

The Survivors: Self-Determination and How It Helps Youngsters to Face the Challenges at the Work Place

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ABSTRACT

As a screenplay project about youngsters' work life, *The Survivors* follows a story of three young interns named Clara, Sebastian, and Bakti in their journey during the internship program held by a famous e-commerce company. Having not enough experience working in a company, the interns have a hard time to survive in the company. Moreover, they also have non-work related problems. Luckily, these interns later learn about Self-Determination. Being self-determined means that the interns can intrinsically motivate themselves, do things by their own initiative, and also decide things based on their moral or values. Using Deci & Ryan's Self Determination Theory in work life context, the creative work shows the importance of self-determination in facing the challenges at the work place and how youngsters can actually gain self-determination. The genre is Dramedy as it shows what usually happens to youngsters in a work place then filled it with humors so that it can be entertaining.

Keywords: Youngsters, The Survivors, Dramedy, Internship, Work Life, Work Place

INTRODUCTION

Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and founder of Analytical Psychology, stated, "I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become." The statement is fascinating and I can agree that people are responsible for their own future. Yet, some people can be very passive and dependent on what they call "fate". I believe that everyone should have a dream or a set of goals so that their life can have a purpose and also become meaningful. Talking about pursuing dream, youngsters may be the best subjects to talk about since the pursuit usually starts from this period. That is why I come up with a topic of self-determination for youngsters.

In this context, the youngsters that I want to talk about are the Millennials or those who were born between 1980s until 2000s (Wallop, 2014). In Indonesia, from around 200 million citizens, approximately 81 million of them are the millennial generation (Kumala, 2018). As a youngster, I am very interested in exploring everything about youth. "Youth is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community" (UNESCO, n.d.).

In this era when almost everything is instant and easy to get, not everyone is fond of challenges, so are the youngsters. Sometimes, the older generation looks down on the millennials who are growing up in this era. In his article titled "Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation", Joel Stein, an American journalist and a former columnist for Time magazine, called the millennials lazy, entitled, selfish, and shallow (Stein, 2013). He might be harsh, but in that article, Stein managed to provide the data and proof to support his statement. Being identified with those four bad characteristics can really hurt youngsters' confidence, but it is not something to be mad about. Instead, it is something for youngsters to reflect on and also something that youngsters have to prove as wrong.

Youth is the period when everyone is searching for their identity and also the time for preparing someone's future. Thoughts about the future can be both dreamy and scary at the same time. I believe that everyone should work hard because it is not easy to reach a dream and that is exactly why it is worth fighting for. Some people may encounter failure, but it is not the end of the journey. What people need is the strength to get back up and the will to start pursuing their dream again. Personally, it happens to me as I often have so many internal conflicts about my future, especially now when I am in my last semester in the university. The thoughts about "what will I do after I graduate?", "will I be able to work my dream job?", and similar other questions are haunting me. I am pretty sure that my fellow millennials can relate to this concern.

A period of life that I particularly want to show in this creative thesis is young people's work life after school which is represented by internship period. The transition time between being a student and a worker can be quite challenging for many people. Faridah Lim, the Country Manager of *Jobstreet.com*, said that the challenges may be [in the forms of] the difference between job and someone's passion, the uncomfortable work environment, or the inharmonic relationship with the boss (Virdhani, 2016). Some people choose to run away from the challenges and quit the job. Especially for millennials, they are even known to be "kutu loncat" (*fleas*) at work because they have the habit to move from one job to another in a short time (Sherly, 2018).

In order to face all of those hard challenges, I think youngsters should be armed with a weapon. That weapon is determination, especially the one which comes from inside or in this case, self-determination. Self-determination basically means a sense of trust that someone can control his or her own fate and it is a combination of an attitude and a skill that lead people to set a goal for themselves (Innova, 2014, para. 1). Being self-determined can also mean that youngsters are being self-initiated, self-directed, and can actually make things happen (Hui, Tsang, & Merrick, 2012, para. 6). The definition shows that indeed self-determination is something great and of course it is not an easy thing to do. In this creative thesis, I want to write about how self-determination can help young people in their life especially during their work life. By implementing self-determination, youngsters are expected to be able to stand strong through the challenges.

The form of this creative thesis is a full-length screenplay which later can be turned into a movie. Screenplay is basically a script for movies or films. In a broader sense, screenplay is: *The guide for the Producers, Director, Actors, Crew of exactly what will appear on screen. It is the common ground that everybody on the film will work with from start to finish of production. It tells the complete story, contains all action in the film and all dialogue for each character. It can also describe characters visually so filmmakers can try to capture their style, look or vibe* (Jefferson, 2014, para. 18-19).

The screenplay should not only be able to deliver its storyline well, but also give good visual descriptions of what the scene should look like.

There are some movies which influenced and inspired the making of the screenplay. They are *The Devil Wears Prada* (Frankel, Weisberger, McKenna, & Finerman, 2006), *Begin Again* (Carney, Bregman, Armburst, Apatow, & Carney, 2014), *Legally Blonde* (Luketic, Brown, McCullah, & Smith, 2002), *Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde* (Herman-Wurmfeld, Kondell, Ahlert, Drake, & Kondell, 2003) and *The Intern* (Meyers, Meyers, Meyers, & Farwell, 2015). These movies are mostly set in the workplace (office), except for *Begin Again*, with young people as the main characters. These movies can give an idea of the situations in the office, the kinds of people in the office, the types of bosses, and the types of workers. Also, since the main characters of these four movies are young people, they can give different images of youngsters and how they deal with their problems.

The reason why I choose to write a screenplay is that Indonesian can now appreciate local movies more. It is proven by the increasing number of Indonesian movie goers who watch Indonesian movies these days. In 2017, the number of the national movie audiences reached 42.7 million with 35% of the market share (Sari, 2018). There was an increase compared to the number in 2016 when the audiences' number was only 37.2 million with 32% of the market share (Sari, 2018). Not only that, Indonesian national movie industry has been growing well nowadays. In 2016, the total number of audiences for *Warkop DKI Reborn: Jangkrik Boss! Part 1* (Umbara, Kriting, Dionysius, Umbara, & Naveen, 2016) was more than 6.8 million (Yulistara, 2018). Another example is *Dilan 1990* (Bustomi, Hidayat, Baiq, & Baiq, 2018), a movie adapted from a novel written by Pidi Baiq, which became very popular in Indonesia. The total number of the audiences was around 6.2 million (Yulistara, 2018).

Another reason to write a screenplay is the fact that I can identify myself with the statement "Screenwriters break the world down into visual clips or scenes – in other words, moving pictures. And screenwriter sees with more than their eyes" (Schellhardt, 2008). I am used to visualizing things when I read stories or even when I listened to my friends' stories. That is why I think my habit of visualizing written or spoken words can help me in writing a screenplay. Being able to imagine words or sentences can help me in picturing the scenes that I want to present in my screenplay. I can visualize the look of the characters, the situation presented in the scene, and many more. Screenwriter should be able to imagine these things so he or she can create a situation then write it in a screenplay.

The genre of this screenplay is Drama-Comedy (or Dramedy) which is "a genre that has a dramatic tone, yet has important elements of comedy. In Dramedies, the amount of drama and comedy are almost equally balanced. This balance provides comedic relief for the audience, while still addressing serious issues" (Buffam, 2011). With drama as the one of the genre, this screenplay will show events that usually happen in real life (true-to-life stories) which will also be containing serious messages (Schellhardt, 2008). I want to write a screenplay that the audiences can relate to, so it can be meaningful for them. The target market, young people, are not fond of strong advices. With comedy, young people can relate and also laugh about themselves, while still getting 'pinched' by the message given by the movie.

The creative work tries to understand why young people need to have self-determination at work and how young people gain self-determination in their working life. These people in this context are the main characters: Clara, Sebastian, and Bakti. To fulfil its purpose, the creative work shows that youngsters, which are represented by Clara, Sebastian, and Bakti, need self-determination because it can make them become mentally strong and optimistic so they can face any challenges at work. Also, in order to gain self-determination, youngsters should not run away from the challenges and they should believe that they have the power to face those challenges.

In order to make this creative thesis, I did library research. I collected data and references by doing a library research. The data and references came from movies, books both printed and digital, and also the internet. The theory that I use in the making of creative work is Self-Determination Theory. SDT is a theory developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, psychologists at the University of Rochester. "SDT is an organismic dialectical approach. It begins with the assumption that people are active organisms, with evolved tendencies toward growing, mastering ambient challenges, and integrating new experiences into a coherent sense of self (Self Determination Theory [SDT], n.d., para. 4)."

There are two important things in SDT which are motivations and psychological needs. There are extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation comes from other people

or external factors such as respect or appreciation and admiration from other people, employee evaluation, rewards, and many more (Ackerman & Tran, 2018, para. 6). Intrinsic motivation comes from our internal drives that come from within which will motivate us to act in particular way. It includes our main values, interest, and morality (Ackerman & Tran, 2018, para. 7). Another important aspect from SDT is about humans' psychological needs. According to SDT, there are three innate psychological needs: competence, connection or relatedness and autonomy.

- **Competence:** *People need to gain mastery of tasks and learn different skills.*
 - **Connection or Relatedness:** *People need to experience a sense of belonging and attachment to other people.*
 - **Autonomy:** *People need to feel in control of their own behaviors and goals.*
- (Cherry, 2017, para. 6)

Using all these, I want to show that indeed, self-determination can help youngsters to face the challenges at the work place.

2. OUTLINE OF THE CREATIVE WORK

Theme

Through my creative work, I want to deliver a message to the audiences, especially young people, that youngsters should have self-determination as it can help them to face the challenges in life, or in this case, work life. I also want to say that no matter how challenging the problems are at work, it is not impossible for youngsters to handle those problems. Just like Clara who is struggling to manage time between her university final project and her work tasks. Instead of running from one of the problems, she tries her best to do both of them well even though it can be overwhelming for her. For Sebastian, the struggle is to do business-related thing that he dislikes which is when all he actually wants is to be an artist. Instead of doing something reckless, like for example, running away from home, Sebastian tries to make a deal with his over-controlling father instead. He swallows his hatred for business and tries his best at doing his job at the company so that his father can see that Sebastian is a responsible person. As for Bakti, who has many problems both inside and outside work, he patiently faces all of his problems even though he may feel miserable. Just like when there is a money scandal, instead of playing dumb, Bakti bravely tell the truth even though he has to drop the internship program for being indirectly involved in the scandal. While struggling with these challenges, they will learn one thing in common which helps them in surviving through their problems. That one thing is self-determination in which they will learn how to be strong during anything and they should not be afraid to try again after making a mistake.

Pitch

- a. The interns (Clara, Sebastian, Bakti) are 7th semester university students who want to win a permanent position at the e-commerce company where they do internship program despite their low determination.
- b. However, the work life is not as dreamy as their expectation; instead, it is very challenging and hard to overcome as they are still inexperienced, and to make matters worse, they are often distracted by other things such as family matters, competition, relationships, and integrity.
- c. They then learn from the experience that self-determination is important although not everyone win the competition at the end.

Characters

- **Major Characters**

- **Beatrice Clara (20 → 22 years old)**

Clara is a very cheerful, funny, and strong girl. Clara has a lot of hobbies and she also has a hard time to commit to one of them. One thing that she really likes to do is writing, so she took Journalism major in the university.

There is something that she is lacking of: ambition. She knows what her hobbies are, she knows the things that she enjoys doing. Yet, she has not actually really thought about what she will do in the future. She may know that her dream job has something to do with writing, but she has no actual plan on how to reach that dream.

In her 7th semester, Clara should write creative blog about a topic that she like as her university's final project. The topic that she chooses is about internship and for that, her lecturer recommends her to actually join an internship program so that her writings can be realistic as she experience it by herself.

- **Sebastian Giovanni (21 → 23 years old)**

Sebastian is basically the typical heir from a rich family. His parents already have a plan for his future, which is to continue the family's business. The path that Sebastian's parents have chosen for him is almost 100% different from the path that Sebastian wants to go. Sebastian has always been had a passion in painting and graphic designing. He tries to talk to his parents so many times, but they only brush him off.

The family expects him to follow his father's footsteps to become a very successful businessman, yet Sebastian has no intention to do that at all. Sadly, Sebastian had no other choice than majoring in Business Management at the university. Before he graduates, he needs to join an internship program as the obligation from the university. He joins *f-on-line!*'s internship program because his mother has a friend inside the company so Sebastian can easily get accepted.

- **Bakti Kurniawan (21 → 23 years old)**

Bakti was born in a low-class family and was raised in a quite tough way. He only has his mother and his older brother. His mother is a very strong figure who raised both of her sons to be very discipline. His big brother works in another town leaving Bakti to take care of their mother. Luckily, Bakti can still get an education in the university since he has a scholarship. He is majoring in Finance Management.

Many people praise him for being a polite and obedient person for someone at his age. But then, he also has a hard time saying no to the requests or orders that are given to him. He joins the *f-on-line!*'s internship program because one of his lecturer recommends him to do so. Later, Bakti finds out that the salary of *f-on-line!*'s workers are high, so he wants to be one.

- **Minor Characters**

- **Helga Amira Kusuma (49 years old)**

One of the founder of the infamous e-commerce company, *f-on-line!*. She is also the active CEO whom almost everyone in the office is afraid of.

- **Amanda (25 years old)**

The head of Human Resource Department who is also help mentoring the interns especially during the campaign preparation.

- **Jonathan (27 years old)**
He has worked in *f-on-line!* for two years in the Finance Department. He helps Gian to do a corruption. He even tries to manipulate Bakti so that he will not tell the truth about the money laundry.
- **Gian Sudiro (42 years old)**
The head of Finance Department. Together with Jonathan, he plans to manipulate the financial reports for the intern's project so that he can do a money laundry.
- **Mr. & Mrs. Giovanni (Sebastian's Parents, 57 & 49 years old)**
One thing that they have in common is they want the best for their son's future. Mr. Giovanni believes that it is better for his son to continue the family business instead of pursuing a career in Arts. In contrast, Mrs. Giovanni wants Sebastian to do what he likes, which is art.
- **Bella Tamara (early 30s: 31-34 years old)**
The head of Creative Marketing Department. At first, she did not trust Sebastian to help with the designs for the company. However, after seeing Sebastian's design for the intern's project, she knows that the boy is very talented.
- **Tasya (22 years old)**
One of the original five interns. She is fired because of her arrogance and also selfishness.
- **Mikhaela Puspita Saraswati (20 years old)**
One of the five interns. She is often absent from work so she is fired.

Conflict

The conflicts that will present in the screenplay are mostly work-related. The start from the conflict comes from the outside or other people, such as parents or boss or colleagues. Later, the external conflicts will affect to the characters and make them have internal conflicts with themselves. Going back to the genre, the screenplay will focus more on the human dramedy and according to Taflinger (1996), the conflict usually revolves between people instead of a conflict between people and the intangible forces around them. To make it more diverse, I give each character their personal problems. I give these problems to give my character a background and personality.

Setting

- **Place:** Surabaya or similar big city in Indonesia.
 - Exterior: Park, Street
 - Interior: Office, lecturer's room, houses
- **Time:** Modern time

Synopsis

Clara, Sebastian, Bakti, along with Tasya and Mikha are chosen to be the five interns of *f-on-line!*, a famous fashion e-commerce company based in Surabaya. Aside from daily intern jobs, these interns should work on a campaign for *f-on-line!* millennials market as their final internship project. However, during the early days of internship, Tasya and Mikha get fired because they cannot adapt to the company's working culture. The CEO, Helga, decided to offer one full-time position of *f-on-line!* for one best intern to motivate the remaining three. In the end, Bakti is the chosen intern who will work at *f-on-line!* for his good work ethic. Although there is only one winner, the Clara and Sebastian still learn many things for their future.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would like to explain how my screenplay has answered the statement of the problems of the creative thesis. I would like to point out which parts of the screenplay that can prove that the two purposes of the creative work are achieved.

First, youngsters, or this case the young interns, need self-determination to face the challenges at the workplace. The interns are all having problems both from inside the workplace and also outside the workplace. Self-determination help these three interns to be mentally strong no matter what happened during that internship period because the motivation comes from themselves. They also start being optimistic by believing that they have the ability to make things happen.

Second, the young interns did face the challenges instead of running away from it. In the process, they also believe in themselves that they have the power to solve the problems ahead of them. Clara, who has problem with dividing her time between university and work, does not sacrifice one of her task, but she chooses to go all out and work harder. For Bakti, instead of pretending not to know the culprits of the corruption, he bravely tells the boss. Sebastian believes that he can try to gain his freedom from his parents with his own power. In addition, the interns finish the preparation of the project in a very limited time instead of giving up.

To conclude, through this creative work, I have delivered that self-determination can indeed help youngsters to face the challenges at the work place. Self-determination can be obtained and practiced when someone can motivate his/herself to do things with the motivation that comes from inside. Moreover, youngsters need to face their problem instead of run away from it so that they will be self-determined. If they run away from the problem, they will not have the chance to grow and to see what they are actually capable of. Facing the challenges may be scary, but it can help people to know their worth.

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