



Hedonism Analysis in Martin Scorsese the Wolf of Wall Street

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ABSTRACT

Hedonism is a philosophical and psychological concept that centers on the idea that pleasure is the highest good and the ultimate of human life. In the film, ideology is portrayed through characters driven by excess, indulgence, and the pursuit of personal desire. This study contributes to literary and cinematic discourse by highlighting how narrative media can reflect and interrogate philosophical concepts like hedonism within a performative framework. The film functions as a dramatic critique of consumerist culture, illustrating how unchecked hedonism becomes both a personal downfall and a broader societal pathology. This research aims to explore the representation of hedonistic values in Martin Scorsese's film *The Wolf of Wall Street* through a qualitative descriptive analysis. The findings show that while pleasure is portrayed as a desirable goal, it ultimately leads to emotional emptiness, social harm, and personal destruction. The results shows that structural with the most dominant type, Egoistic Hedonism (28.1%) and Normative Hedonism (9.4%) the study examines how the characters' dialogues and actions reflect varying dimensions of pleasureseeking behavior. Each form of hedonism is categorized and analyzed based on selected scenes and dialogues, revealing a dominant pattern of egoistic and folk hedonism that aligns with capitalist excess and personal gratification. The film's protagonist, Jordan Belfort, epitomizes modern hedonism by pursuing wealth, sex, drugs, and power with little regard for ethical boundaries or long-term consequences

INTRODUCTION

Literature is a diverse and evolving form of artistic expression that uses language to explore human experience, emotion, and ideas through written works valued for their aesthetic qualities and intellectual depth. According to Chen (2023), Literature remains a crucial arena for cultural inquiry and negotiation in the digital age, facilitating new forms of critical engagement with the complexities of contemporary life. Reading literary fiction enhances readers' capacity to understand and feel others' emotions, demonstrating literature's role in developing social-emotional literacy. Literature manifests in several primary forms, each with distinct characteristics and traditions. Poetry employs concentrated, often rhythmic language to create emotional resonance and imagery through careful attention to sound, structure, and metaphor. Prose represents the most common written form, featuring everyday language organized into sentences and paragraphs without metrical structure, encompassing everything from novels to essays. Fiction encompasses imaginative narrative works that, while not factually true, often reveal profound truths about human nature through invented characters and scenarios. Nonfiction presents factual accounts and explorations of real events, people, and ideas, including memoirs, biographies, essays, and journalism. Drama, written specifically for theatrical performance, uses dialogue and stage directions to create stories meant to be enacted by performers before an audience. Each of these literary forms has evolved significantly throughout history, reflecting changing cultural values and expanding to incorporate diverse voices and perspectives that continue to reshape our understanding of what literature can be and do in contemporary society.

Drama occupies a unique position within literary genres due to its inherently performative nature. Unlike prose or poetry, which are primarily intended for reading, drama is crafted to be enacted, engaging audiences through live performance that combines dialogue, movement, and visual storytelling. This performative aspect allows drama to vividly portray emotional and social situations, making the audience active participants in the unfolding narrative. According to Aryanti and Tjahyadi (2023), drama serves as a medium that communicates ideas through interaction, conflict, and visual storytelling, enabling audiences to directly experience emotional and social situations. The structure of drama typically includes acts and scenes, with rising and falling actions that build tension and resolve conflicts. Through this structure, drama explores major themes such as identity, love, justice, sacrifice, and power. The audience becomes part of the dramatic experience as they witness the emotions, decisions, and consequences faced by the characters. Drama, viewed through hedonism theory, is a literary form aimed at maximizing audience pleasure and minimizing pain by evoking emotions like joy, suspense, and catharsis.

Hedonism is a philosophical and psychological concept that centers on the idea that pleasure is the highest good and the ultimate goal of human life. It refers to a way of thinking or living where the pursuit of personal enjoyment, satisfaction, and happiness is prioritized above all else. In its simplest form, hedonism suggests that actions are good if they increase pleasure and bad if they

result in pain. According to Allwood (2025), from one of the earliest and most influential hedonistic philosophers Epicurus, true pleasure is not found in indulgence, but in the absence of pain and disturbance, a state he called ataraxia. However, in modern contexts, the term hedonism often refers to excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, such as wealth, sex, luxury, or drugs, and is commonly associated with materialism and consumer culture. Hedonism is not just a way of life, but also a framework of thought that reflects how people make choices and define success. Philosophers like Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill expanded on hedonistic ideas through utilitarianism, a theory in which the best action is the one that maximizes overall happiness. While classical hedonism focuses on individual pleasure, modern forms often involve social, economic, and psychological dimensions, where pleasure is shaped by media, advertising, peer validation, and capitalism. According to Chen (2023), modern individuals are constantly exposed to pleasure-seeking temptations, creating a psychological tension between immediate gratification and long-term fulfillment. This reveals that hedonism is not merely a matter of behavior, but also a complex mental and cultural orientation toward life.

Handayani et al. (2024) argue that in today's capitalist and liberal society, hedonism has become institutionalized, shaping identity through consumption and pleasure. It is marketed, measured, and moralized in ways that prioritize self-interest over collective responsibility. As a result, hedonism is not just personal but embedded in cultural systems that reward excess and stimulation. Literature and film often explore these themes by depicting characters consumed by gratification, later revealing the emotional and ethical consequences. In storytelling, particularly in drama and cinema, hedonism serves as a tool to illustrate inner turmoil, moral decline, and social critique. Through symbolism, character behavior, and visual excess, creators reflect the allure and dangers of unchecked desire. These narratives examine deeper issues of identity, purpose, and the cost of self-indulgence. *The Wolf of Wall Street*, directed by Martin Scorsese, is a striking example. The film portrays Jordan Belfort's rise and fall as a stockbroker driven by greed and pleasure. Through symbols like drugs, money, and chaos, it critiques the hedonistic values of late capitalism. Belfort embodies a worldview where gratification eclipses ethics, ultimately revealing the emptiness and destruction beneath the surface.

Jordan: "**I bought bonuses for everyone – cars, trips, Rolexes.**"

Naomi: "Trying to buy their loyalty again?"

Jordan: "No, trying to give them a taste of my happiness." Naomi: "And what about yours?"

Jordan: "**It grows when theirs does.**"

One of the clearest uses of metaphor in *The Wolf of Wall Street* appears in a scene where Jordan Belfort wants to try to grow his wealth by pleasing everyone by giving luxury goods and his wife questioned it. In this scene, Jordan demonstrates Utilitarian Hedonism, which is the pursuit of happiness not only for oneself but also for others. He feels joy when his employees are also happy.

The line **"I bought bonuses for everyone-cars, trips, Rolexes"** and **"It grows when theirs does"** suggests that collective pleasure is considered more meaningful than individual satisfaction alone. This indicates that, at certain points, Jordan practices a socially-conscious form of hedonism. By studying *The Wolf of Wall Street* as a dramatic and philosophical work, it becomes possible to explore how hedonistic values shape character development, thematic structure, and emotional tone. The film not only illustrates a life consumed by indulgence, but also critiques a system that rewards such behavior. Through the lens of hedonism, the story reveals how unrestrained desire can erode identity, relationships, and conscience. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how drama, especially in film, can reflect not only personal choices, but also broader cultural trends toward self-centeredness and material obsession. As a result, *The Wolf of Wall Street* stands not only as a bold cinematic achievement, but also as a compelling study of hedonism in action, one that challenges audiences to confront the costs of a life defined by pleasure.

Recent academic research has increasingly examined hedonism—the idea that pleasure is a central human motivator—in the context of contemporary drama and media. Scholars often draw on frameworks like Weijers (2012), which categorize different types of hedonism: folk hedonism (seeking pleasure in everyday indulgences), egoistic hedonism (pursuing one's own pleasure regardless of others), and motivational hedonism (seeing pleasure as the root of all action). For instance, a study on *Marie Antoinette* illustrates how characters embody folk and egoistic hedonism through luxurious lifestyles and self-centered choices, often leading to emotional instability. Similarly, *Inventing Marie* explores a protagonist obsessed with luxury and public image, revealing inner conflict and identity struggles. In classic drama, research on Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey Into Night* found six forms of hedonism in its characters, with a strong focus on short-term pleasure overriding long-term well-being, highlighting how desire can impair rational thought. Audience motivations have also been analyzed. It emphasizes hedonism not just as a psychological motive but also as a storytelling device that highlights the collapse of morality and identity in a high-stakes world. Harris (2020) in *Bryce Andrews' Badluck Way* explores how the author's experience of solitude during ranching is not only a lifestyle choice but a source of intrinsic pleasure—making it egoistic hedonism.

The study argues that preference for isolation and independent labor on a remote ranch reflects a pursuit of pleasure, self-authenticity, and psychological fulfillment. Other recent work—such as studies by Smith et al. (2021) on consumer habits, Rivera and Thompson (2022) on social media, and Ahmed et al. (2023) on cultural differences—further confirms hedonism's broad influence on behavior, media, and society. Together, these studies show that hedonism is not only a personal philosophy but a powerful cultural force shaping modern life. Pribadi (2024), in a study of *Home Alone*, uses Epicurean philosophy to distinguish between egoistic hedonism (personal enjoyment like dressing in luxury) and utilitarian hedonism (shared enjoyment, such as family trips and parties), showing how even comedic films reflect hedonistic values. While earlier

studies often focused on consumer behavior or digital media, this research shifts focus to *The Wolf of Wall Street*, treating it as a dramatic narrative that vividly portrays hedonism. The film uses dialogue, symbolism, and character actions to depict the pursuit of wealth and pleasure as a form of identity, ultimately revealing its destructive effects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hedonism is a philosophical theory that holds pleasure and happiness as the highest good and proper aim of human life. According to Epicurus, living a hedonistic life can be seen as a form of freedom, offering liberation from both physical and mental pain. Many individuals experience high levels of anxiety and excessive worry throughout their lives, often feeling inadequate or believing they are not the focus of attention from others. However, it becomes problematic when this lifestyle leads to extravagance. He suggested that hedonism serves as a means to alleviate the suffering that humans endure. Lifestyle refers to the way an individual experiences life through engaging in activities they find enjoyable. This can include work, hobbies, shopping, social events (like gatherings for mothers), a passion for fashion, and various forms of social interaction. Luxury can also be a part of this lifestyle. Daniel Dorsey (2024) states which explains the quality of pleasure in each person is different, which suggests that some pleasures are intrinsically more valuable than others. Weijers (2012) has six types of Hedonism, namely: (1) Folk Hedonism; (2) Value/Prudential Hedonism; (3) Motivational Hedonism; (4) Normative Hedonism; (5) Selfish Hedonism; (6) Utilitarian Hedonism.

Folk Hedonism

The hedonist folk believe that a person should pursue pleasure without contemplation of future self-consequences or consequences for people around them, as stated by Weijers (2012). For instance, alcohol drinking is idolized socially. However, the people who participate in the act of drinking alcohol will not, in fact, consider what's next in their life in terms of their health. Folk hedonism is also portrayed in the drama *The Weekend Hit* to indulge in effortless immediate gratification without thought for the future or a greater sense of health and well-being.

Example:

Tara: Forget the paper! I scored VIP tickets to the Neon Nights rave tonight. It's going to be insane!

Maya: You've already failed one class. Aren't you worried?

Tara: **"I'm young. I just want to live and enjoy life while I can. Studying can wait but fun can't."**

Maya: But what about your scholarship? If you lose that, you might not be able to come back next semester.

The sentence **"I'm young. I just want to live and enjoy life while I can. Studying can wait but fun can't."** This line clearly reflects the principles of Folk Hedonism, a theory that emphasizes the pursuit of immediate pleasure without considering long-term consequences. Tara prioritizes short-term enjoyment over

her academic responsibilities and well-being, showing a carefree attitude toward the future.

Value/Prudential Hedonism

This type of hedonism seems to explain to us that all pleasures are very valuable in human life and enjoyment must be pursued even if it is not of any value in enhancement of humans. For instance, mothers who are housewives are certainly going to seek some sort of pleasure like socializing with other mothers in her neighborhood and in essence their gossiping does not add any value to their life, but rather makes them partake in flagrant sins. In the drama *The Weekend Hit*, Value/Prudential Hedonism is also used to define that pleasure is the one intrinsic good and that a person's well-being depends on the amount as well as the quality of pleasure he possesses in his life.

Example:

Maya: Bubbles? Aren't you a little old for that?

Tara: Maybe. But it makes me feel ridiculously happy.

Maya: I don't get it. It's not productive. It won't help your grades or your résumé.

Tara: **"Not everything needs to serve a purpose some pleasures are worth it just because they make us feel alive."**

Her sentence, **"Not everything has to have a purpose-some pleasures are worth doing just because they make us feel alive,"** captures this view perfectly. It shows that he believes that pleasure in itself is something valuable, regardless of whether it contributes to productivity, achievement, or future goals. This is in line with prudential hedonism in the sense that what matters is how the pleasure is perceived by the individual, not whether it has quantifiable benefits.

Motivaital Hedonism

Motivaital hedonism refers to a behavior pattern where people constantly seek pleasure or relief from pain through their actions. This approach is driven by the natural human desire to avoid suffering and discomfort. For example, some individuals might try to cope with emotional pain or personal problems by turning to alcohol or engaging in unhealthy activities as a way to escape what they're feeling.

Example:

Maya: Another party tonight? You haven't even started your paper.

Tara: I'll do it later. I just need to blow off some steam.

Maya: But this keeps happening. You're behind in everything.

Tara: **"Every time I think about deadlines and grades, I feel like I can't breathe. The parties... they're the only thing that helps me forget how much pressure I'm under."**

The sentence **"Every time I thought about deadlines and grades, I felt like I couldn't breathe. The parties... they were the only thing that helped me forget how much pressure I was under."** This moment exposes the true psychological motivation behind Tara's behavior she was not seeking pleasure in a superficial or carefree way, but rather using partying as a means to avoid the mental pain and anxiety associated with her academic responsibilities.

Normative Hedonism

This type of Hedonism is a theory in ethics that asserts pleasure is the only thing that is intrinsically good, and therefore, people ought to act in ways that maximize pleasure and minimize pain not just for themselves, but potentially as a guide to what is morally right or wrong. In the drama

Example:

Maya: You stayed in again last night?

Tara: Yeah. I thought about going out, but I realized I'd rather wake up clear-headed and finish my painting project. It actually made me feel... peaceful.

Maya: Wow. Who are you and what have you done with the real Tara?

Tara: **"I've been thinking a lot lately if pleasure is the only thing that really makes life good, then I should be choosing the kind of pleasure that actually improves my life, not just distracts me from it."**

The sentence **"I've been thinking a lot lately-if pleasure is the only thing that really makes life good, then I should choose the kind of pleasure that actually improves my life, not just distracts me from it,"** directly expresses the core idea of Normative Hedonism. The context of this dialogue centers on Tara re-evaluating what the "good life" means. Rather than chasing temporary pleasures and diversions, she begins to prioritize pleasures that contribute to long-term satisfaction, such as creativity, peace of mind, and personal growth.

Egoism Hedonism

Egoistic hedonism describes a mindset where someone pursues pleasure without considering that impact on others, even if it means harming or using people to get what they want. For instance, a woman who wants to go out with her friends might ask her sister to lie to their parents by saying she is attending a group study session, when in reality, she is not. In this case, personal enjoyment is prioritized over honesty and responsibility.

Example:

Maya: You're seriously skipping the group project meeting again? We're presenting Monday, Tara.

Tara: Relax, I'll catch up later. Tonight's the biggest party of the semester.

Maya: We're counting on you. This affects all our grades, not just yours.

Tara: **"Look, I do what makes me feel good. If partying all weekend keeps me happy, then that's the right choice for me."**

The sentence **"Look, I do what makes me feel good. If partying all weekend keeps me happy, then that's the right choice for me."** This bolded line reflects the core principle of egoistic hedonism that what is "right" is determined by how much pleasure it brings to the individual, regardless of the impact on others. In this context, Tara's behavior isn't just irresponsible it's philosophically aligned with egoistic hedonism. She believes she is justified in her choices because they increase her own well-being, and she doesn't feel morally obligated to prioritize anyone else's discomfort. The dialogue dramatizes how egoistic hedonism operates in real-life conflicts between personal satisfaction and social obligation.

Utilitarian Hedonism

Utilitarian hedonism is a type of hedonism where a person does not just seek happiness for themselves, but also wants to share that happiness with others. The goal is not only personal satisfaction but also the well being of those around them. For example, when an office employee gets a promotion, they feel proud and joyful. Instead of keeping that joy to themselves, they choose to celebrate with their co-workers so everyone can share in the moment and feel included.

Example:

Maya: Tara, I know you had plans tonight, but we need you. The group project's a mess without your part, and the deadline's tomorrow.

Tara: Ugh, Maya, I've been looking forward to this party for weeks. Everyone's going. Can't you just cover for me?

Maya: No, we've already done more than our share. If we mess this up, we all lose marks James could lose his scholarship.

Tara: **"Fine. If skipping one night of fun means the whole group does better and no one gets hurt, then that's what I should do."**

The sentence **"Fine. If skipping one night of fun means the whole group does better and no one gets hurt, then that's what I should do,"** shows her shift from personal gratification to a broader ethical perspective. Rather than acting on self-interest alone, Tara considers the consequences of her actions on others and chooses the option that creates the most happiness and prevents harm making her decision a clear application of utilitarian hedonism.

METHODOLOGY

This project employs a qualitative descriptive study design. As suggested by Zhang & Wildemuth (2020), qualitative descriptive research aims to provide an in-depth description of events in the natural language of the events, allowing researchers to follow inherent meanings in naturalistic environments. It allows for studying spoken words, social actions, and symbolic expressions without interfering with the environment where they occur. In this study, the movie *The Wolf of Wall Street* by Martin Scorsese is the subject of examination. Data used are dialogue in the movie, more specifically dialogues that represent hedonistic practices. Hedonistic practices represented in the movie are the pursuit of pleasure, obsession with money, and consumptive lifestyle. These are seen in the respective scenes in the movie and classified based on hedonism indicators. The categorization of the data is based on hedonism theory developed in existing research by authors such as Smith, Johnson, and Lee (2021), who examined pleasure-seeking as an underlying motive in consumer behavior, and Rivera and Thompson (2022), who focused on how instant gratification affects modern psychological tendencies. After the data are transposed and coded according to these markers, analysis is finished through consideration of the context of the scenes, the characterisation of the figures, and the social values represented. In so doing, the study aims to describe how hedonistic values are actualized in the speech acts of the characters in the film, and the effect of these messages on the audience's perception of capitalism and the modern way of life.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of hedonistic elements identified in *The Wolf of Wall Street* and discusses how these elements reflect various types of hedonism based on Sinaga et al. (2022) typology. The film, which portrays the life of stockbroker Jordan Belfort, provides rich material for analyzing the intersection between personal pleasure and moral degradation within the capitalist system. The data are drawn from the film's scenes and dialogues that exhibit hedonistic behaviors, which are then categorized and analyzed thematically.

Table 1. Types of Hedonism in *The Wolf of Wall Street*

No	Type of Hedonism	Scene/Behavior Example	Frequency	Percentage
1	Folk Hedonism	Excessive drug use and spontaneous lavish parties	8	24%
2	Prudential/Value Hedonism	Belfort reflecting on the joy of dominating the market	4	12%
3	Motivational Hedonism	Use of sex and drugs to escape stress	5	15%
4	Normative Hedonism	Justification of fraud to maintain pleasure	3	9%
5	Egoistic Hedonism	Manipulating others for personal gain	9	27%
6	Utilitarian Hedonism	Belfort motivating team to succeed together	3	9%
Total			32	100%

Folk Hedonism

Jordan: "Come on, Donnie, one more line. **This stuff makes everything better!**"

Donnie: "Dude, it's 10 a.m. We have a meeting in twenty minutes."

Jordan: "Exactly! That's why we need it – to feel alive before we have to deal with those losers."

Donnie: "You're crazy. But okay. One more line."

The scene between Jordan and Donnie in *The Wolf of Wall Street* clearly illustrates the concept of Folk Hedonism, which is characterized by the pursuit of immediate pleasure without considering future consequences. In this exchange, Jordan impulsively encourages Donnie to take another line of drugs, despite it being early in the morning and just before an important meeting. His statement, "**This stuff makes everything better!**" reflects a mindset where pleasure is viewed as a universal remedy, without any critical thought or regard for potential harm. This unreflective pursuit of pleasure aligns with the key traits of Folk Hedonism, where decisions are driven by the desire to feel good in the moment, regardless of long-term outcomes. Although Donnie initially expresses concern by reminding Jordan of their upcoming responsibility, he eventually gives in, demonstrating how the lure of instant gratification can override rational decision-making. This scene not only highlights the characters' reckless behavior

but also serves as a critique of a lifestyle driven by unrestrained pleasure-seeking, which ultimately leads to personal and social downfall.

Value/Prudential Hedonism

Naomi: "Did you really buy a \$100,000 watch?"

Jordan: "**It's not a watch, Naomi. It's a statement.**"

Naomi: "It doesn't even keep time better than your phone."

Jordan: "Maybe not, but **it reminds me I'm winning.**"

In this scene from *The Wolf of Wall Street*, Jordan's decision to buy an excessively expensive watch reflects the concept of Value or Prudential Hedonism. Unlike Folk Hedonism, which seeks pleasure purely for immediate gratification, Prudential Hedonism places value on pleasure as something that contributes to a person's overall well-being or sense of fulfillment. When Naomi questions the practicality of spending \$100,000 on a watch, Jordan responds, "**It's not a watch, Naomi. It's a statement,**" indicating that the object holds symbolic value beyond its basic function. Although the watch does not tell time better than a phone, Jordan believes it serves as a personal reminder of his success and status, saying, "**It reminds me I'm winning.**" This reveals that his pleasure comes from the psychological satisfaction and self-image it reinforces, rather than from the object itself. In this case, the pleasure is tied to self-worth and identity, illustrating how Prudential Hedonism views pleasure as meaningful when it enhances one's perceived quality of life, even if that pleasure is shallow or materialistic. This moment highlights how material possessions can become sources of emotional validation in a hedonistic lifestyle, especially when social power and success are equated with happiness.

Motivational Hedonism

Donnie: "You look like hell, man. When did you last sleep?"

Jordan: "Sleep doesn't cure what I feel. But these pills? **They make me forget.**"

Donnie: "You're drowning yourself to escape."

Jordan: "Exactly. Because drowning is quieter than screaming."

This scene powerfully illustrates the concept of Motivational Hedonism, in which pleasure is not pursued for its own sake, but as a means to escape pain, stress, or emotional turmoil. When Donnie confronts Jordan about his physical and mental state, noting that he looks exhausted and questioning when he last slept, Jordan dismisses the idea that sleep could help. Instead, he turns to pills, saying, "**They make me forget,**" revealing that his substance use is driven by a desire to numb emotional suffering rather than to experience genuine pleasure. This form of hedonism is rooted in avoidance – seeking pleasurable experiences or distractions primarily to escape negative emotions. Jordan's statement, "Because drowning is quieter than screaming," metaphorically expresses how he finds temporary peace in self-destructive habits, as they silence the internal chaos he's facing. According to Weijers (2012), this aligns with Motivational Hedonism, where individuals are motivated by the desire to reduce or avoid pain rather than to increase pleasure in a traditional sense. Jordan's actions here reflect a deeper emotional emptiness and highlight how hedonistic behavior can become a coping mechanism rather than a pursuit of happiness.

Normative Hedonism

Jordan: "Let the team party, they deserve it. But get them in by 9 sharp."

Chester: "You're rewarding and punishing them at the same time?"

Jordan: "**Pleasure is power, Chester. But it's nothing without control.**"

Chester: "Pleasure with purpose, then? I like it."

This scene demonstrates Normative Hedonism, where the pursuit of pleasure is guided by moral, social, or rational boundaries. Jordan allows his team to indulge in a party, recognizing their efforts and using pleasure as a form of motivation or reward. However, he also insists they report to work by 9 a.m. sharp, indicating that pleasure is not given without expectations of discipline and responsibility. His statement, "**Pleasure is power... but it's nothing without control,**" captures the essence of Normative Hedonism as described by Weijers (2012), where pleasure is still valued, but must be aligned with order, purpose, and consequence. Jordan understands that unregulated pleasure can lead to chaos, so he balances enjoyment with structure. This approach reflects a hedonistic philosophy that does not reject responsibility or rules but rather incorporates them into the pursuit of happiness. By blending pleasure with control, Jordan uses pleasure strategically – as a motivational tool that maintains workplace efficiency while still acknowledging human desires. This aligns with the idea that pleasure can and should exist, but within frameworks that ensure it contributes positively to a greater good or personal development.

Egoist Hedonism

Jordan: "Sell the fake stocks. **I don't care if it ruins them.**"

Donnie: "But these are normal people, Jordan."

Jordan: "I'm not in this to make friends. I'm in this to make millions."

Donnie: "So you'll crush lives just to feel good?"

Jordan: "Exactly."

This scene is a clear example of Egoist Hedonism, a form of hedonism where an individual seeks personal pleasure and satisfaction regardless of how it affects others. In the dialogue, Jordan instructs Donnie to sell fake stocks, fully aware that doing so will financially ruin their clients. His complete disregard for the well-being of others is captured in the line, "**I don't care if it ruins them,**" which underscores his purely self-centered pursuit of profit and pleasure. When Donnie questions the morality of such actions, pointing out that their victims are just "normal people," Jordan unapologetically replies, "I'm not in this to make friends. I'm in this to make millions," and even confirms that he's willing to "crush lives just to feel good." This attitude reveals the essence of Egoist Hedonism, in which the individual values only their own pleasure, even if it causes harm to others. According to Weijers (2012), this extreme form of hedonism elevates personal gratification as the sole aim of life, with no concern for ethical implications or the suffering of others. Jordan's actions exemplify how Egoist Hedonism can manifest as exploitative and destructive behavior, especially in environments driven by greed and power.

Utilitarian Hedonism

Jordan: "I bought bonuses for everyone – cars, trips, Rolexes."

Naomi: "Trying to buy their loyalty again?"

Jordan: "No, trying to give them a taste of my happiness."

Naomi: "And what about yours?"

Jordan: "**It grows when theirs does.**"

This scene illustrates Utilitarian Hedonism, where pleasure is valued not only for the individual but also for the happiness it brings to others. Jordan distributes generous bonuses – cars, trips, and luxury watches – not simply as a means to manipulate loyalty, but as a way to share his own sense of joy and success. When Naomi questions his intentions, Jordan responds, "Trying to give them a taste of my happiness," suggesting that his pleasure is amplified when it is experienced collectively. His statement, "**It grows when theirs does,**" highlights the core of Utilitarian Hedonism: the belief that the best outcome is one that maximizes overall happiness. According to this philosophy, the right action is the one that produces the greatest amount of pleasure for the greatest number of people. In this moment, Jordan shows a rare glimpse of social awareness, indicating that his joy is deeply connected to the well-being of those around him. While much of his behavior throughout the film leans toward selfish indulgence, this instance reflects a more inclusive and ethically minded form of hedonism, where personal satisfaction is derived from uplifting others.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

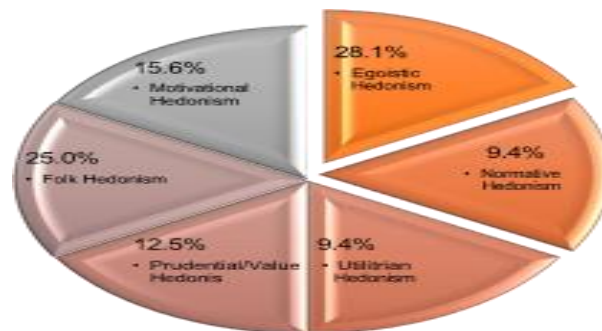


Figure 1. The Analysis of the Wolf of Wall Street

The analysis of *The Wolf of Wall Street* through Weijers' (2012) six types of hedonism reveals a complex portrayal of how the pursuit of pleasure can dominate one's identity, ethics, and interpersonal relationships. Among the six types, Egoistic Hedonism (27%), and it plays a critical role in shaping the narrative arc of the film's protagonist, Jordan Belfort. His relentless pursuit of personal pleasure through wealth, drugs, sex, and manipulation is not only portrayed as morally corrupt but also as a destructive force that erodes his integrity, damages the lives of others, and ultimately leads to his downfall. This form of hedonism is shown through behaviors such as exploiting clients for financial gain and prioritizing personal satisfaction over ethical responsibility. His statement, "I'm not in this to make friends. I'm in this to make millions," encapsulates the extreme self-centered mindset that characterizes egoistic

hedonism, making it the clearest thematic force driving the plot. Closely following is Folk Hedonism (24%), demonstrated through spontaneous indulgence in parties and substance abuse without regard for consequences. This supports the depiction of a culture driven by immediate gratification.

Motivational Hedonism (15%) appears when pleasure is used as a means of escaping emotional distress or pressure, exposing the psychological motivations behind reckless behavior. Meanwhile, Prudential Hedonism (12%) reflects calculated attempts to derive long-term satisfaction from success, although often corrupted by unethical means. Normative and Utilitarian Hedonism, both at (9%), highlight brief moments when Jordan attempts to justify pleasure through moral reasoning or shared happiness. For example, his efforts to motivate his employees through rewards suggest an awareness of collective well-being, even if those actions are ultimately rooted in self-interest. Overall, the distribution of these hedonism types illustrates not only the psychological dimensions of the characters' decisions but also reflects broader cultural critiques. The film functions as a dramatic reflection of late capitalism, where pleasure, success, and identity are commodified. By portraying the rise and fall of a man consumed by pleasure, *The Wolf of Wall Street* presents a cautionary tale that challenges viewers to question the moral cost of unchecked hedonism. The analysis shows that when pleasure becomes the ultimate life goal disconnected from empathy, ethics, and responsibility it can lead to emptiness, alienation, and irreversible damage, both personally and socially.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so it is necessary to conduct further research related to the topic of Hedonism Analysis in Martin Scorsese's *The Wolf of Wall Street* in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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