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## Ethical Communication in Humor: Analyzing Panji's Stand-Up Comedy to Raise ECO-Cultural Awareness

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**Abstract.** *Stand-up comedy has evolved into a dynamic platform for the treatment of complex social and environmental issues, combining entertainment and education. However, little is known about how stand-up comedians manage the balance between entertainment, education, and ethical responsibility when addressing environmental challenges. This study aims to understand how humor functions as a tool for raising environmental cultural awareness and promoting positive behavioral changes. The study employs a case study methodology in conjunction with a qualitative approach. The analysis will be carried out through discourse analysis to uncover the underlying themes, ethical considerations, and communication techniques embedded in Pandji Pragiwaksono's humor. The findings from this study will not only enhance our understanding of humor's role in environmental communication but also provide practical insights for comedians, environmental educators, and communicators who are trying to effectively engage audiences while maintaining ethical integrity across different cultural contexts.*

**Keywords:** *stand-up comedy, environmental awareness, humor, ethical communication.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Stand-up comedy has evolved into a dynamic platform for the treatment of complex social and environmental issues, combining entertainment and education. By exploiting humor, comedians offer the audience a means of engaging in topics that may otherwise seem overwhelming or inaccessible. In Indonesia, Pandji Pragiwaksono stands out as a prominent figure who uses comedy to highlight environmental and cultural challenges. His performances, particularly on platforms such as Mata Najwa, deal with problems such as deforestation, air pollution and unsustainable resource management, stimulating reflection and dialogue between his audiences. Northrop Frye introduces the concept of irony and satire in the Winter myth in *Anatomy of Criticism* (Frye, 2000), emphasizing these elements as powerful narrative tools for criticizing social and cultural issues. This is consistent with (Phiddian, 2013) observation that satire is a rhetorical strategy that provokes intellectual and emotional reactions to public issues. Pandji Pragiwaksono also uses these rhetorical strategies in stand-up comedy to address Indonesia's urgent environmental and cultural challenges.

Frye emphasizes that irony operates through contradictions that question expectations and assumptions. This is consistent with (Kargupta, 2023), which is that humor simplifies complex concepts such as environmental degradation and makes them more accessible. The

use of humour by Pantji reflects the way irony and satire can deconstruct complex issues and promote reflection and dialogue between the public. This practice reflects the trend of Western comedy, in which humor plays a role in social commentary and advocacy. Research highlights the way humor simplifies complex messages and promotes critical thinking about environmental and cultural issues (Kawalec, 2020). Through relatable anecdotes and satires, Pandji creates a dialogue space to address the urgent need for sustainable practices and cultural preservation in Indonesia.

This paper explores the use of humor in stand-up comedy as a tool for raising environmental cultural awareness and promoting positive behavioral changes. It analyzes the communication ethics underlying the integration of environmental themes and messages into comedy routines. In particular, the study examines how stand-up comedians manage the balance between entertainment, education and ethical responsibility when addressing environmental challenges.

The main purpose of the study is to understand how humor, environmental communication, and ethical issues interact in stand-up comedy, particularly in relation to Pandji Pragiwaksono's performance in Indonesia. Although comedy is widely recognized as a powerful social criticism technique in literature, little is known about how stand-up comedians achieve a balance between entertainment and environmental statements while maintaining their moral principles. In particular, this study explores how Pandji Pragiwaksono achieves this fine line in his humorous routines dealing with environmental and cultural concerns and the moral consequences of using comedy as a tool for environmental dialogue. This study is crucial to our understanding of alternative approaches to environmental education and advocacy, particularly in the Indonesian context, where traditional environmental communication methods can face cultural or social obstacles. Furthermore, the analysis of the ethical dimensions of the use of humor in environmental and cultural communication will provide valuable insights for both actors and environmental communicators who are trying to effectively engage audiences while maintaining responsible communication practices.

This study's importance stems from its thorough analysis of the relationship between humor and eco-cultural communication, which provides insightful information for both scholarly research and real-world implementation. This study adds to the expanding corpus of research on alternative strategies for environmental campaigning and education by examining how stand-up comedy may successfully deconstruct intricate eco-cultural issues and motivate behavioral change. Additionally, the study discusses important ethical issues that come up when comedy is used to address delicate cultural and environmental subjects, offering advice

to professionals in the field. The study's emphasis on how comedians like Pandji Pragiwaksono modify their acts to appeal to a variety of audiences—particularly in non-Western cultural contexts—is extremely significant. This aspect of the research is especially valuable as it fills a significant gap in existing literature, which has predominantly focused on Western perspectives of environmental communication. The findings from this study will not only enhance our understanding of humor's role in environmental communication but also provide practical insights for comedians, environmental educators, and communicators seeking to effectively engage audiences while maintaining ethical integrity across different cultural contexts.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Humour has long been recognized as a powerful communication tool and is able to solve social, cultural and environmental problems through humor and criticism. Satire, a common form of humour, exposes social flaws through irony and exaggeration (Singh, 2012). In Indonesia, stand-up comedy has become a means of combining entertainment with subtle messages about social concerns, making it particularly effective in cultural and environmental promotion (Jaya, 2022). satire often uses irony as a rhetorical tool to criticize social deficiencies (Khadka, 2020). (Frye, 2000) identifies satire as part of a broader narrative framework that contrasts reality and expectations and promotes social consciousness through subtle or direct criticism. Pandji Pragiwaksono's work is a first example, using humor to criticize Indonesia's environmental policies and social standards. (Saputri, 2022), also emphasizes the ways in which Indonesian television comedy, such as *Lapor Pak*, uses satire to solve political and social problems while keeping the public engaged, a strategy reflected in the way Pandji delivers ecological and cultural messages through stand-up comedy.

According to (Lindofrs, 2017), satire in stand-up comedy frequently incorporates moral accountability, emphasizing social duty through emotive language. This strategy is evident in Pandji's moral criticisms of consumerist practices and ineffectual environmental regulations. Furthermore, comedians like Nigel Ng demonstrate how humor cuts across cultural boundaries by exposing preconceptions and provoking discussion through sarcasm and irony (Puti, 2022). These performances show how comedy can be used to engage a variety of audiences while discussing difficult subjects.

### Satire and Humor in Communication

Satire, as explored in the journals you referenced, is a significant device for addressing societal issues, including environmental and cultural concerns. In Pandji Pragiwaksono's comedy, satire functions not only as a form of entertainment but as a method for eco-cultural critique. The following elements of satire are essential in understanding how Pandji's comedy fosters awareness about pressing environmental issues.

- **Horatian Satire (Light-hearted and Gentle Critique)**

Horatian satire, characterized by a gentle and light tone, is effective in addressing social behaviours without alienating audiences. Pandji often uses this approach in the discussion of cultural standards and individual actions, especially in environmental issues such as plastic use, water waste and pollution. He uses humor to criticize these behaviours, encourages reflection in a non-confrontational way. This is consistent with (Heidari-Shahreza, 2023) , which highlight how humor can be an educational tool to raise awareness of environmental and cultural issues and make sensitive issues such as pollution and deforestation more accessible and more engaging. Likewise, (Saputri, 2022), stresses that gentle satire delivers effective critical messages without creating resistance among the public. Frye's concept of analogical imagery (Frye, 2000) further supports this, demonstrating how such satire promotes meaningful reflection by presenting social behaviours in a engaging and relatable way. By this approach, Pandji's work illustrates the power of Horatian satire to promote environmental consciousness.

- **Juvenalian Satire (Harsh, Biting Criticism)**

The Juvenalian satire, as discussed in (Kawalec, 2020) is sharp and critical, aimed at challenging powerful institutions or systems that perpetuate social or environmental harm. Pandji often uses this form of satire to criticize the inefficiencies of the government and the use of natural resources, and to emphasize the political failures and broader consequences of unsustainable practices. His direct criticism, particularly regarding issues such as deforestation and pollution, emphasizes the importance of humor in accountability systems. This is consistent with Kawalec's exploration (Kawalec, 2020) of how satire exposed systemic deficiencies, and Frye's concept of demonic imagery complements this view. Frye's perspective shows how Juvenalian satire, through its intensive and definite criticism, can effectively reveal the shortcomings of institutions, as shown in Pandji's comedy routines.

- **Manippean Satire (Intellectual and Philosophical Critique)**

(Frye, 2000) and (Saputri, 2022) emphasizes both the intellectual depth of Manipean satire, which aims to expose contradictions and offer a deeper critique of social values. Pandji uses this form of satire to question the cultural mindset that gives priority to economic growth rather than environmental sustainability. His work encourages philosophical discourses on ecological and cultural ethics and social priorities, and urges the public to reflect on the basic values that drive harmful environmental practices. This is consistent with (Puti, 2022), which explores the challenge of humor to social norms by intellectual criticism. Pandji's reflections on consumptionism, over-exploitation of resources and development practices have provoked deeper discussions about the philosophical foundations that are fuelling unsustainable practices.

### **Irony and Its Role in Humor**

Irony is an essential rhetorical device in Pandji Pragiwaksono's stand-up comedy, used to highlight contradictions, societal absurdities, and the gap between awareness and action. Irony serves as a tool to expose the disconnect between what is said or expected and what is actually happening, especially in relation to eco-cultural concerns.

#### **- Situational Irony**

Situational irony occurs when the result of an action contradicts expectations. Pandji uses it in discussions on environmental issues. For example, criticizing the lack of effective pollution control highlights the irony that polluted cities such as Jakarta still face bad environmental policies despite public knowledge of the consequences. (Herman, 2018), analyze the situational irony as a means of revealing social contradictions, which Pandji uses to highlight the absurdity of the contradiction between public knowledge and the actions taken to solve ecological and cultural problems.

#### **- Verbal Irony**

Verbal irony is when what is said is opposite to the intended meaning, often used to point out societal flaws or criticize ineffective systems. Pandji uses verbal irony when he sarcastically remarks about environmental policies that fail to address pressing issues, such as the excessive production of single-use plastics despite ongoing environmental crises. Pandji's use of verbal irony connects with (Heidari-Shahreza, 2023), which emphasizes how humor can highlight contradictions in policy and raise awareness about environmental issues. Verbal irony allows Pandji to critique these policies without sounding too accusatory, while still conveying the severity of the situation in a humorous, thought-provoking way.

- **Dramatic Irony**

Dramatic irony involves the audience knowing more than the characters, often leading to a sense of urgency about the situation. Pandji plays on dramatic irony in his critique of society's awareness of environmental issues versus the lack of meaningful action to address them. The audience knows the consequences of climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, while society seems indifferent or uninformed about the gravity of the situation. Pandji's use of dramatic irony reinforces the idea that audiences already possess the knowledge needed to understand the ecological crises but still need to be motivated to act. This mirrors the findings in (Puti, 2022), which highlight how irony is used in stand-up comedy to bridge the gap between awareness and action, encouraging audiences to rethink their behavior.

(Frye, 2000) exploration of irony as a literary instrument corresponds to these classifications and highlights its role in exposing absurdities in social norms. Pandji uses these forms of irony, such as verbal irony, to criticize environmental policies in order to engage audiences and deliver critical messages.

**Ethical Communication in Humor**

Ethical communication is fundamental to Pandji Pragiwaksono's stand-up comedy, especially in his treatment of sensitive topics like environmental degradation and cultural preservation. (Johannesen, 2008) outlines several key elements of ethical communication that are relevant to Pandji's comedic approach:

- **Respect for Cultural Norms and Diversity:** Ethical communication requires an understanding and respect for cultural values. Pandji ensures that his humor resonates with Indonesian cultural norms and does not alienate any groups. By focusing on collective responsibility and using culturally relevant examples, Pandji encourages environmental responsibility without offending or marginalizing his audience. This approach aligns with (Heidari-Shahreza, 2023) , which discusses using humor in a culturally sensitive way to promote environmental education.
- **Honesty and Transparency:** (Johannesen, 2008) emphasizes that ethical communication must be truthful and transparent. Pandji's comedy does not manipulate the facts about environmental issues, but instead, humorously highlights the truth behind governmental inefficiencies and environmental harm. This honesty in communication aligns with \*Kawalec (2020), where humor is used to convey a clear message about social and political shortcomings, without distorting the facts for comedic effect.

- **Promoting Positive Change:** Ethical communication, according to (Johannesen, 2008) , involves promoting behaviors that lead to positive social change. Pandji uses humor not just to entertain, but to encourage the audience to adopt more sustainable practices, such as reducing plastic use and conserving water. His humor motivates individuals to think about their daily choices and how they can contribute to a healthier environment. This aligns with (Kawalec, 2020), which highlights the role of humor in advocating for actionable change, even through light-hearted or humorous approaches.
- **Accountability and Responsibility:** (Johannesen, 2008) stresses the importance of accountability in ethical communication. Pandji critiques environmental and governmental failures but encourages a collective responsibility rather than blaming any one group or individual. This aligns with the ethical communication goal of fostering a shared responsibility for environmental issues, as discussed in (Heidari-Shahreza, 2023) , which emphasizes communal action in the context of environmental education

There are significant gaps in understanding how humor functions in non-Western contexts, particularly regarding eco-cultural comedy in Indonesia. The majority of existing research focuses on Western comedy, with limited attention given to how humor is perceived by Indonesian audiences or how moral boundaries are maintained in these types of performances (Jaya, 2022). Additionally, while humor has been studied in various communication settings, research specifically examining the interaction between stand-up comedy and environmental communication in Southeast Asia is scarce. There is also a need for further exploration into the effectiveness of comedy as an educational tool for environmental awareness in culturally diverse communities, especially within Indonesia's multiethnic society.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a case study methodology in conjunction with a qualitative approach. Because it enables a thorough examination of the use of humor in Pandji Pragiwaksono's performances, a case study was selected. This research attempts to comprehend how comedy may be an ethical and successful communication strategy, with an emphasis on conversation and audience responses. Pandji's performances and the audience's reactions to the messages are both analyzed in this method. Information was gathered from a number of sources, such as social media comments and performance records. In this sense, the study evaluates humor's effect on the audience in addition to its substance. The main approach to gathering data is content analysis, which entails closely examining Pandji's performances to

pinpoint the main ideas, linguistic devices, and comedic devices that are employed to address eco-cultural issues. We'll pay close attention to how he uses satire and irony in his humor, especially how they talk about societal standards and environmental challenges. Pandji's performance of Mata Najwa and other comparable rituals that tackle eco-cultural issues make up the major sample. Viewers who have witnessed and reacted on these performances will be included in the audience sample, offering their opinions on how well the comedy communicates the desired ideas.

Data analysis will be carried out through discourse analysis to uncover the underlying themes, ethical considerations, and communication techniques embedded in Pandji's humor. Frye's *Mythos of Winter* (Frye, 2000) will provide a theoretical framework for analyzing how irony and satire are integrated into his routines. The analysis will also incorporate the qualitative approach used by (Saputri, 2022) to study satire in television discourse, adapting it to the stand-up comedy context. To classify the humor styles Pandji employs, (Herman, 2018) will be referenced to identify different types of irony, including verbal and situational irony. By applying this multi-theoretical approach, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how humor functions as a communication tool for promoting eco-cultural awareness.

#### **4. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

##### **Findings**

##### **Satire in Pandji's Comedy**

##### **Horatian Satire: Light-hearted and gentle critique**

Horatian satire in Pandji's performances offers a gentle nudge to audiences, often addressing individual habits or cultural idiosyncrasies.

*"Aksi kecil seperti bawa tumbler sendiri itu dampaknya besar, apalagi kalau dilakukan berjuta-juta orang."*

This dialogue encourages eco-friendly behavior, using humor to highlight the importance of small, collective actions without reprimanding the audience.

*"Banjir ini bukan hanya karena curah hujan tinggi, tapi juga karena kita yang terus-menerus merusak resapan air."*

Pandji uses humor to connect flooding to human-caused environmental destruction, presenting it in a way that is engaging rather than accusatory.

##### **Juvenalian Satire: Harsh, biting criticism**

Juvenalian satire in Pandji's routines is more direct and confrontational, critiquing systemic or governmental failures. For example:

*"Kita ini negara yang kaya alam, tapi sayangnya pengelolaannya seringkali tidak berpihak pada keberlanjutan, yang dirusak lebih banyak daripada yang dijaga."*

This statement criticizes the exploitation of Indonesia's natural resources, highlighting the imbalance between development and sustainability.

*"Polusi udara itu memang jadi masalah besar di Jabodetabek, orang-orang banyak yang batuk-batuk, kualitas udara buruk, tapi penyelesaiannya kadang tidak jelas arahnya."*

Pandji takes aim at ineffective policies addressing air pollution, framing the issue as a failure of leadership.

### **Manipulative Satire: Intellectual and philosophical critique**

Manipulative satire in Pandji's work critiques broader societal attitudes or philosophical contradictions.

*"Bayangkan kalau hutan-hutan terus ditebang, mau dari mana kita dapat udara segar dan keseimbangan alam?"*

This line critiques the philosophical disconnect between economic development and environmental sustainability, inviting audiences to reflect on the consequences of deforestation.

*"Energi terbarukan itu bukan cuma solusi, tapi kebutuhan mendesak. Kalau kita terus bergantung pada energi fosil, krisisnya tidak akan pernah selesai."*

Pandji challenges reliance on fossil fuels, positioning renewable energy as an urgent necessity rather than a luxury.

### **Irony in Pandji's Performances**

Irony is a recurring element in Pandji's routines, often used to juxtapose expectations with reality, creating humor while provoking thought. The theory of irony highlights three main types: situational, verbal, and dramatic irony.

#### **Situational Irony**

Occurs when there is a discrepancy between expected outcomes and reality.

*"Polusi udara itu memang jadi masalah besar di Jabodetabek, orang-orang banyak yang batuk-batuk, kualitas udara buruk, tapi penyelesaiannya kadang tidak jelas arahnya."*

This statement contrasts the severity of air pollution with the lack of effective solutions, emphasizing the absurdity of societal inaction.

### **Verbal Irony**

Involves saying the opposite of what is meant, often to highlight contradictions.

*“Kalau plastik sekali pakai masih terus diproduksi, kapan selesai masalah sampahnya? Harus ada regulasi yang lebih jelas.”*

Pandji sarcastically critiques ongoing production of single-use plastics, pointing out the inconsistency in addressing waste issues.

### **Dramatic Irony**

Arises when the audience knows more about a situation than the characters or society being critiqued.

*“Bayangkan kalau hutan-hutan terus ditebang, mau dari mana kita dapat udara segar dan keseimbangan alam?”*

The audience understands the critical importance of forests for ecological balance, making the line's humor both ironic and reflective of societal ignorance.

### **Discussion**

Irony and satire are effective social critique devices in Pandji Pragiwaksono's comedy. He tackles a variety of topics by using various forms of satire, ranging from personal habits to political shortcomings and environmental disasters. Each type of satire serves a unique function in shaping the narrative and the tone of his performances.

### **Satirical Techniques as a Tool for Social Change**

By employing Horatian humor, Pandji is able to criticize individual behaviors in a way that promotes change without coming across as overly judgmental or preachy. He uses comedy to get his audience to think critically about what they do, especially when it comes to environmental concerns like using less plastic and adopting eco-friendly habits. These teachings, which could normally be greeted with resistance if offered in a more direct or severe manner, are easier for the audience to absorb when Horatian satire is lighthearted.

Juvenalian satire, on the other hand, enables Pandji to use scathing humor to address more important, institutional problems, such as corruption and inefficient policymaking. By using this strategy, he draws attention to the shortcomings of the leadership and government in dealing with pressing problems like environmental deterioration and air pollution.

This type of satire works especially well for igniting discussions about responsibility and structural reform. With its philosophical and intellectual criticism, Manippean satire challenges

viewers to consider larger social ideals, especially the conflict between environmental preservation and economic growth. Pandji pushes his audience to reevaluate their priorities and the long-term effects of their acts by employing this type of comedy.

### **Irony as a Means of Highlighting Contradictions**

Pandji uses irony frequently in his comedy to draw attention to the inconsistencies and ridiculousness of social norms and practices. Situational irony highlights the disparity between the seriousness of an issue and the deficiency of appropriate solutions. By doing this, Pandji highlights how frustrating it is for many people when the answers to urgent problems appear elusive or ineffectual.

His criticisms are further strengthened by verbal irony, which enables him to make fun of the inconsistencies in laws or social practices. The spectator is prompted to consider the inconsistencies of present behaviors by this sardonic tone, which highlights the ridiculousness of problems like pollution and plastic trash.

Lastly, by portraying the audience as more cognizant of the vital significance of ecological concerns than the people or society being criticized, dramatic irony amplifies the effect of Pandji's comedy. This instills a sense of urgency as the audience is aware of the negative effects of inactivity, and the performance's comedy draws attention to the ignorance and denial that exist in society.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This study has delved into the intricate relationship between humor, environmental communication, and ethical considerations in stand-up comedy, with a specific focus on Pandji Pragiwaksono's performances in Indonesia. It has been established that humor, particularly satire and irony, can be a powerful tool for addressing complex eco-cultural issues. Pandji's comedy effectively utilizes these rhetorical devices to critique environmental degradation, unsustainable practices, and societal apathy. The research highlights the ethical dimensions of using humor for environmental advocacy. Pandji's performances demonstrate a commitment to ethical communication by respecting cultural norms, promoting honesty and transparency, advocating for positive change, and fostering a sense of collective responsibility. By engaging audiences through humor, Pandji encourages critical thinking and motivates behavioral change towards a more sustainable future. This study contributes to the growing body of research on alternative approaches to environmental communication, particularly in non-Western contexts. It provides valuable insights for comedians, environmental educators, and communicators seeking to effectively engage diverse audiences while maintaining ethical integrity. Further

research is needed to explore the long-term impact of humor-based environmental communication, particularly in measuring behavioral changes and societal shifts.

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