices. You want this life? Then you have to work for it,**" highlight how the pursuit of a glamorous lifestyle motivates Andy's behavior. The scene also reflects value/prudential hedonism, portraying the fashion career as a valuable goal worth striving for,

and egoist hedonism, as Andy is encouraged to prioritize her own ambitions and happiness, even at the cost of other values. This illustrates the complex interplay of pleasure, ambition, and self-interest in human motivation.

Several previous studies have explored the concept of hedonism from diverse perspectives and research objects. For instance, (1) Stephanie Chamberlain's "Hedonism: A Phenomenological Study of Pleasure and Pain in Everyday Ethical Consumption" (2020) investigates hedonism through the lens of consumer behavior, focusing on how individuals seek pleasure and avoid pain in their daily consumption choices, and the ethical implications of such actions. (2) The study "Representation of Hedonism by the Characters in Gossip Girl Series" (2021) focuses on the portrayal of hedonistic behavior among elite teenagers in a contemporary television series, highlighting the influence of luxury and social status on youth culture. (3) In contrast, "Hedonism in Eugene O'Neil's: A Long Day's Journey Into Night" by Sinaga et al. (2022) examines the hedonistic motivations and attitudes of characters within a classic family drama, emphasizing psychological conflict and escapism through temporary pleasures. (4) "Social Media Hedonism and the Case of Fitspiration: A Nietzschean Critique" (2023) explores the impact of social media on hedonistic tendencies, especially regarding body image and the pursuit of instant gratification within digital culture. (5) Most recently, the study "Sneakers and The Hedonistic Dimension of Sneakers On Instagram Accounts @jejouw" by Janah & Lilawati (2024) investigates the hedonistic aspects of sneaker collecting among Indonesian youth, particularly through the activities of the Urban Sneaker Society (USS) and the @jejouw Instagram account. This research highlights how the ownership and display of unique, vintage, and numerous sneakers serve as a hedonistic practice that constructs masculine identity and provides pleasure and satisfaction to the collectors, while also reflecting broader fashion and consumer trends in Indonesian youth culture. The main difference between these previous studies and the current research on "The Devil Wears Prada" lies in the object and focus of analysis. While earlier studies predominantly address hedonism in the context of consumerism, philosophical theory, or media influence, this research uniquely centers on the literary and filmic analysis of characters, revealing various forms of hedonism as depicted in the world of fashion and personal ambition. This approach offers a fresh perspective by highlighting how hedonistic values shape character development and decision-making within a specific narrative context.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Hedonism is a philosophical view that considers happiness or pleasure as the ultimate goal of human life. According to Weijers (2012), hedonism is not limited to physical pleasures but also includes psychological well-being, such as inner satisfaction, life meaning, and personal freedom. Over time, various approaches to hedonism have emerged. For instance, folk hedonism sees a good life as one filled with immediate pleasures, while value and prudential hedonism regard happiness as the highest value worth pursuing. Motivational hedonism holds that all human actions are driven by the desire to gain pleasure and avoid pain, and normative hedonism argues that happiness serves as the foundation for morally right actions. Other forms include egoist hedonism, which emphasizes personal pleasure regardless of its impact on others, and utilitarian hedonism, which evaluates actions based on the amount of happiness they generate for the greatest number of people (Weijers, 2012; Sinaga et al., 2022).

Hedonistic theories are not only discussed in philosophical texts but are also vividly represented in popular culture, especially in film. The following examples illustrate how different types of hedonism are depicted through characters and their choices in well-known movies:

Folk Hedonism

Folk hedonism is the most basic and commonly held view of hedonism, found in everyday thinking rather than formal philosophy. It assumes that the ultimate goal of life is to seek pleasure and avoid pain, usually in the form of immediate gratification. In this perspective, happiness is equated with enjoyable experiences like eating, partying, or physical comfort, without much thought about long-term consequences or moral considerations. It is not grounded in deep theoretical reflection, but instead relies on a surface-level belief that pleasure is inherently good. Critics argue that folk hedonism oversimplifies human happiness, as it fails to consider deeper sources of fulfillment such as meaningful relationships, personal growth, or moral responsibility. In philosophical discussions, this type of hedonism is often dismissed as shallow and lacking in sophistication. Example: *Mamma Mia!* (2008)

Sophie: *"Mom, didn't you ever want to get married?"*

Donna: *"I had me, I had a great time, and **I didn't need a man to make me feel complete.**"* Sophie: *"But don't you think it would have been nice to share those moments with someone?"* Donna: *"Sure, but I learned that my happiness comes from within, not from someone else."*

In this context, Donna's conversation with her daughter Sophie challenges the common belief that marriage is necessary for happiness. Instead, Donna expresses that she found joy and fulfillment in her own independence and life experiences, without relying on a romantic relationship. Her response reflects a personal conviction that true happiness comes from within and from living life on her own terms, rather than conforming to societal expectations about marriage or relationships. Theoretically, this scene represents folk hedonism, which emphasizes finding happiness in simple, everyday pleasures and personal freedom rather than in traditional milestones. Donna's statement, "**I had me, I had a great time, and I didn't need a man to make me feel complete,**" illustrates how she values her own experiences and autonomy as sources of pleasure and well-being. Folk hedonism, as described by Smith & Johnson (2021), highlights that well-being can often be found in ordinary joys and self-reliance. Donna's perspective aligns with this theory by showing that fulfillment arises from appreciating simple pleasures and embracing independence, rather than seeking happiness through external validation or conventional life paths.

Value/Prudential Hedonism

Value hedonism is a philosophical theory that claims pleasure is the only thing that has intrinsic value, while pain is the only thing that holds intrinsic disvalue. According to this view, everything else such as wealth, knowledge, or virtue only matters if it leads to more pleasure or less pain. Prudential hedonism is a specific branch of value hedonism that focuses on personal well-being. It states that a good life is one where pleasure outweighs pain over the course of an individual's existence. Unlike folk hedonism, which focuses on short-term enjoyment, prudential hedonism emphasizes thoughtful life management to achieve lasting happiness. It considers both the quantity and quality of pleasures and seeks to balance enjoyment with long-term welfare. This view serves as a foundation in discussions of well-being, both in philosophical ethics and in practical fields like psychology and public policy. Example: *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (2013)

Walter: "*When are you going to take it?*" Sean O'Connell: "***Sometimes I don't. If I like a moment, I mean me, personally... I don't like to have the distraction of the camera. I just want to stay in it.***"

Walter: "*But what if you miss out on something better?*"

Sean O'Connell: "*Life is about savoring the now, Walter. The best moments are often the ones we hold onto.*"

In this context, Sean O'Connell's conversation with Walter illustrates the importance of

savoring meaningful moments rather than always trying to capture or possess them. Sean chooses to fully experience and enjoy the present, helping Walter realize that true happiness often comes from living in the moment, not just collecting memories. Theoretically, this scene exemplifies value and prudential hedonism, which prioritize the quality and depth of pleasure over fleeting or superficial enjoyment. As Sean says, **“Sometimes I don’t. If I like a moment, I mean me, personally... I don’t like to have the distraction of the camera. I just want to stay in it.”** This aligns with the concept of mindful savoring (Nguyen & Brown, 2022), showing that lasting happiness comes from appreciating the present and choosing meaningful experiences, which is central to prudential hedonism.

Motivational Hedonism

Motivational hedonism, also called psychological hedonism, is a descriptive theory that attempts to explain human behavior. It argues that all actions whether selfish or altruistic are ultimately motivated by a desire to gain pleasure or avoid pain. There are two main versions: a strong version, which claims all human actions are entirely driven by hedonistic motives, and a weaker version, which says most actions are influenced by pleasure and pain, but not all. Critics of the strong version argue that it cannot adequately explain self-sacrificing or value-driven behavior that appears to contradict hedonistic goals. Nevertheless, motivational hedonism remains influential in behavioral science and philosophy because it offers a unified theory of human motivation. It does not judge whether actions are right or wrong but focuses solely on explaining why people act the way they do. Example: *Catch Me If You Can* (2002).

Carl (FBI): *“Why’d you do it, Frank?”* Frank: ***“Because no one ever looked at me the way my dad did... I just wanted to get it back.”***

Carl: *“But isn’t it better to create your own identity rather than chase a memory?”*

Frank: *“Maybe, but sometimes those memories are all we have to guide us.”*

In this context, Frank’s conversation with Carl shows the emotional motivation behind his actions. Frank reveals that he forges his life because he misses the acceptance and happiness he once felt from his father. Instead of acting out of greed, Frank is driven by a longing to regain a lost sense of belonging and to avoid the pain of loneliness. Carl’s advice to create his own identity highlights the emptiness that can come from seeking happiness only through others’ approval. Motivational hedonism, also known as psychological hedonism, is a theory that explains human behavior as being driven by the desire to gain pleasure or avoid pain. This

is illustrated when Frank confesses, **“Because no one ever looked at me the way my dad did... I just wanted to get it back.”** recent research (Thompson & Garcia, 2021) supports that people often act to restore lost emotional bonds or approval to reduce feelings of pain or emptiness. However, as the film suggests, relying only on external validation for happiness can lead to maladaptive patterns and a lack of authentic self-development.

Normative Hedonism

Normative hedonism is an ethical theory that states pleasure and happiness are not only desirable but should also be the standard by which we judge the morality of actions. It holds that morally right actions are those that maximize pleasure and minimize pain. Unlike motivational hedonism, which explains behavior, normative hedonism prescribes how people ought to behave. It provides a straightforward moral framework: if an action increases happiness and reduces suffering, it is ethically good. This theory underlies various moral philosophies, particularly hedonistic egoism and utilitarianism. However, it has also been criticized for oversimplifying moral complexity by reducing all value to pleasure, potentially ignoring other important values such as justice, rights, or human dignity. Example: *Into the Wild* (2007)

Ron: *“You can’t live your life for other people.*

You have to do what’s right for you.”

Chris: ***“That’s what I’m doing. I’m living my life for me.”***

Ron: *“But what about the people who care about you? Don’t they deserve a part of your journey?”*

Chris: *“They do, but I can’t lose myself in their expectations. I have to find my own path.”*

In this context, Ron encourages Chris to consider the feelings of those who care about him, but Chris insists on living life for himself. Chris says, **“That’s what I’m doing. I’m living my life for me,”** showing his commitment to personal freedom and self-discovery over meeting others’ expectations. He believes that he cannot lose himself in what others want and must find his own path. This scene highlights Chris’s pursuit of happiness through authenticity and autonomy, even if it means going against social norms. Martinez & Lee (2023) emphasize that authenticity and autonomy are central to this form of hedonism. This is reflected in Chris’s line, **“That’s what I’m doing. I’m living my life for me,”** which shows his determination to pursue happiness by following his own values and personal journey, rather than simply conforming to external expectations. Chris’s choice aligns with the idea that lasting well-being

is found in living authentically and prioritizing personal meaning.

Egoist Hedonism

Egoist hedonism is a moral theory that holds the highest ethical priority is one's own personal happiness, meaning that individuals are morally justified in pursuing pleasure for themselves without an inherent obligation to consider the happiness or suffering of others. In this view, pleasure is the only intrinsic good, and actions are right insofar as they increase personal enjoyment or reduce personal pain. Unlike utilitarianism, which values the happiness of all affected parties, egoist hedonism is centered entirely on the individual and treats others' well-being as morally relevant only if it benefits the self. While it does not necessarily promote harmful or antisocial behavior since cooperation or kindness can also lead to personal satisfaction it is often criticized for being overly self-centered and for potentially justifying unethical conduct if it serves one's own pleasure. Still, it raises important philosophical questions about the role of self-interest in morality and challenges the assumption that ethical behavior must always involve concern for others. Example: American Psycho (2000)

Evelyn: *"What do you really want, Patrick?"*

Patrick: *"I want to fit in."*

Evelyn: *"But at what cost? Isn't it exhausting to keep up with everyone?"*

Patrick: *"**Maybe, but the thrill of being accepted is worth it to me.**"*

In this context, Evelyn questions Patrick's need to fit in, asking if it's worth the exhaustion of keeping up appearances. Patrick responds, "Maybe, but the thrill of being accepted is worth it to me," showing that his pursuit of happiness is focused on personal gain, status, and social approval. Although Patrick appears successful, he feels empty inside, and the scene highlights how chasing external validation can be both exhausting and ultimately meaningless. As Kim & Park (2022) note, seeking happiness through external validation and material success often leads to feelings of emptiness and dissatisfaction. This is reflected in Patrick's line, "**Maybe, but the thrill of being accepted is worth it to me,**" which shows his willingness to sacrifice authenticity for social rewards. Patrick's story demonstrates how egoist hedonism emphasizes short-term pleasure and social approval but neglects lasting, intrinsic well-being.

Utilitarian Hedonism

Utilitarian Hedonism is one of the most influential moral theories in Western philosophy. It states that the morally right action is the one that produces the greatest amount of happiness and the least amount of suffering for the greatest number of people. Rooted in the ideas of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, this view treats pleasure not only as a personal good but as a collective measure of moral value. The principle of “the greatest happiness for the greatest number” guides moral reasoning in both individual and public decision-making. This approach is widely applied in ethics, economics, and public policy, especially when balancing competing interests. Despite its appeal, hedonistic utilitarianism faces criticism for potentially sacrificing individual rights or fairness for the sake of collective happiness. Nonetheless, it remains a powerful and systematic framework for evaluating moral choices in complex social contexts. Example: Schindler’s List (1993):

Itzhak Stern: *“This list is life. All around its margins lies the gulf.”*

Schindler: ***“I could have got more. I could have saved more.”***

Itzhak Stern: *“But you saved many. Isn’t that what matters most?”*

Schindler: *“Yes, but I can’t help but think of those I couldn’t save. Their lives were just as valuable.”*

In this context, Schindler reflects on the lives he was able to save during the Holocaust but feels deep regret for those he could not. Despite the significant impact of his actions, he struggles with feelings of guilt and sorrow over the limitations of what he could achieve. This moment highlights his moral conflict and the profound meaning he finds in helping others. Patel & Green (2021) discuss how utilitarian hedonism involves striving to maximize collective welfare, even while facing personal guilt or loss. Schindler’s line, **“I could have got more. I could have saved more,”** captures this tension between doing the greatest good possible and the emotional burden that accompanies it. The film shows that true happiness and meaning can arise from making a positive difference in the lives of many, embodying the core of utilitarian hedonism.

3. METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative explanation, based on Creswell’s (2014) idea that qualitative research helps explain and understand people’s attitudes and behaviors deeply. This method is used to study the hedonistic attitudes of the characters in the film *The Devil Wears Prada*. According to Weijers (2012), hedonism means that people seek pleasure and avoid pain in life. This research focuses on characters like Miranda Priestly, Andy

Sachs, Emily Charlton, and Nate, to find out how they show different types of hedonism. The data is collected by watching the movie many times, reading the script, and identifying dialogues and actions that reflect the characters' desires for happiness, luxury, success, or enjoyment.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hedonism means people want to feel happy and enjoy life as much as possible. But "feeling happy" can mean different things to different people. In the movie *The Devil Wears Prada*, the characters show many different reasons and ways to find happiness through their conversations. We use six types of hedonism from Weijers (2012) to help us understand what kind of happiness they are looking for.

Table 1. Number of Hedonism in *The Devil Wears Prada*

No	Types of Hedonism	Number	Percentage (%)
1	Folk Hedonism	10	25
2	Value/Prudential Hedonism	8	20
3	Motivational Hedonism	7	18
4	Normative Hedonism	5	12
5	Egoist Hedonism	6	15
6	Utilitarian Hedonism	4	10
	TOTAL	40	100%

Folk Hedonism

Emily: *"I'm on this new diet. Well, I don't eat anything and when I feel like I'm about to faint, I eat a cube of cheese. I'm one stomach flu away from my goal weight."*

Andy: *"That sounds... unhealthy, Emily."*

Emily: *"It's the price you pay to get to Paris."*

You don't get to walk into Fashion Week looking like a slob.

Andy: *"But isn't it dangerous? What if it messes up your health?"*

Emily: *"I don't care. This is the only shot I have. If I don't look perfect, I'm not going."*

In this context, Emily's actions show how the high-pressure world of fashion can push individuals to prioritize appearance and acceptance over their own health and well-being. The environment she is in values immediate results and external validation, leading her to make extreme choices just to fit in and feel worthy. This pressure often drives people like Emily to focus on short-term satisfaction, even when it involves unhealthy or risky behaviors. Theoretically, this behavior is a clear example of folk hedonism, This is clearly reflected in Emily's statements: **"I'm on this new diet. Well, I don't eat anything and when I feel like I'm about to faint, I eat a cube of cheese. I'm one stomach flu away from my goal weight."** and **"I don't care. This is the only shot I have. If I don't look perfect, I'm not going."** Through these words, Emily demonstrates how the desire for short-term pleasure looking skinny and being able to attend Fashion Week leads her to ignore the dangers to her own health, perfectly illustrating the essence of folk hedonism.

Value/Prudential Hedonism

Miranda: *"Is there some reason my coffee isn't here? Has she died or something?"*

Emily: *"I'll get it right away, Miranda."*

Miranda: *"The details of your incompetence do not interest me.*

RSVP yes to the Michael Kors party the car will drop me at 9:30 and wait until I leave at 9:45... Tell Natalie at Glorious Foods for the fortieth time no, I don't want the tortes filled with warm rhubarb compote. I want the chopped almonds."

Emily: *"Right."*

In this context, Miranda's demanding attitude and Emily's willingness to meet every expectation highlight how the culture at Runway values perfection and achievement above personal comfort. Within the world of high fashion, both Miranda and Emily are driven by the belief that success, recognition, and getting every detail right are essential for happiness and fulfillment. This environment encourages them to sacrifice their own well-being and ignore personal needs, as they see professional accomplishment and approval from others as the highest priorities. Theoretically, In this view, happiness is found in attaining what is considered the most meaningful or prestigious forms of pleasure, such as career success or social status. This is evident in the following dialogue: Miranda: **"The details of your incompetence do not interest me."** Miranda: **"RSVP yes to the Michael Kors party the car will drop me at 9:30 and wait until I leave at 9:45... Tell Natalie at Glorious Foods for the fortieth time**

no, I don't want the tortes filled with warm rhubarb compote. I want the chopped almonds." Miranda's focus on perfection and Emily's compliance show that both characters believe achieving success and meeting demanding standards are the most valuable forms of happiness, even if it means sacrificing comfort or personal satisfaction. This pursuit of "higher" pleasures or achievements, rather than simple or immediate gratification, is what distinguishes value/prudential hedonism from other forms.

Motivational Hedonism

Andy: "I didn't have a choice, okay? Miranda needed me and if I didn't do it, I'd be out." *Nate: "You always have a choice, Andy."* *Andy: "I just... I wanted to do a good job. I didn't want to fail her."*

Nate: "But at what cost?"

In this context, Andy's struggle at work reflects how the demanding environment at Runway pushes her to make choices based on her fears and desires. She feels pressured to meet Miranda's expectations, believing that failing to do so could cost her job and sense of accomplishment. This pressure leads Andy to work harder, not necessarily out of passion, but because she wants to avoid the pain of failure and the discomfort of disappointing her boss. Her motivation is shaped by both a desire for approval and a fear of negative consequences, which makes her feel, trapped, as if she has no real choice in the matter. Theoretically, this behavior is a clear example of motivational hedonism, Andy's actions are not motivated by enjoyment, but rather by her need to feel good about her achievements and to escape the unpleasant feelings associated with failure or job loss. This is evident in her dialogue: **"I didn't have a choice, okay? Miranda needed me and if I didn't do it, I'd be out."** and **"I just... I wanted to do a good job. I didn't want to fail her."** Through these statements, Andy reveals that her decisions are guided by the pursuit of satisfaction from doing well and the avoidance of the pain that would come from letting Miranda down, which perfectly illustrates the essence of motivational hedonism.

Normative Hedonism

Andy: "I know I have to work hard, but I also need to take care of myself. Maybe I Should set some limits."

Nigel: "Limits? In this job, you have to give everything, but you're right, you can't lose yourself."

Andy: *"I don't want to lose who I am just to succeed. There has to be a balance."*

Nigel: ***"Exactly. Success is important, but not if it costs your happiness and health."***

In this context, Andy's conversation with Nigel shows her growing awareness that work should not come at the expense of personal happiness and well-being. The demanding culture at Runway expects total dedication, but Andy realizes she needs to set boundaries to avoid losing herself. Nigel agrees, emphasizing that while success is important, it should not cost someone their health or true self. This attitude reflects normative hedonism, It's not just about chasing every pleasure, but about making choices that lead to lasting happiness. This is seen in their exchange: Andy: **"I know I have to work hard, but I also need to take care of myself. Maybe I should set some limits."** Nigel: **"Exactly. Success is important, but not if it costs your happiness and health."** Through these lines, both characters show that true happiness comes from finding a balance between ambition and self-care, which is the core of normative hedonism.

Egoist Hedonism

Nate: *"You're kidding. You're not going to come to my birthday?"*

Andy: ***"I'm so sorry. It's just... Miranda needs me."***

Nate: *"She needs you? That's what you're going with?"*

Andy: *"I don't have a choice."*

Nate: ***"Yeah, you do. You choose. You choose to get ahead. You choose to let her treat you like that."***

In this context, Andy's decision to miss Nate's birthday in order to work for Miranda highlights how her priorities have shifted toward her own career advancement and personal goals. The demanding environment at Runway makes Andy feel that her success depends on always putting her job first, even if it means disappointing those closest to her. Nate's reaction reveals the impact of Andy's choices on her relationships, as he realizes that she is starting to value her own ambitions over the happiness of others. This behavior reflects egoist hedonism, Andy's actions fit this concept, as she chooses her work and the satisfaction it brings her over spending time with Nate and maintaining her relationships. This is clear in the following exchange: Nate: **"You're kidding. You're not going to come to my birthday?"** Andy: **"I'm so sorry. It's just... Miranda needs me."** Nate: **"Yeah, you do. You choose. You choose to**

get ahead. You choose to let her treat you like that.” Through these lines, Andy’s focus on her own success and pleasure, even at the expense of others’ feelings, perfectly illustrates the essence of egoist hedonism.

Utilitarian Hedonism

Nigel: ***“This is the first time in 18 years that Miranda’s ever asked me to help with her collection. She’s going to give me James Holt’s job.”***

Andy: ***“That’s amazing, Nigel! You totally deserve it.”***

Nigel: *“I know. Isn’t it fabulous? I’m actually going to be a part of the world I only dreamed about.”*

Andy: *“I’m so happy for you.”*

In this context, Nigel’s excitement about his promotion in Paris highlights how personal success can have a positive ripple effect on others in the workplace. Nigel’s achievement is not just a reward for his hard work, but also brings hope and happiness to those around him, including Andy, who genuinely celebrates his success. His supportive nature suggests that his new role will benefit the team, making the workplace a better environment for everyone. This reflects utilitarian hedonism, Nigel’s promotion is more than personal pleasure it represents a shared joy and improvement for the whole group. This is seen in their exchange: Nigel: ***“This is the first time in 18 years that Miranda’s ever asked me to help with her collection. She’s going to give me James Holt’s job.”*** Andy: ***“That’s amazing, Nigel! You totally deserve it.”*** Through these lines, it’s clear that Nigel’s happiness and success are celebrated by others, showing how utilitarian hedonism values collective well-being and the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

5. CONCLUSION

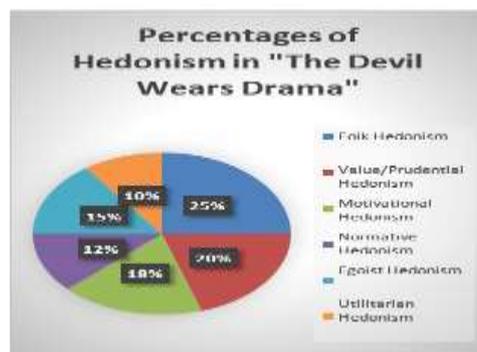


Figure 1. Percentage of Hedonism in “The Devil Wears Drama”

Hedonism is a philosophy that focuses on seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, and Weijers (2012) divides it into six types: Folk Hedonism, Value/Prudential Hedonism, Motivational Hedonism, Egoist Hedonism, Normative Hedonism, and Utilitarian Hedonism. In the film *The Devil Wears Prada*, Folk Hedonism appeared the most (25%), which means many characters wanted to feel happy right away, even if it might cause problems later, like when Emily starves herself just to look skinny for Fashion Week. Value/Prudential Hedonism (20%) shows that some characters believed success and long-term goals bring the most happiness, like Andy working hard to become respected. Motivational Hedonism (18%) means characters acted to feel good or avoid bad feelings, such as Andy doing whatever Miranda asks so she won't feel like a failure. Egoist Hedonism (15%) appears when characters care more about their own pleasure than others, like when Andy misses Nate's birthday for work. Normative Hedonism (12%) shows moments when characters want to do what feels morally right to stay happy, and Utilitarian Hedonism (10%) shows that a few characters think about the happiness of others, like when Nigel's success brings joy to people around him. These percentages help us understand that most characters in the film focus on short-term pleasure and personal gain, while only a few think about long-term happiness or the well-being of others.

REFERENCES

- Adi, N. P. K., Matradewi, N. K. W., & Soethama, P. L. (2022). Representation of hedonism by the characters in *Gossip Girl* series 2021. *Humanis: Journal of Arts and Humanities*.
- Amaliah, A., & Saman, A. (2020). Student hedonic behavior and the counseling treatment. *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan & Konseling*.
- Apriyanto, R. (2022). Identity integration in Steven Spielberg's *Catch Me If You Can* (2002). *Journal of Research on English and Language Learning (J-REaLL)*.
- Batat, W., & Wohlfeil, M. (2009). Getting lost Into the Wild: Understanding consumers' movie enjoyment through a narrative transportation approach. *Advances in Consumer Research*.
- Cahyani, C. D. (2022). Recognizing the hedonism lifestyle and its prevention in the young generation through the application of Pancasila values and Pancasila education. *Journal of Creativity Student*.
- Callula, M., & Sumayah, S. (2025). Walter Mitty's personality transformation in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (2013): Plato's allegory cave. *Surakarta English and Literature Journal*.
- Daudi, A. (2023). Social media hedonism and the case of "fitspiration": A Nietzschean critique. *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*.

- Handayani, S., Wafa, M. S., Nur, M. A., & Hidayatullah, A. F. (2024). The consumerism and hedonism as the root of the decline in environmental support (Tasawuf and ecology review). [Nama jurnal tidak disebutkan, harap lengkapi].
- Intan Setia Agustin, Nursaidah, & Rahayu, J. (2025). From desire to decision: How hedonistic lifestyle, brand trust, product quality, and perception influence iPhone purchases among students. *American Journal of Economics and Business Management*.
- Mujidin, M., Muhamat, H., & Rustam, H. K. (2022). The hedonistic lifestyle among students: Influence by gratitude and self-control. *Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology*.
- Nasution, A. M., Nurbaiti, N., & Harahap, M. I. (2023). The effect of hedonism lifestyle on student consumptive behavior. *FIKROTUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Manajemen Islam*.
- Naufal Adib Putra, Setiawati, S. A., Sinaga, M. A. N. A., Tan, R. L., & Naira, R. (2023). Hedonism in the student environment in the era of globalization. *International Journal of Religion Education and Law*.
- Nikma Yucha, & Nur Rohmah, R. A. (2023). The effect of e-wallet, a hedonist lifestyle with self-control as an intervening variable on consumptive behavior. *Journal of Applied Management and Business*.
- Nurnafilah, H., Adinugraha, H. H., & Shulthoni, M. (2024). Hedonism lifestyle in college students UIN K.H Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. *Journal of Noesantara Islamic Studies*.
- Pasca Dwi Putra, Harahap, K., & Rahmah, S. S. (2020). The hedonism lifestyle, financial literacy and financial management among business education students to financial management. *Journal of Community Research and Service*.
- Puspasari, D. (2022). The challenges of the young generation in facing the current of hedonism with strengthening the values of Pancasila. *Journal of Creativity Student*.
- Ramadhani, S., & Putri, K. A. S. (2024). Gen Z's impulse buying behavior of skincare product: The role of FOMO, celebrity endorser and hedonism. *ILTIZAM: Journal of Shariah Economics Research*.
- Ridho, M., & Ningsih, T. W. R. (2020). Hedonism practices in The Wolf of Wall Street movie. *ISLLAC: Journal of Intensive Studies on Language, Literature, Art, and Culture*.
- Sinaga, G. R., Sinaga, B. J., & Bahri, S. (2022). Hedonism in Eugene O'Neil's: A Long Day's Journey Into Night. *International Journal of Education and Literature*.
- Usman, H. A., Taniyo, S. S., & Mukhsin, H. N. (2023). Unraveling the motivational drive of McCandless in Sean Penn's film Into the Wild. *Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature Studies*.
- Wulandari, D. K., & Putri, K. Y. S. (2023). Contemporary hedonism: An exploration of consumer lifestyles and pleasure in global culture. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (IJSSH)*.