

SURVIVAL STRATEGY IN JOBS PORTRAYED IN DAVID FRANKEL'S *THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA*: A PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

STRATEGI BERTAHAN HIDUP DI DALAM PEKERJAAN DIGAMBARAKAN DALAM FILM DAVID FRANKEL *THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA*: PSIKOANALISIS PERSEPEKTIF

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Abstract

*The aim of this study is to analyze the survival strategy in jobs in the characters David Frankel's *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. This study uses Alfred Adler's individual psychological theory to describe the characters in the movie. This research used a descriptive qualitative method. In this research there are two types of the data, namely primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected from word, picture, and audio from the character to describe the survival strategy. The secondary data of this research is from journals and articles that related with this research. The conclusion of this study is, firstly, five indicators of survival strategy in jobs there is career path, employee benefits, fighting for position, aggressive behavior, and nice behavior. Secondly, the depiction is divided into characters, setting, and events. Lastly, the reason why David Frankel addressed survival strategy because Frankel wants other to see the survival strategy in a person especially in the field of work.*

Keywords: *Survival Strategy, Individual Psychological Perspective, The Devil Wears Prada*

Abstrak

*Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis strategi bertahan hidup dalam pekerjaan dalam karakter film *The Devil Wears Prada* karya David Frankel. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori psikologi individu Alfred Adler untuk menggambarkan tokoh-tokoh dalam film tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Dalam penelitian ini terdapat dua jenis data, yaitu data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer dikumpulkan dari kata, gambar, dan audio dari karakter untuk menggambarkan strategi bertahan hidup. Data sekunder penelitian ini diperoleh dari jurnal dan artikel yang berkaitan dengan penelitian ini. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah, pertama, lima indikator strategi bertahan hidup dalam pekerjaan yaitu jenjang karir, tunjangan karyawan, perebutan jabatan, perilaku agresif, dan perilaku baik. Kedua, Penggambaran dibagi menjadi tokoh, latar, dan peristiwa. Terakhir, alasan David Frankel membahas strategi bertahan hidup karena Frankel ingin agar orang lain melihat strategi bertahan hidup dalam diri seseorang khususnya dalam bidang pekerjaan.*

Kata kunci: *Strategi Bertahan Hidup, Psikologi Individu, The Devil Wears Prada*

Introduction

A survival strategy is an action taken by everyone to be able to maintain their survival through the work they do. Social situations and problems that arise in life caused by the natural or harmful environment economic factor. In carrying out the coping strategy process, everyone will have different and unique reactions and consider the best and acceptable way to manage or resolve the issue at hand in order to minimize significant losses (Streefland, 1989). Survival strategy is essentially a process to fulfill the basic survival recruitments. Survival strategies are needed, especially in the world of work these times. An example of a survival strategy in society that is often encountered is that we do not work by the field of knowledge we learn in college. Andrea Sachs also felt this. A journalist also an editor who is known to be innovative while at the University. When she applied for a job at the Elias Clark publication company, Andrea's initially aimed to fill the editor position. Instead, she got a job as second assistant to a famous editor-in-chief of the fashion magazine Runway, Miranda Priestly.

The Devil Wears Prada was one of the movies directed by David Frankel. The movie was released on June 22, 2006. Based on Lauren Weisberger's novel that published on February 3, 2003. This movie is about a

young woman named Andrea Sachs as a recent college graduate who receives an interview call at a New York company and thinks she will become a journalist. Without Andrea knowing she applied to the offices of the major fashion magazine in New York, Runway. Andrea became a junior personal assistant to Miranda Priestly, known as the perfect woman and number one in the world of fashion. Many girls would kill to get the job Andrea currently has. Despite her expertise as a journalist, Andrea does not understand the world of fashion and how she adapts to her work environment.

The researcher is interested in analyzing the topic in The Devil Wears Prada movie because of several reasons. Firstly, because the storyline in this movie is really interesting. Each of the characters in The Devil Wears Prada movie has the same problems, that is about how they tried to survive in their jobs. The Devil Wears Prada movie is also very relatable in the work field and how each character has their own way of solving their problems. Secondly, the message of this movie has a very important and useful message. Started by Andrea Sachs who is a journalist and suddenly works as a fashion designer assistant, Miranda who always prioritizes her work over everything even her family, Nigel and even Emily. All characters in The Devil Wears Prada movie describe people in reality who went through

the same thing, the movie is very relatable in the work field, how this movie is described based on the reality that occurs in society such as how to deal with cruel environment and work partner, and how to deal with a cruel boss. Most importantly how we as individuals survive a job that we ourselves are not good at. When we want top positions in our work, then we must prepare to sacrifice something. Trying to adjust to the environment even sacrificing time for ourselves. Lastly, because the previous research that used a novel that was adapted to movie *The Devil Wears Prada* has not raised this topic meanwhile the movie is more focus on discusses about survival strategy especially in the field of jobs. This research will be analyzed by using individual psychological perspective according to Alfred Adler theory.

There are previous studies that have analyzed the movie with different topic and theory. The first study from Cesar, (2013) discusses about the material inclination and the character contribution in uncovering material inclination. This study used the postmodern theory by Jean Baudrillard. The result of this study shows that there are two characteristics which are consumerism and hedonism, that the characters tend to be positioning material objects and wealth as parameters to indicate social status. Narizwana, (2016) discovered the anxiety

and defense mechanism in the character of Miranda Priestly. The theory that used in this study is Sigmund Freud's theory. The result of this study shows that there are four anxiety and action that perform in Miranda Priestly to defense herself, which is intellectualization, acting out, denial, and projection.

Another study from Erliska (2017) discusses the power exercised in *The Devil Wears Prada*, power drives gender oppression, and power plays an important role in gender oppression in the novel. The theory used in this study is a Marxist feminist approach. The results of this study show that exploitation in the workplace, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and all other indicators of the power of the ruling classes are present in their character. Yan, (2017) analyzed the new feminism in the main character by using the example in the movie to show its influence on the society. The theory that used in this study is Feminist approach. The result of this study shows that the main character in the movie represent the new feminism from the way the character is successful in her career and persistence for years and leading her in the lively and colorful life.

Other study from Babelyuk & Galaidin, (2020) discovered the main characteristics of a new postmodern genre on the image of a wise woman in modern literature. The theory

that used in this study is postmodernism approach. The result shows that the woman character in this novel represent as a wise woman who priority her education and professional position by achieving her own success in her life. TIAN Ye, (2021) discuss the character of Miranda Priestly in the exploring the explicit and implicit aspects of the character and find out the multiple faces of Miranda Priestly. The theory that used in this research is psychological approach. The result of this study shows that Miranda has multifaced character and representative of a bossy female leader.

Study from Tampubolon, (2021) discovered the struggles of women and Andrea as the main character portrayed in the movie. The theory that used in this study is Feminist Approach. The result of this study shows that there are three types of women's struggle and five characterizations of Andrea Sachs. Putri & Ambarwati, (2021) discuss the feminine mystique portrayed in the lives of women in the workforce as a company leader inside the novel. This study used feminist approach and feminine mystique theory. The result of this study shows that there are three points of feminine mystique represent in the novel. Last study from Purnama, (2022) discuss the direct discrimination by legitimate power and supported by the influence of social identity. The theory that used in this study is semiotic

approach. The results of this study indicate that direct and indirect discrimination exist based on several types of discrimination.

In this research, the researcher applied individual psychological perspective from Alfred Adler theory. According to Adler, (1938, p, 145.) individual psychology is a personality theory that emphasizes the uniqueness of individuals in overcoming limitations in fighting for their life goals. There are six main theories expressed by Adler: Inferiority Feelings, Striving for Superiority, Style of Life, Creative Self, Social Interest, Fictional Finalism. The focus in this study is the survival strategy that perform in the character of *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. Suharto, (2009) proposed that survival strategy can be broadly defined as the human ability to find ways to overcome the various problems that affect life. A survival strategy in jobs is an action taken by everyone to be able to maintain their survival through the work they do. A survival strategy is a plan of actions or activities carried out to survive in any situation. A strategy is a plan designed to achieve a goal.

The researcher will analyze and examine the characters in David Frankel's *The Devil Wears Prada* movie using the theory of Alfred Adler psychoanalysis perspective as how the character use survival strategy in jobs. According to Adler, individual psychology focuses on how people achieve

their goals and how this influences their behavior towards achieving those goals. (2005:193). Six types of Adler individual psychology perspective described in the movie, there are Inferiority Feelings, Striving for Superiority, Style of Life, Creative Self, Social Interest, Fictional Finalism. By doing some research from the previous research so, the researchers raised the title: *Survival Strategy in Jobs Portrayed in David Frankel's The Devil Wears Prada: A Psychoanalytic Perspective*.

Method

The types of this study are literature study. In this study the researcher used descriptive qualitative method. The objective of this study is to analyze the characters in the movie that use survival strategy in their jobs by using the theory of Alfred Adler individual psychology approach. The primary data source of this study is *The Devil Wears Prada* movie that collected from word, picture, audio, and the secondary data source is from the journals and articles that related with this study. Step of collecting the data in this study as it follows; first, watching the movie, reading the movie script, taking notes from picture, dialogue, and scene related to the topic, analyzing and identifying the related topic, lastly choosing the appropriate references that related to the

topic that support the issue. There are three techniques of analyzing the data in this research, first is data reduction, data reduction collected from scene, conversation, action, in the movie that related to survival strategy in jobs. Second is data display, data display collected from visual form from the scene, conversation, or action and classifying them based on the research objectives. Last is drawing conclusion analyzes based on the data that collected from theories, and concept that related in the researcher.

Result and Discussion

The Indicator of Survival Strategy

Career Path

Career path shows in the dialogue between Andrea and Miranda employee that being Miranda Priestly assistant is a good opportunity for career path because as it was said that million girls would kill for being Miranda assistant. if a person can stay consistent for one year as a Miranda Priestly assistant, it can help them to a higher career level because almost all companies accept people who work as Miranda assistants, being Miranda Priestly assistant is like stepping stone for their career path to grows.

Employee Benefits

Employee benefit shows when Andrea

gives her friends luxury brands from her company. As an employee Run Way magazine gives a lot of benefits to the employee. Each company usually has a different policy in providing facilities for its employees. Work in Run Way magazine provides many benefits to its employees because it is engaged in fashion, the advantage that employees get is to get branded goods that are popular on social media, such as high-end clothes, bags, shoes, and also many good stuffs

Fighting For Position

Fighting position shows when Miranda asked Andrea to attend Paris Fashion Week and replace Emily, because Emily makes one mistake and Miranda thinks that it is incompetent, so Miranda asked Andrea to attend Paris Fashion week as Miranda's assistant and replace Emily's position. Andrea tried to refuse Miranda's offer because going to Paris is Emily's dream, but Andrea does not have any choice because if she is not going to Paris Miranda will fire her and make a statement that Andrea is incompetent which can cause Andrea career.

Aggressive Behavior

Aggressive behavior shows in scene when Emily Charlton was showing superiority to Andrea as how Emily behaves aggressively towards Miranda second assistant because

Emily do not like Andrea at the first, they meet because Andrea really different from the previous girls who had worked as Miranda's assistants which does not fulfil the criteria of beauty appearances. Emily do not want Andrea look better than her so she shows her superiority towards Andrea by behave aggressively even though both of them is Miranda assistant.

Nice Behavior

Nice behavior shows in scene when Nigel was tried to awaken Andrea that million people would take her job if Andrea not doing it good, so when Andrea asked Nigel to help her by changing her appearances, Nigel tried to help her. Nigel and Andrea get along well as a co-worker in Run Way Magazine.

The Depiction of Survival Strategy in Jobs in David Frankel's *The Devil Wears Prada* Character

Struggling Character

In this movie, struggling character divided into two namely struggling as assistant, and struggling to get promotion that represented by Andrea Sachs, Emily Charlton, and Nigel.

Struggling as Assistant

Andrea Sachs

Andrea is not an expert in fashion industry because Andrea graduated as a journalist. While Andrea works as Miranda second assistant, she had struggled a lot to adapt in her work environment. It starts with everyone in the company underestimate Andrea because she does not know how to dress attractively and properly. Miranda as her boss always underestimate her, because Andrea not pays attention to her appearances at all. There was scene where Miranda disappointed with Andrea because she underestimates her job, and at that time Andrea almost want to give up as Miranda second assistant but Andrea tried to survive in her job by tried to changing her appearances and tried to learn more about fashion industry because she has planning for her carrier in the future.

Emily Charlton

Emily works as Miranda first assistant. Emily has been working as Miranda's assistant for a long time. Because Emily is the first assistant and has worked for long enough, she gets the chance to attend Paris Fashion Week with Miranda. As an employee working in Run Way Magazine, attending Paris Fashion Week is everyone's dream and are the elect. How Emily prepares herself for Paris Fashion Week including an over-dieting that causes Emily to get sick when she is going to a social event before

going to Paris with Miranda's various colleagues because of that Miranda ordered Andrea to come assist her. Besides that, Emily is considered less competent and eventually Emily cannot attend Paris Fashion Week because Miranda wants the second assistant to come with her, at that time Emily was really breakdown, apart from not being able to attend Emily also sudden accident but she still tried to survive in her job as Miranda assistant because Emily knew if she quit, millions of girls would take Emily place.

Struggling to Get Promotion

Nigel work under Miranda for 13 years, but Miranda never promotes him to a better position. Until Paris Fashion Week come, Miranda promotes Nigel to high position by making his own label. Nigel was really happy because for the first time in his life as working under Miranda and Run Way Magazine, he will promote to high position, but because there are some reasons, Miranda was betrayed Nigel by changing Nigel's position with someone else to save herself. In the Nigel can not doing anything Nigel just hope that Miranda would pay her action, and Nigel still want to survive in his jobs because he still has aspirations for his work achievement

Successful Character

Succesful character is represented by

Miranda Priestly. Miranda Priestly is a famous fashion editor in Run Way Magazine. Miranda is a cruel and perfectionist boss to her employee. Miranda always treats her employee cruelly. Miranda is number one editor in New York, everyone wants to work with her and she has big power for everything, because of this Miranda always does as she pleases and is often unreasonable. For example, that she wants her assistant to get her a plane to send her home, but at that time there was a strong storm and Miranda did not care at all because she had to get home right then. Another example is when Miranda order her assistant to get her Harry Potter manuscript that have not been published yet, but Miranda threatens her assistant that Miranda will fired her if she did not get the manuscript. Miranda also betrayed Nigel her subordinate in order to save herself so she still became editor in Run Way Magazine.

Setting

Runway Magazine Company

Andrea Sachs was cried and angry to Miranda because Miranda said that Andrea makes her disappointed. In this scene Andrea almost give up with her work and almost quit her job, but then she realizes that she should try harder to adapt with her work environment by asked Nigel to help her changes her whole looks.

Restaurant

Andrea said to her father that she will makes her current jobs as a stepping stone to her career because Andrea knows being Miranda assistance is a hard job but Andrea must survive in her job because it will open many opportunities for her career.

Andrea's apartment

Andrea believes that if she survives in her job for one year it will open up many opportunities for her to be a journalist in New York even though being Miranda assistant is the hardest work to survive but she believes in herself in order to be successful in the future.

Street

Andrea tries various ways to get Harry Potter manuscripts that have not been published because of orders from her boss because if Andrea did not make it, she will get fired from her job. Andrea tried to ask Christian Thompson for getting her Harry Potter manuscript that have not been published. To not get fired and survive in her job Miranda used his creativity by making plans A works which asked for help from her co-worker.

Events

Working in Runway Magazine Company

Runway magazine company is a famous

company in New York, many people want to work in Runway Magazine. The character that works in Runway Magazine, the employee and the boss itself had represented survival strategy. For example, character of Andrea Sachs and Emily Charlton that work as an assistant in Runway magazine experience the struggle as an assistant of famous editor in New York as how Andrea tried to fit in and survive in her jobs despite her boss impossible demand, also how Emily survive as first assistant even it gets her to the hospital. Another example that experiences in the character of Miranda as the boss in the company who betrayed her partner work in order her to still became editor in Runway Magazine company.

Sacrificing Love Life

Sacrificing love life is represented in the character of Miranda Priestly and Andrea Sachs as how they prioritize their work over their love life. Miranda always gets divorced because she is too busy with her work and has no time to be a wife and is also a good mother to her children. Andrea broke up with her boyfriend because she always prioritized Miranda and her works over everything including her boyfriend because Andrea has goals to achieve.

Sacrificing Friendship

Sacrificing friendship seen when all

of Andrea's friends are disappointed with Andrea because she always prioritized her work even when Andrea was in her free time with her friends, and also it was seen when her friends see Andrea was flirting with another guy but not her boyfriend. Despite that Andrea just trying to do better at work by prioritizing her work over her friendship because Andrea needed more out of life, and she was achieving it.

Reason of Addressing Survival Strategy

According to several interview about The Devil Wears Prada movie, David Frankel said that at first, he refused to direct the movie because he thinks that the movie was un-directable because there were many challenges in directing the movie, but in the end, David Frankel accepted to direct The Devil Wears Prada with some changes of the plot. In interview with Insider, Frankel stated that life is not a straight line, that there are compromises that you need to make, there are curves in the road. It can be concluded that Frankel indirectly said that we must be able to survive in any situation.

It was also said in other interview with Entertainment Weekly Frankel said that he wants the character of Miranda to be the heroine, not the villain, and in the story for Andy character to learning is what it took to be great at something. According to the novel, the character Miranda and Andy is

different from the movie, because Frankel wants to change the plot to be more like satire and revenge, Miranda character describe as how life problems a person faced and how Andrea characters shows how she survive her problems to achieving goals.

Many interviews with David Frankel about *The Devil Wears Prada* movie stated that there is relation between the character in the movie and survival strategy in jobs. David Frankel as the director of the movie never explained specifically what was he actually addressed. Frankel only said that there must be a lot of problems in our life, and how do we survive it and make it a lesson for something great in the future.

According to Alfred Adler theory based on psychological perspective. Based on the result of the study there are five indicators that shows survival strategy in jobs. There is career path, working in the big company such as Run Way magazine give them a lot of opportunities to their career path. A lot of people willing to sacrifice important things in their life in order to get a successful life, that is why the character in *The Devil Wears Prada* do not waste their opportunity to get their goals achievement in their life. Second indicator is employee benefits, because working in big company like Run Way Magazine give them a lot of benefit such as branded goods. Third indicator is fighting for position, to be able successes in career, a

position is needed in the work, several characters in the movie shows they betrayed their friends to get a better position like how Andrea replace Emily, and Miranda betrayed Nigel position to get promotion. Fourth indicator is aggressive behavior, the character in this movie shows how they tried to behave aggressively to their co-worker in order to survive in their job, like how Emily always being mean to Andrea because Andrea is kind of different from the criteria as Miranda assistant, and how Miranda always acted cruel towards her subordinate because Miranda wants everything to be perfect. The last indicator is nice behavior, like how Nigel and Andrea get along well as a co-worker in the company.

To describe survival strategy in this study, the researcher used theory of Alfred Adler based on individual psychological perspective. There are inferiority feelings, striving for superiority, style of life, creative self, and fictional finalism. The author describes survival strategy in jobs by making three depictions. There are characters, setting, and events. The characters are divided into two there are struggling character which represented by Andrea Sachs, Emily Charlton, and Nigel. Second character is successful character which represented by Miranda Priestly. The setting of place is divided into four, there are in the Run Way Magazine company, in the

restaurant, in Andrea's apartment, and in the street. The event is divided into three, there are work in Runway Magazine company, sacrifice love life, and sacrifice friendship. Reason why David Frankel as the director of *The Devil Wears Prada* addressed survival strategy is because Frankel wants other to see the survival strategy in a person especially in the field of work

The result of this research adding new findings from the previous study conducted by Hendra Narizwana (2016) and Tian Ye (2021) the difference between that research is the topic that used. The focus is on defense mechanism and explicit and implicit aspect in the character of Miranda Priestly in *The Devil Wears Prada* movie. According to Narizwana (2016) research there are two things that can be found from the research question there are four types of anxiety and action that perform in Miranda Priestly to defense herself, which is intellectualization, acting out, denial, and projection. According to Tian Ye (2021) research the result shows that Miranda has multifaced character and representative of a bossy female leader.

Conclusion

To conclude, *The Devil Wears Prada* was one of the movies directed by David Frankel. The movie was released on June 22, 2006. Based on Lauren Weisberger's novel that

published on February 3, 2003. This movie is about a young woman named Andrea Sachs as a recent college graduate who receives an interview call at a New York company and thinks she will become a journalist. Without Andrea knowing she applicants to the offices of the major fashion magazine in New York, Runway. Andrea became a junior personal assistant to Miranda Priestly, known as the perfect woman and number one in the world of fashion. Many girls would kill to get the job Andrea currently has. Despite her expertise as a journalist, Andrea does not understand the world of fashion and how she adapts to her work environment. This movie is very relatable in the work field, how this movie is described based on the reality that occurs in society such as how to deal with cruel environment and work partner, and how to deal with a cruel boss. Most importantly how we as individuals survive a job that we ourselves are not good at. It was said that when we want top positions in our work, then we must prepare to sacrifice something. Trying to adjust to the environment even sacrificing time for ourselves. The conclusion of survival strategy in jobs in David Frankel's *The Devil Wears Prada* it found are five indicators of survival strategy in jobs that addressed in the character of *The Devil Wears Prada*. There is career path, employee benefits, fighting for position, aggressive behavior, and nice

behavior. The depiction of survival strategy that addressed in character of *The Devil Wears Prada* divided into characters, settings and event. The reason survival strategy addressed by David Frankel in *The Devil Wears Prada* is because Frankel wants others to see the survival strategy in a person especially in the field of work.

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Proceeding Advances in Social Science,
Education and Humanities Research.
Atlantis Press