

Analyzing the Movie "Catch Me If You Can" in Terms of Character Traits

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Abstract

This study aims to analyse the movie "Catch Me If You Can" in the context of character traits. This research employed a qualitative approach, with data analyzed using document analysis methods. In analyzing the movie content, the main character was examined based on the character traits listed in the Index of Character Virtues. According to the findings, the main character, Frank Abagnale, exhibits positive behaviors related to the traits of perseverance, wisdom, and optimism. Conversely, his behaviors concerning humility and forgiveness were observed to be negative. Additionally, in terms of kindness, closeness, peace, honesty, he demonstrated both positive and negative behaviors. This study suggests that family structure and familial relationships play a significant role in shaping Frank Abagnale's character traits. The movie "Catch Me If You Can" can be used as a course material in "Character and Value Education," and "Positive Psychology" courses.

Keywords: Character, Character traits, Character Virtues Index, Movie analysis, Catch Me If You Can

About the Article

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Introduction

Despite the challenges in life, every person possesses certain strengths (Bannink, 2017). Character strengths are defined as positive personal attributes (Peterson, 2006), whereas virtues are psychological processes that enable one to acquire thoughts and behaviors that contribute to oneself and their environment (Ekşi et al., 2017). Studies classify virtues under various dimensions (Macdonald et al., 2008; McGrath, 2014; Shryack et al., 2010). In their comprehensive research, Peterson and Seligman (2004) defined 24 character strengths (VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues). According to this research, the 24 strengths are grouped under six virtues: Wisdom and knowledge (creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective), courage (bravery, persistence, integrity/honestly, vitality), humanity (love, kindness, social intelligence), justice (citizenship, fairness, leadership), temperance (forgiveness and mercy, prudence, humility/modesty, prudence, self-regulation/self-control) and transcendence (appreciation of beauty and excellence, gratitude, hope, humor, spirituality).

Studies focusing on character strengths aim to enhance well-being and success by identifying and fostering these strong attributes (Güldal, 2023). In the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014), character traits are evaluated under 11 dimensions: perseverance, humility, optimism, kindness, closeness, peace, wisdom, forgiveness, honesty, spirituality, and courage, with a focus on their progression over time in character development.

The environment in which a person is born and raised shapes character by developing character traits positively or negatively (Kayan, 2022). Scientists also agree that the strong aspects of character are reflections of family and school life during the healthy growth process (Li & Liu, 2016). Hence, character possesses a developable quality. The development of character strengths is essential for children's and adolescents' social adaptation (Liu & Wang, 2021). Research on character development highlights the significance of character education and values education (Levent & Baş Doğan, 2022). One of the materials used for character education is movies (Yilmaz, 2017).

Movies can create a stimulating effect by being recurrently recalled in human memory over a long period (Niemić & Wedding, 2011). The intertwining of psychology and cinema allows the use of movies for educational purposes (Derin & Voltan Acar, 2016). Research by Canpolat (2021) concluded that TV series and movies focusing on psychology can be attention-grabbing due to their incorporation of real-life stories, potentially beneficial for developing character strengths and preventing mental disorders. Rufer (2014) regarded character strengths as the essence of a good life, emphasizing that movies offer a rich resource for their formation and development.

The use of movies as a therapeutic tool has become more prevalent in educational fields in recent years (Şenol Durak & Fıfıloğlu, 2007). "Catch Me If You Can" a movie inspired by real events, is one such example that encompasses various character traits and their development. This study aims to analyze the movie "Catch Me If You Can" in the context of the character traits listed in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The Character Virtues Index, designed to evaluate character traits, was used as a

checklist in the content analysis of the movie's script. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the field as movie analysis and raise awareness regarding the development of character traits.

Method

Research Design

This study was qualitative research that focused on character traits in the movie "Catch Me If You Can". In this study, document analysis was utilized as the qualitative research method. Documents analyzed in qualitative research include texts and images not influenced by the researcher (Kıral, 2020). Document analysis systematically evaluates books, reports, archival files, videos, audio recordings, photographs, etc., related to the research subject in their original form (Karataş, 2015). Cinema movies fall under the category of audiovisual documents (Geray, 2014). Movies used in qualitative research provide comprehensive insights for researchers on the topic (Zengin, 2019). Therefore, the scenes from the movie "Catch Me If You Can" were treated as documents in this study.

Procedure

The screenplay for the movie analyzed is based on the real-life story of Frank Abagnale, known as a former fraudster (Solon, 2017). Information regarding the movie is provided in Table 1:

Table 1

Details of the Movie

Title:	Catch Me If You Can	
Director:	Steven Spielberg	
Screenwriter:	Jeff Nathanson	
Release Date:	December 25, 2002 (USA) January 31, 2003 (Türkiye)	
Cast	Leonardo DiCaprio Tom Hanks Christopher Walken Nathalie Baye Martin Sheen Nancy Lenahan Amy Adams James Brolin	Main character (Frank Abagnale Jr.) FBI agent (Carl Hanratty) Father (Frank Abagnale Sr.) Mother (Paula Abagnale) Brenda's father (Roger Strong) Brenda's mother (Carol Strong) Nurse (Brenda Strong) Father's friend (Jack Barnes)
Genre:	Crime, Drama	
Country:	USA	
IMDb Rating:	8.1 (14.01.2025)	
Duration:	141 minutes	

Data Analysis

In this study, the content analysis method was used to analyze data collected through document review. Content analysis is a technique used to draw inferences from transcriptions, recordings, and visual or written media messages (Olgun, 2008). It is also one of the fundamental strategies employed in document review studies (Armstrong, 2021). The analysis of movie scenes was conducted using a checklist containing character traits. Since the aim was to assess the character development of the movie's main character, Frank Abagnale Jr., the checklist was prepared with the character traits included in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The checklist is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Checklist

Character Traits	Definition
Perseverance	Continuing effort to complete one's goal despite difficulty and delay.
Humility	The willingness to admit mistakes, enjoy other's success, and know one's strengths and weaknesses without need for acclaim.
Optimism	Hopefulness, positivity, confidence, and enthusiasm.
Kindness	Charitable, compassionate, and protective treatment of others.
Closeness	Relational awareness enabling loving, safe attachment.
Peace	Calmness despite agitation and stress.
Courage	Brave, noble, reasoned choices to act despite danger.
Wisdom	Perception and foresight to make good decisions.
Spirituality	Awareness of transcendence or divinity that influences mood, thought, and behavior.
Forgiveness	Overcoming reactivity to perceived injustice.
Honesty	Truthful overtly and covertly; authentic, creditable; without duplicity or deceit; choosing not to lie, cheat, or steal.

Credibility and Ethics

Credibility and transferability are emphasized in qualitative research over the validity and reliability used in quantitative studies (Tutar, 2022). Credibility relates to the recognition of experiences in the study content by others (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011), while transferability refers to the reproducibility of the research design or findings with different participants or contexts (Arslan, 2022). One fundamental measure to ensure these aspects is providing detailed descriptions with strong descriptors (Johnson et al., 2020). In this study, comprehensive information across all phases of this research was presented; findings resulting from the data analyses were duly tabulated and clearly outlined.

In qualitative research, credibility can be established through prolonged engagement (Long & Johnson, 2000). In line with this, the movie "Catch Me If You Can" was viewed multiple times at intervals throughout the data collection and analysis process. The first viewing aimed to develop a general understanding of the movie and to determine its

relevance within the research framework. During the second viewing, attention was given to the dialogues and non-verbal communication elements to identify character traits. In the third viewing, the movie was segmented into distinct sequences. The fourth viewing involved a detailed analysis of each sequence, during which the character's traits were evaluated using the checklist.

An expert examination can be employed to ensure credibility (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). This involves a non-research-involved expert reviewing the study to ensure no issues in the researcher's analyses or interpretations (Arslan, 2022). In this study, opinions from two experts with specialty degrees in clinical psychology and educational sciences were consulted, and each study phase was re-evaluated with these specialists. Data for this study were not collected from human participants. Thus, it has been reported by the Directorate of the Institute of Educational Sciences of Marmara University with the document dated 20.05.2024 and numbered 796614 that this study does not require an ethics committee application.

Findings

In this study, the movie was segmented into sequences, and their display locations in the movie were determined. Subsequently, positive and negative behaviors related to the character traits in the Character Virtues Index observed in the main character during these sequences were identified. Finally, scenes displaying each character trait and related behaviors of the main character were outlined. The character traits "spirituality" and "courage" were not distinctly evident and were therefore excluded from the study. Table 3 presents the time stamps of sequences in the movie used for analysis.

Table 3

Time Stamps of Sequences in the Movie

Scenes	Scene time intervals	Scenes	Scene time intervals	Scenes	Scene time intervals
S1	03:09-04:54	S17	34:04-35:43	S33	89:09-90:39
S2	04:55-08:55	S18	35:44-37:35	S34	90:40-92:12
S3	08:56-11:01	S19	37:36-39:14	S35	92:13-96:06
S4	11:02-12:50	S20	39:15-41:25	S36	98:26-103:34
S5	12:51-14:07	S21	41:26-44:31	S37	103:35-105:54
S6	14:08-16:01	S22	44:32-49:09	S38	105:55-107:44
S7	16:02-18:36	S23	49:10-56:56	S39	107:45-109:56
S8	18:37-19:05	S24	56:57-58:35	S40	112:24-118:00
S9	19:06-21:15	S25	58:36-59:54	S41	118:01-120:03
S10	21:16-21:53	S26	63:16-66:35	S42	120:04-121:17
S11	21:54-22:50	S27	70:06-73:37	S43	121:18-124:00
S12	22:51-26:00	S28	73:38-75:06	S44	124:01-125:40
S13	26:01-29:03	S29	75:07-75:21	S45	125:41-127:06
S14	29:32-32:32	S30	76:53-78:12	S46	127:07-132:33
S15	32:33-32:49	S31	82:27-85:11	S47	132:34-135:58
S16	32:50-34:03	S32	85:12-88:02		

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Perseverance

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of perseverance, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Perseverance and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S2	Escaping from prison despite being ill	Positive
S23	Successfully escaping just before being captured in the hotel room	Positive
S33	Trying to learn legal knowledge	Positive
S36	Escaping just before being captured at the wedding	Positive
S39	Hiding among the flight attendants to escape unnoticed	Positive
S42	Escaping from the restroom while being transported by plane	Positive
S47	Working hard to pass the bar exam	Positive

Perseverance reflects one's ability to progress towards their goals despite encountering obstacles (Demirci & Ekşi, 2015). As seen in Table 4, throughout the movie, the main character pursues his aims with determination in challenging situations.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Humility

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of humility, and the behaviors related to this trait are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Humility and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S17	Acting like a real pilot when a young child approaches while wearing a pilot uniform	Negative
S18	Engaging in dialogue with bank clerks and managers in a manner that presents himself as superior	Negative
S24	Enjoying being compared to James Bond in a fraud news article and trying to portray himself differently	Negative
S25	Emphasizing that one car in front of a building is just one of his cars	Negative

Humility is characterized by the acceptance of mistakes, the enjoyment of others' successes, and the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses without seeking praise (Liston, 2014). Individuals possessing this trait do not highlight their own successes to draw attention (Kabakçı, 2013). As seen in Table 5, however, the main character occasionally attempts to attract attention by presenting himself differently in the movie.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Optimism

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of optimism, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Optimism and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive / Negative
S15	Setting a goal to become a passenger airplane pilot and informing his father in writing	Positive

Optimism is a trait defined by focusing on the positive and believing that good things will happen in the future (Avşaroğlu & Okutan, 2018). A high level of optimism is associated with an individual's ability to plan their career, have confidence in career decisions, and set career objectives (Creed et al., 2002). In the movie, the main character's decision to aspire to be a pilot is influenced by an actual pilot, and his communication of this goal to his father (S15) exemplifies positive behavior related to the trait of optimism.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Kindness

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of kindness, and the behaviors related to this trait are outlined in Table 7.

Table 7

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Kindness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S4	Bringing a cloth to clean after his mother spills a drink on the carpet	Positive
S8	Disposing of his mother's cigarette for her health	Positive
S22	Efforts to support his father financially and socially	Positive
S27	Supporting the crying nurse	Positive
S28	Belittling a colleague by the answer given to their question when starting work	Negative
S35	Attempting to support his father in improving his relationship with his mother	Positive
S44	Assisting Agent Carl with his knowledge to catch the check fraudster	Positive

Kindness signifies being helpful, compassionate, and protective towards others (Liston, 2014). A person's sense of compassion is closely associated with demonstrating generous and thoughtful behaviors (Yıldız, 2022). As seen in Table 7, the main character mainly exhibits positive behaviors related to kindness.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Closeness

The scenes in which the main character displays the trait of closeness, and the behaviors related to this trait are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Closeness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S3	Listening attentively to his father during the award ceremony and embracing him in pride	Positive
S4	Dancing with his mother and actively participating in dialogues while they dance	Positive
S7	Playfully joking with his father about his mother	Positive
S12	Realizing that his mother is cheating on his father	Negative
S13	Learning about his parents' divorce in an unhealthy manner and being forced to choose between them	Negative
S22	Having a sincere meal with his father	Positive
S26	Emphasizing that Agent Carl has no one to contact when he tries to reach out before Christmas	Negative
S28	Establishing eye contact with Brenda in a warm manner that evokes a sense of closeness	Positive
S31	Having dinner with Brenda's family	Positive
S34	Spending an evening singing with Brenda's family in a family setting	Positive
S35	Learning that his mother has married his father's friend	Negative
S36	Damaging the trust in his relationship with Brenda by revealing his true identity just before the wedding	Negative
S37	Completely ruining his relationship by confessing to agents while planning to escape with Brenda	Negative
S41	Informing him that his father has died while on the plane despite stating that Carl could meet his father	Negative
S43	Feeling disappointment upon looking through the window and seeing his mother's new husband and daughter	Negative
S44	Celebrating Christmas and receiving comic book gifts from Carl	Positive
S46	Realizing Carl's lack of attention to him while he is adjusting to the job and discovering that Carl lied regarding his child	Negative

Closeness signifies the ability to form loving and trusting relationships (Liston, 2014). Throughout the movie, positive and negative behaviors related to the trait of closeness exhibited by the main character can be observed as summarized in Table 8.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Peace

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of peace, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Peace and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S1	Appearing calm while admitting his name and acknowledging the person who captured him during a TV program revealing his fraud	Positive
S10	Biting his nails and shaking his legs while the principal recounts what he did to his parents at school	Negative
S12	Not reacting when realizing his mother has cheated on his father	Positive

S13	Displaying tense body language when forced to choose one parent after learning about their divorce	Negative
S17	Clenching and shaking his hands while trying on his uniform after lying about its loss	Negative
S20	Showing anxiety as the plane takes off	Negative
S23	Acting coolly while deceiving the agent that has come to capture him	Positive
S35	Becoming tense upon learning that his mother is married to his father's close friend	Negative
S36	Worrying during the agent's raid on his wedding	Negative
S40	Becoming anxious when the agent tracks him down	Negative

Peace refers to the ability to maintain a sense of tranquility and composure, especially in stressful situations (Liston, 2014). Throughout the movie, the main character predominantly exhibits negative behaviors related to peace. However, as seen in Table 9, the character exhibits positive behaviors related to peace, albeit in small numbers.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Wisdom

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of wisdom, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Wisdom and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S16	Asking many questions to learn about airplanes	Positive
S29	Attempting to learn about the duties of a doctor	Positive
S33	Trying to gain information related to the legal field	Positive
S44	Possessing knowledge regarding the preparation of fake checks	Positive
S45	Being able to discern whether checks are genuine or fake through reasoning	Positive
S47	Attempting to analyze checks with reasoning ability	Positive

Wisdom is a virtue that manifests as the ability to acquire and utilize knowledge (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and can be reached through qualities such as love of learning, curiosity, and a multifaceted perspective (Kabakçı, 2016). As seen in Table 10, the main character exhibits positive behaviors related to wisdom.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Forgiveness

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of forgiveness, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Forgiveness and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S9	Seeking revenge after being pushed by friends in the hallway and laughed at	Negative

Forgiveness entails avoiding anger and aggressive behaviors when faced with wrongdoing, accompanied by kindness and compassion (Sarıçam & Biçer, 2015). As seen in Table 11, the main character exhibits a negative attitude towards forgiveness.

Findings Related to Behaviors Exhibiting the Trait of Honesty

The scenes in which the main character exhibits the trait of honesty, and the behaviors related to this trait are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Scenes Exhibiting the Trait of Honesty and Associated Behaviors

Scenes	Related Behavior	Positive/Negative
S1	Accurately stating his name and the name of the agent who captured him during a TV program	Positive
S2	Relying on deception to escape from his cell	Negative
S5	Remaining silent about his father's lies and cheating, thus becoming complicit	Negative
S6	Assisting his father in deceiving bank employees by pretending to be his chauffeur	Negative
S9	Introducing himself as a substitute teacher	Negative
S11	Giving a hint to a friend regarding the preparation of a fake document	Negative
S12	Not telling his father that his mother is cheating on him when offered money	Negative
S14	Discovering the process of creating fake checks and deceiving bank employees	Negative
S16	Presenting himself differently and requesting items to appear as a pilot	Negative
S17	Claiming to be a co-pilot and lying about losing his uniform	Negative
S18	Cashing and writing a fake check	Negative
S19	Presenting himself as a passenger while cashing a fake check	Negative
S20	Introducing himself as a co-pilot	Negative
S21	Cashing a fake check	Negative
S23	Impersonating a secret service agent to deceive an agent	Negative
S26	Correctly stating the room number when sharing his location with the agent	Positive
S27	Claiming to be a doctor to Brenda	Negative
S28	Identifying himself as a doctor during a job interview	Negative
S30	Discussing with hospital staff as if testing their knowledge to conceal he is not a doctor	Negative
S31	Claiming to Brenda's family that he studied law	Negative
S32	Honestly stating to Brenda's father that he is not a doctor, lawyer, or pilot	Positive

S36	Confessing his true identity to Brenda	Positive
S38	Introducing himself as Frank Roberts and misleading hostesses with empty promises	Negative
S39	Deceiving the agent and escaping amidst a crowd of hostesses	Negative

Honesty is characterized by not lying, cheating, stealing, or acting hypocritically, and it reflects reliability (Liston, 2014). As shown in Table 12, the main character exhibits mostly negative behaviors related to honesty.

Discussion

Possessing good character promotes behaviors that are beneficial both to the individual and to their environment (Damon & Hart, 1992). However, the surrounding context can significantly influence character development, either positively or negatively (Kayan, 2022). Studies demonstrate that character education within schools leads to positive outcomes in character development (Hanafiah et al., 2024). Movies are also utilized as materials for character education (Yılmaz, 2017).

In this research, the movie “Catch Me If You Can” has been analyzed regarding character traits. The character traits of the main character in the movie have been examined in the context of the character traits listed in the Character Virtues Index developed by Liston (2014). The movie is divided into 47 meaningful and cohesive sequences, and the behaviors observed in the main character are categorized as positive or negative based on the character traits.

The findings reveal that the main character, Frank William Abagnale, exhibits positive behaviors regarding the traits of perseverance, wisdom, and optimism; negative behaviors concerning humility and forgiveness; and both positive and negative behaviors in relation to kindness, closeness, peace, and honesty. Human life is shaped by both similarities and differences, reflecting the development of traits within an environment defined by contrasts (Ülkü & Polatçı, 2023). All individuals possess both light and dark sides (Kaufman et al., 2019). Therefore, it is unrealistic to expect anyone to be entirely good or bad. Frank William Abagnale’s demonstration of both positive and negative behaviors can be linked to the inherent quality of humans having both light and dark aspects. Furthermore, the differences between a person's light and dark sides are formed by the reflection of their personality in their behaviors (Kavak & Naldöken, 2024).

Character, which reflects the moral dimension of personality (Aydın, 2016), significantly influences attitudes toward various situations (Taşdöven et al., 2012). The behaviors exhibited by Frank in response to various circumstances can be attributed to his character. Character is not innate; rather, it is developed through experiences within the social environment (Karatay, 2011). Childhood experiences, in particular, play a significant role in the formation of character, and new experiences can modify it to some extent (Demirci, 2017). The family is a fundamental element in the character development

process (Avcı & Göksel, 2023). Character strengths, including those based on virtues, are influenced by elements such as family and society (Işık et al., 2019). It is believed that childhood family experiences play a significant role in shaping Frank's character traits, resulting in both positive and negative behaviors. Literature indicates that family functionality (Raimundi et al., 2016) and family support (Noronha et al., 2019) are positively associated with the development of character strengths.

Frank is depicted as having undergone an unhealthy divorce process experienced by his parents, which results in a disconnected relationship with his mother and sporadic emotional exchanges with his father. Family integrity is one of the most vital components of a child's personality development (Bilici, 2014). A dysfunctional family can negatively impact the development of moral identity (Yılmaz, 2021). A study conducted by Çakır and Turan (2021) found that the scores for the traits of peace and wisdom varied according to family type; individuals from extended families showed higher scores in peace, while those from intact families scored higher on wisdom compared to those from fragmented family units. Based on these findings, it can be interpreted that Frank's predominantly negative behaviors concerning peace are influenced by his fragmented family background.

After his parents' divorce, Frank had almost no communication with his mother and only occasionally met with his father. The movie highlights the supportive attitudes present in the dialogue between Frank and his father. The literature indicates that perceived levels of social support from family correlate positively and significantly with traits such as kindness (Yıldız, 2022) and hope (Mantar, 2021); other studies show that family social support is positively and significantly related to character strengths (Khosrojerdi & Pakdaman, 2022). Based on these findings, it can be interpreted that the social support perceived by his father has influenced Frank's exhibition of positive behaviors regarding his character traits.

Although Frank demonstrates positive behaviors linked to his character traits, he is also capable of exhibiting negative behaviors, evidenced by his involvement in various fraudulent activities. Misbehavior and aggressive dispositions in children can be explained through social learning and attachment theories, particularly regarding familial influences (Özada & Duyan, 2018). From a social learning perspective, Frank witnessed his father repeatedly using lies and deceit to manipulate others during his childhood. Social learning theory posits that individuals learn not only through personal experiences but also by observing and imitating others' experiences and behaviors (Erjem & Çağlayandereli, 2006). This learning mode can lead to the acquisition of both desirable and undesirable behaviors (Samancı & Uçan, 2017). Research by Gürel (2014) shows that modeling behaviors significantly influences children's moral judgments. Frank's predominantly negative behaviors regarding honesty, such as lying, cheating, and deception, can stem from the lack of a positive role model in his father for character development.

From the perspective of attachment theory, Frank's relationship with his mother—lacking a foundation of trust—along with the poor handling of his parents' divorce, has negatively impacted his character development. Healthy communication between a mother and child is vital for fostering positive relationships with others (Kırman & Doğan, 2017). Individuals who maintain healthy and fulfilling relationships with their parents are more likely to develop positive interactions with their peers (Özdemir et al., 2012). For interpersonal relationships to be fulfilling and secure, individuals must establish secure attachments with their caregivers (Ulusoy et al., 2018). It can be suggested that Frank's sense of isolation related to the trait of closeness throughout the movie—as well as the instability of his romantic relationship—originates from the lack of a secure attachment to his mother. A study by Liu and Wang (2021) found that perceived parental emotional warmth and secure attachments are positively and significantly related to the character strengths of adolescents. Similarly, Lavy and Littman-Ovadia (2011) have discovered that most character strengths are negatively and significantly correlated with avoidant and anxious attachment styles. The research findings suggest that Frank's negative behaviors concerning closeness are influenced by his inability to establish a secure bond with his parents.

The indifference Frank exhibits towards the crimes he commits is particularly striking. The apparent indifference displayed by individuals involved in criminal activities often stems from underlying insecurities, feelings of inferiority, and a self-perception of unworthiness (Kımtır, 2008). Research by Güneri Yöyen (2017) indicates that childhood traumas increase the likelihood of developing low self-esteem. It can be suggested that Frank developed low self-esteem as a result of his traumatic experiences in childhood, leading him to adopt behaviors that present an image different from his true self as a means of compensation. Adler asserts that self-esteem reflects the transition from feelings of inferiority to feelings of superiority (Kımtır, 2008). An individual strives to assert themselves as superior to the extent that they perceive themselves as inferior (Fırat & Güngör, 2021). A superiority complex is frequently interpreted as overcompensation for feelings of inferiority (Selvi, 2018). Individuals with a superiority complex tend to exaggerate their physical, intellectual, or social abilities (Güneş, 2010). Those who wish to enhance their self-concept tend to seek to elevate their social status (Varışoğlu & Irmak, 2011). Frank's inclination towards prestigious occupations such as being a pilot, doctor, or lawyer can be seen as efforts to enhance his social standing and strengthen his self-image.

In conclusion, this study establishes that the main character in the movie "Catch Me If You Can" demonstrates both positive and negative behaviors concerning his character traits. This duality can be explained by acknowledging the dual nature of human beings. Furthermore, it can be inferred that family structure and interpersonal relationships significantly shape character traits during the main character's development process. The omission of obvious representations of spirituality and courage in the movie suggests a limitation of this research, as it focuses on character traits within the framework of perseverance, humility, optimism, kindness, closeness, peace, wisdom, forgiveness, and honesty

outlined in the Character Virtues Index. The movie "Catch Me If You Can" could be used as a course material in "Character and Value Education" and "Positive Psychology" courses.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

Karakter; katılım ve çevrenin etkisi ile oluşmakta (Çapuk, 2022), kişinin içinde doğup büyüdüğü ortam karakter özelliklerini olumlu veya olumsuz yönde geliştirerek karakteri biçimlendirmektedir (Kayan, 2022). Bilim insanları da sağlıklı büyüme sürecinde karakterin güçlü yönlerinin aile ve okul yaşantısının yansıması olduğu görüşünde uzlaşmaktadır (Li & Liu, 2016). Dolayısıyla karakter geliştirilebilir bir niteliğe sahiptir. Çocukların ve ergenlerin sosyal uyumları için karakter güçlerinin geliştirilmesi de önem arz etmektedir (Liu & Wang, 2021). Karakter gelişimini konu edinen çalışmalarda karakter eğitimi ve değerler eğitimi ifadelerine yer verildiği görülmektedir (Levent & Baş Doğan, 2022). Karakter eğitimi amacıyla kullanılan materyallerden biri sinema filmleridir (Yılmaz, 2017).

Sinema filmleri uzun süre boyunca insan hafızasında tekrarlı biçimde hatırlanarak canlandırıcı bir etki oluşturabilmektedir (Niemiec & Wedding, 2011). Psikoloji bilimi ile sinemanın iç içe olması, filmlerin eğitim amacıyla kullanılmasını sağlamaktadır (Derin & Voltan Acar, 2016). Senaryosu gerçek hayatta yaşanmış olaylardan esinlenerek yazılmış olan “Sıkıysa Yakala” filmi, birçok karakter özelliğini ve karakter özelliklerinin gelişimini içeren bir filmidir. Bu çalışmada Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan karakter özellikleri açısından “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Filmin içeriğinin analizinde kontrol listesi olarak Liston (2014) tarafından karakter gelişim özelliklerinin değerlendirilebilmesi için geliştirilen Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın karakter özelliklerinin gelişimi açısından farkındalık oluşturması ve alanyazına film incelemesi çalışması olarak katkıda bulunması bakımından yararlı olabileceği umulmaktadır.

Bu araştırma, “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin karakter özellikleri açısından ele alındığı nitel bir çalışmadır. Araştırmada nitel araştırma yöntemlerinden doküman analizi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmada doküman olarak “Sıkıysa Yakala” filminin sahneleri ele alınmıştır. Doküman incelemesi ile toplanan verilerin analizinde içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Film sahnelerinin analizi karakter özelliklerini içeren bir kontrol listesi üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada filmdeki ana karakterin karakter özellikleri karakter gelişimi bağlamında değerlendirilmek istendiğinden, kontrol listesi oluşturulurken karakter gelişim özelliklerinin değerlendirilebilmesi için geliştirilen Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’ndeki karakter özellikleri dikkate alınmıştır.

Filmin analizinde öncelikle film sekanslara ayrılmış ve bu sekansların filmdeki gösterim yerleri belirlenmiştir. Ardından filmin ana karakterinde Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan karakter özelliklerine yönelik olumlu ve olumsuz yöndeki davranışların görüldüğü sahnelerin bulunduğu sekanslar tespit edilmiştir. Daha sonra ana karakterde her bir karakter özelliğinin görüldüğü sahneler ve bu özelliklere ilişkin davranışlar ortaya konulmuştur. Ana karakterde Karakter Erdemleri İndeksi’nde yer alan cesaret ve maneviyat özellikleri ana karakterde belirgin biçimde görünmediğinden analizlere dahil edilmemiş; ana karakterin karakter özellikleri kararlılık, alçakgönüllülük, iyimserlik, nezaket, yakınlık, sakinlik, bilgelik, affedicilik ve dürüstlük olmak üzere dokuz tema

altında değerlendirilmiştir. Elde edilen bulgulara göre filmin ana karakteri Frank Abagnale'in karakter özellikleri arasında kararlılık, bilgelik ve iyimserlik özelliklerine yönelik davranışları olumlu yönde; alçakgönüllülük ve affedicilik özelliklerine yönelik davranışları olumsuz yönde; nezaket, yakınlık, sakinlik ve dürüstlük özellikleri açısından ise olumlu ve olumsuz yönde davranışlar sergilediği görülmektedir. Karakter özellikleri açısından olumlu ve olumsuz yönde davranışlar göstermek, insanın aydınlık ve karanlık yönü olan bir canlı olması ile açıklanabilir. Bunun yanı sıra ana karakterin karakter gelişimi sürecinde aile yapısının ve aile ilişkilerinin karakter özelliklerini şekillendirdiği yorumu yapılabilir. "Sıkıysa Yakala" filmi "Karakter ve Değer Eğitimi" ve "Pozitif Psikoloji" derslerinde ders materyali olarak kullanılabilir.

Ethics Committee Approval: Data for this study were not collected from human participants. Thus, it has been reported by the Directorate of the Institute of Educational Sciences of Marmara University with the document dated 20.05.2024 and numbered 796614 that this study does not require an ethics committee application.

Informed Consent: Informed consent was not obtained because this study was not conducted with human participants.

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