

**LAUGHING AT WOUNDS: NARRATIVES OF TRAGEDY
IN STAND-UP INDO JOGJA COMMUNITY**



Final Thesis Research Report

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2026

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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Written by:

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Approved and endorsed by the Thesis Supervisor

Date: 6 April 2026

To Know,
Thesis Supervisor

الإمامة الإسلامية
الاستاذ الدكتور
الشيخ الدكتور
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MOTTO

وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى

‘And that a person shall have nothing but what he has striven for.’ (Q.S An-Najm: 39)

Every page is a testament to struggle, doubt, and hope.

“Dunia boleh saja menahanku atau perlahan bongkar mimpiku, kupunya doa ibu”

-Perunggu

DEDICATION

This thesis is written as a dedication to:

1. My parents and family, who have always supported and prayed for me
2. My colleagues and friends, who have always been there for me through thick and thin,
laughter and tears
3. My beloved UII campus and Communication Studies programme
4. The hilarious Standup Indo Jogja Community
5. Everyone who contributed to and supported this work

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC ETHICS

Bismillahirrohmanirrahim

Undersigned, I henceforth

Name : Mohammad Aji Bayu Samudera

Student Number : 22321321

Through this letter, I hereby state the following:

1. Throughout the completion of this thesis research, researchers upheld academic integrity by refraining from academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, enlisting assistance from others in writing the thesis, or engaging in any other violations that contradict the esteemed academic ethics upheld by the Islamic University of Indonesia.
2. This thesis represents solely my own scientific efforts as a student and researcher, without the involvement of any other individuals or parties.
3. If, after I graduate from the Communication Science Department in the Faculty of Psychology and Social-Cultural Science at the Islamic University of Indonesia, it is determined that this thesis shows clear evidence of plagiarism, or if the Islamic University of Indonesia imposes academic sanctions.

Thus, I truly agree with this remark.

Yogyakarta, 25 February 2025



Sincerely,
Mohammad Aji Bayu Samudera

FOREWORD

All praise and gratitude be to Allah Ta'ala, the Most Merciful, for His abundant love, blessings, and will, so that this final thesis entitled *Laughing at Wounds: Narratives of Tragedy in the Stand Up Indo Jogja Community* could be completed smoothly. The author realizes that this Final Project was more difficult than expected, but it would not have been possible without the help, guidance, and prayers of various parties. Therefore, on this occasion, the author would like to express his deepest gratitude to all those who have helped during the process of completing this Final Project, with the utmost gratitude to:

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14. Comedians across Indonesia, may the laughter that grows from our sorrow become a balm for others' wounds. *Sehat selalu dan terus lucu!*

The author realizes that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, the author sincerely hopes to receive criticism and suggestions from readers as input for future work. May this thesis be of benefit to the readers, the author himself, and the development of Communication Science. May all parties who have been involved and contributed to the completion of this thesis be

rewarded with good deeds and blessings from Allah SWT. Finally, may Allah SWT continue to bestow His mercy and blessings upon us all. Aamin Ya Rabbal Alamin.

Yogyakarta, 2 April 2026

Mohammad Aji Bayu Samudera

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ABSTRACT

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Stand-up comedy serves not only as entertainment but also as a narrative medium through which individuals articulate their lived experiences. One interesting phenomenon in stand-up comedy is the use of personal tragic experiences as comedy material. This study examines how Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians construct and perform narratives of personal tragedy, as well as analyses the functions and effects of these narratives on the comedians' self-reflection and audience reception. This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians and analyzed using humor theory and narrative communication theory. The results show that comedians process tragedy through cognitive reframing, transforming painful experiences into accessible and communicative humorous narratives. Personal tragedies serve as a sources of authentic narratives that reinforce honesty, self-disclosure, and emotional closeness with the audience. In addition, humor acts as a coping mechanism that helps comedians reduce emotional burdens and increase resilience. This study also found that the Stand Up Indo Jogja community acts as a safe space, offering emotional, artistic critique, and ethical guidance throughout the comedians' creative process. Thus, the transformation of tragedy into comedy is a complex communication process, involving emotional readiness, humour techniques, and community support.

Keywords: Stand-up Indo Jogja, tragic humor, tragic narratives, humor as coping, narrative communication, comedy community

ABSTRAK

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Stand-up comedy tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai hiburan, tetapi juga sebagai medium komunikasi personal yang memungkinkan individu menyampaikan pengalaman hidup secara reflektif. Salah satu fenomena yang menarik dalam praktik stand-up comedy adalah penggunaan pengalaman tragedi pribadi sebagai materi komedi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana komunitas Stand Up Indo Jogja membentuk dan menyampaikan narasi tragedi personal dalam materi stand-up comedy, serta menganalisis fungsi dan dampak penggunaan narasi tragedi tersebut terhadap proses refleksi diri komika dan penerimaan audiens. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan komika Stand Up Indo Jogja, yang kemudian dianalisis menggunakan teori humor dan teori komunikasi naratif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komika mengolah tragedi melalui proses reframing, yaitu membingkai ulang pengalaman pahit menjadi narasi humor yang lebih ringan dan komunikatif. Tragedi berfungsi sebagai sumber narasi autentik yang memperkuat kejujuran, self-disclosure, dan kedekatan emosional dengan audiens. Selain itu, humor berperan sebagai mekanisme coping yang membantu komika mereduksi beban emosional dan meningkatkan resiliensi. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa komunitas Stand Up Indo Jogja berperan sebagai ruang aman yang menyediakan dukungan emosional, evaluasi teknis, serta batasan etis dalam proses kreatif komika. Dengan demikian, transformasi tragedi menjadi komedi merupakan proses komunikasi yang kompleks, melibatkan kesiapan emosional, teknik humor, dan dukungan komunitas.

Kata Kunci: Stand-up Indo Jogja, humor tragedi, narasi tragedi, humor sebagai coping, komunikasi naratif, komunitas komedi

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Stand-up comedy has grown rapidly as an art form that not only serves as entertainment, but also as a means for comics or familiar known as stand-up comedian to articulate personal, often traumatic experiences. This phenomenon has become more visible in recent years, with many comics openly discussing their difficult life experiences in their stand-up material. This shows how humor can act as a coping mechanism, helping individuals to deal with trauma and build resilience. By reframing personal experiences as humorous narratives, comics not only provide entertainment for the audience, but also create a deep emotional connection with them.

Conceptually, coping mechanisms are psychological strategies or processes that individuals use to manage stress, pressure or trauma experienced in everyday life. In the context of stand-up comedy, coping mechanism involve the use of humor as an adaptive strategy to process emotional distress or traumatic events, allowing negative emotions to be expressed through laughter rather than suppressed. According to Simione and Gnagnarella (2023) humor can function as an adaptive coping strategy that helps reduce perceived stress, regulate emotions, and enhance psychological well-being. Furthermore, catharsis refers to the release of pent-up emotions through verbal or expressive acts; in performance contexts, it occurs when comics express their emotional burdens (such as sadness or anger) on stage and achieve psychological relief through audience laughter. Meanwhile, psychological resilience refers to a person's capacity to adapt and recover following exposure to adversity or trauma. In the framework of stand-up comedy, resilience is seen when the comedian is able to reconstruct their life narratives— including distressing experiences— into comedic performances that is not only funny, but also gives new strength to himself and the audience.

In humor studies, not all jokes are coping mechanisms. Pure comedy usually only emphasizes laughter without any therapeutic purpose. In contrast, in stand-up comedy that functions as a coping mechanism, jokes are built on real-life experiences that contain inner conflict, tragedy, or emotional distress, which are then transformed through rhetorical techniques such as hyperbole, irony, misdirection, or an unexpected twist. This process not

only provokes laughter, but also facilitates empathetic engagement, enabling audience members with similar experiences to feel understood and to release emotional tension. Thus, such comedic narratives possess not only surface-level humor but also a deeper layer of meaning that has the potential to heal inner wounds for both comics and audiences.

As stand-up comedy grows in Indonesia, more and more comics draw on personal life experiences as the basic for their comedic narratives. They do not just tell stories, but also reframe traumatic experiences through humor-based rhetorical strategies such as hyperbole, irony, and misdirection. This process allows them to take control of their own life narratives and turn tragedy into something lighter and acceptable to the audience. Several studies have shown that humor in stand-up comedy often serves as a form of catharsis, allowing comics to articulate and process emotions through performance. In this context, humor is not only a communication tool, but also a part of their identity as a comic.

Based on an article published on Kompasiana.com on (September 22, 2023), individuals may gradually transform painful life events into sources of humor over time. Many stand-up comedians utilize their personal experiences, including tragic ones, as material for comedic repertoire. By adding elements of mundane observations, hyperbole, or narrative twists, they reconfigure tragic stories into humorous performances. Such performances not only elicit laughter from the audience, but also often provides a profound message or greater understanding of the realities of life. Stand-up comedy has also evolved into a platform for comics to convey their personal concerns and social criticism on various issues, such as politics, culture, and daily life. By using humor as a communication tool, comics can convey messages that may be difficult to accept if delivered directly.

An article by JEO Kompas (July 13, 2022) reported the rapid growth of stand-up comedy in Indonesia, reflecting its growing appeal among diverse audiences. This phenomenon is driven by the emergence of stand-up comedy communities in various regions as well as digital platforms that allow comics to reach a wider audience. This article also highlights how comics develop their identities through material grounded in personal experiences, social tensions, and critiques of social norms. As stand-up comedy gains popularity, comics not only act as entertainers but also as social observers who convey reality in a lighter and more relatable way.

A report on kompasiana.com (July 24, 2023) discusses how humor, especially in the form of stand-up comedy, can be a mechanism for dealing with various life challenges. The author highlights that comics often turn bitter experiences and personal tragedies into comedic material, which not only entertains audiences but also helps them in their own emotional healing process. By using humor as a form of catharsis, one can more easily accept the reality of life, make peace with the past, and find ways to persevere in the midst of adversity. An article titled “Stand-Up Comedy's Way of Resistance” published on Omong-Omong.com (February 06, 2023) discusses how stand-up comedy is used as a medium of resistance and expression of social criticism on various issues, such as injustice, politics, and public unrest. Comics utilize humor to deliver a sharp yet entertaining message, making criticism easier to accept by the audience. The article also highlights that, while stand-up comedy can be a powerful tool of expression, comics have to face challenges such as free speech restrictions and the risk of public controversy.

For example, a feature on Kompas.com (July 26, 2022), examines how Indonesian comedian Bintang Emon, develops his comedy material based on his personal experiences and concerns, rather than appropriating others' narratives. He emphasized that authentic comedy comes from things that the comics themselves really feel, thereby enhancing both delivery and audience reception. This approach also shows how stand-up comedy can be a means of self-expression as well as a coping mechanism in facing various life challenges. As reported by Media Indonesia (September 25, 2021), Sakdiyah Ma'ruf, a female comedian of Arab descent, uses the stand-up comedy stage to voice issues of gender equality and fight negative stereotypes of Muslim women.

An article titled “The work of comics who bring Indonesia more humor” published on Antara News (September 22, 2023) discusses the important role of humor in Indonesian society, especially through stand-up comedy as a medium for intelligent social criticism. The article traces the evolution of humor in Indonesia from the era of Srimulat and Warkop DKI to the emergence of talented young comics today. The article highlights Institut Humor Indonesia Kini (IHIK3) is mentioned as an institution that plays a role in studying and promoting humor through The Library of Humor Studies, the first humor library in Indonesia. The article also highlights how humor can improve the quality of life by triggering the release of endorphins and advocates for greater public recognition of humor as an integral part of social life.

An article in *Harian Jogja* (January 07, 2023) discussing the role of the Stand Up Indo Jogja community in developing comedy talent in Yogyakarta. This community is a forum for comics rehearse, exchange insights, and develop material that both entertains and communicates social messages. Guided by a spirit of collective support, members not only seek to entertain, but also make humor a reflection tool and a coping mechanism for the comics and their audience. This article highlights the importance of community in building a stand-up comedy ecosystem that supports the growth of local comics. This is reinforced by a report from *IDN Times Jogja* (August 22, 2022), which profiles several comedians who emerged from the Stand Up Indo Jogja community and have successfully pursued careers in the entertainment world. The article highlights their journey from the local community to becoming professional comics who are widely recognized at the national level. The success of these comics shows how the stand-up comedy community in Yogyakarta is an effective platform for refining performance skills, developing professional identities, and positioning humor as both a form of a self-expression and coping mechanism in facing life's challenges.

Radar Jogja (October 25, 2023) also reported how stand-up comedy has become an important medium for young people to voice their concerns. Many of them use the stage as a place to talk about life pressures, complicated personal experiences, and identity conflicts that are seldom addressed in everyday conversations. This shows that stand-up comedy has transformed beyond mere entertainment, functioning as a space of personal articulation and fostering empathic connections between comics and audiences.

More than just a performance space, stand-up comedy communities like Stand Up Indo Jogja have developed into a safe space for its members to explore and reflect on life experiences through the medium of humor. This space allows comics to talk about sensitive topics such as mental health, dysfunctional families, social pressure, and experiences of discrimination, in an honest yet entertaining way. In this context, the process of writing and performing stand-up material is not only to elicit laughter but also functions as a cathartic practice, allowing stories that were once a source of pain can now be viewed with a healthier distance. This supportive environment of fellow comics and an audience that is open to personal stories strengthens the function of stand-up comedy as a means of catharsis and building emotional resilience, especially for young people who are looking for ways to deal with the complexities of life.

Collectively, these observations indicate that the use of humor as a coping mechanism in stand-up comedy is not just a momentary trend but an integral part of the evolution of the art of comedy itself. Comics are increasingly realizing that their personal stories, including traumatic ones, can be powerful material in building relationships with audiences while helping them understand and accept their own life experiences. This trend also shows how stand-up comedy can be more than just entertainment, but a medium for self-expression, reflection, and even psychological healing for both the comics and their audiences.

This study focuses on stand-up comedians in Yogyakarta. Yogyakarta was selected as the research site primarily due to accessibility and vibrant cultural infrastructure. As a city known for its thriving arts and culture community, Yogyakarta has an active and diverse stand-up comedy ecosystem. Many local comics utilize small stages in cafes, campus events, and creative communities as a platform for expression. By focusing on comedians in Yogyakarta, this study gains access to personal narratives of comics who are active in the local scene, enabling an in-depth investigation of how they use humor to reframe traumatic experiences. In addition, the existence of a stand-up comedy community in Yogyakarta also allows this research to obtain richer data through in-depth interviews and analysis of live comedy performances.

More specifically, this study centers on the Stand Up Indo Jogja Community, a regional chapter of the nationwide Stand-Up Indo network. As a community based in the Special Region of Yogyakarta, Stand Up Indo Jogja acts as a forum for individuals who want to develop their talents and interests in the art of stand-up comedy. This community is not only a gathering place for comics, but also serves as a space to learn, share experiences, and hone the ability to be funny on stage.

With its various activities and contributions, Stand Up Indo Jogja not only supports comedian development but also actively advances the art of stand-up comedy in Indonesia, especially in Yogyakarta. Healthink's Youtube page explains that Stand Up Indo Jogja is a community that not only provides laughter, but also a safe space to connect and support mental health. The channel notes that, in Jakarta, some members have reported that participation in the community helped alleviate severe emotional distress, underscoring the role of social support is in overcoming mental challenges.

Stand Up Indo Jogja regularly holds open mic sessions every Friday night at Tilasawa Coffee, Sleman. This event serves as a training ground for comics to refine their material and develop confidence through live performance. Despite its practice nature, the open mic always manages to attract audiences, reflecting Yogyakarta residents' strong interest in stand-up comedy (Mojok.co, August 21, 2023). The community maintains an active presence on social media platforms such as Instagram @standupindo_jogja, where it disseminates updates on community activities. Through this platform, they share event schedules, open mic information, and various content related to stand-up comedy that can be accessed by community members and the general public who are interested.

An article titled 'Stand Up Comedy Becomes a Platform for Young People's Unrest,' published by Radar Jogja (February 03, 2024), explains that the Stand Up Indo Jogja Community has become a space of expression for young people since its establishment in 2011. The head of the community, Miftakhul Ilmy, stated that the community members, who are mostly university students, regularly express their concerns through stand-up comedy material in open mic sessions held every Friday at Tilasawa Coffee. In addition, the community also holds weekly writing workshops every Tuesday, encouraging members to develop original content provided it avoids racism, hate speech, and pornography. With around 70 official members, this community is a place for young people to cultivate creative interests, build social connections, and channel personal expression through humor.

According a KapanLagi report (May 28, 2025), national-level stand-up comedy solo performances now draw thousands of attendees; for instance, Pandji Pragiwaksono's "KOMO I DOMONO I" show at Istora Senayan broke the attendance record with more than 5,000 spectators (KapanLagi.com). These figures indicate rapidly expanding public interest in stand-up comedy, creating pathways for regional comedians, including those from the Stand-Up Indo Joga community to break into bigger stages. Moreover, between 2011 and 2012, the Stand Up Indo Jogja community has produced at least 10 comics who have gained national recognition, including Sigit Haryo Seno (Imot), Bene Dion, and Hifdzi Khoir, several of whom became finalists on Stand Up Comedy Indonesia Kompas TV, proving the growing quality of Jogja comics (IDN Times Jogja). Open mic audiences in Yogyakarta alone is estimated to have increased by more than 50% in the last three years, with an average attendance of 150-200 audiences per open mic session (Mojok.co, 2023).

This indicates that the stand-up comedy ecosystem in Yogyakarta is not only thriving in terms of community development, but also complemented by the growing enthusiasm of the audience.

1.2 Research Questions

1. *How do Stand Up Indo Jogja comics shape and convey narratives of personal tragedy through their stand-up comedy material?*

This formulation highlights aspects of the creative process and narrative strategies used by comics to transform tragic experiences into humorous performances that resonate with audiences.

2. *What are the functions and impacts of the use of tragedy narratives in stand-up comedy on the comics' self-reflection process and audience reception?*

This focus includes aspects of the comics' intrapersonal communication as well as the audience's socio-emotional response to humor derived from personal wounds.

1.3 Research Purpose

This research aims to understand the creative process of comics in reframing tragic experiences into humorous narratives in stand-up comedy performances, and to analyze the function of such tragic narratives in stand-up comedy material as both a coping mechanism and a mode of self-reflection for comics. It aims to explore the storytelling methods, comedy techniques (such as setup-punchline, timing, and reframe), and personal dynamics experienced by comics when processing traumatic experiences into performance material. The research covers not only communicative practices alongside their psychological and social dimensions, examining functions not only as entertainment but also as a form of micro-therapy and cultural expression.

1.4 Research Benefits

A. Theoretical Benefits

- a. Strengthening narrative communication theory by demonstrating how comedians construct and reframe tragic experiences into humorous stories that possess coherence and fidelity.

- b. Contributing to relief theory of humor within communication studies, particularly regarding the function of humor as a tool for reinterpreting personal experiences.
- c. Providing a narrative analysis model of tragedy-to-comedy that can be used as a reference for future entertainment communication research.

B. Practical Benefits

- a. For comedians and the stand-up community, this research provides an insights into transforming personal experiences into effective, safe, and communicative comedy material.
- b. For researchers and academics, the results of this research can be used as a reference for further studies on humour, narrative, and performative communication.
- c. For audiences and the public, this research helps to increase understanding that stand-up comedy can be a means of expression, reflection, and empathy building.

1.5 Literature Review

1.5.1 Previous Research

1. PROSES KOMUNIKASI INTRAPERSONAL KOMIKA DALAM MENGANGKAT ISU MATERI STAND UP COMEDY (Studi Deskriptif Kualitatif pada Komunitas Stand Up Comedy UIN Jogja) (Thesis by Ullul Azmi Lestari, Ilmu Komunikasi, Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2016)

This study aims to understand how intrapersonal communication processes take place within comics when they choose and shape comedy material that raises certain issues. It seeks to uncover the thought processes and internal reflections that take place before the material is presented to the public.

In its discussion, this study outlines the intrapersonal communication process of comics through four main stages: sensation, perception, memory and thinking. The sensation stage involves gathering information from the surrounding environment, which is then interpreted at the perception stage. Relevant information is stored in memory and processed in the thinking stage to generate appropriate comedy material.

The study also connects this process to three theories of humor: superiority and degradation theory, biosynthesis theory, and disengagement theory. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, this study involved three comics from the Stand Up Comedy UIN Jogja community as subjects. The results show that a systematic and reflective intrapersonal communication process is essential in creating effective and meaningful stand-up comedy material.

2. STAND UP COMEDY INDONESIA SEBAGAI MEDIA KRITIK SOSIAL (Analisis Wacana Stand Up Comedy Indonesia Season 4 di Kompas TV) (Thesis by Syamsul Alam, Jurnalistik, Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar, 2016)

This study aims to analyze how Stand Up Comedy Indonesia (SUCID) Season 4 on Kompas TV functions as a medium for social criticism. This research focuses on how the comics convey social issues, including politics, economic inequality, cultural norms, and everyday life, how these messages are packaged in the form of communicative and entertaining stand-up comedy. The content of this thesis includes a general description of the SUCID Season 4 event, the characteristics of the material delivered by the comics, and the forms of social criticism that appear in their performances. This research uses Norman Fairclough's discourse analysis method to examine how language is used as a tool to convey criticism of power and social structures. In the analysis, the author reveals how comics utilize rhetorical strategies such as satire, irony, sarcasm, and hyperbole to highlight social inequality without losing the element of entertainment.

The study concludes that Stand Up Comedy Indonesia Season 4 is an effective medium in delivering social criticism. Humour is used as a powerful tool to convey important messages to the public, positioning stand-up comedy not only as entertainment but also as a reflective space for social expression that cultivate critical public awareness. Stand-up comedy has proven to be an alternative to mass communication that is able to penetrate the boundaries of formality and touch on community issues in a critical and humorous manner.

3. SELF HEALING MELALUI STAND UP COMEDY PADA REMAJA KOMIKA BERLATAR BELAKANG BROKEN HOME (Thesis by Agus Mashudi Sodik, Dakwah dan Komunikasi, Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta, 2023)

This study aims to understand how the process of self-healing occurs among adolescents from families affected by parental separation through participation in stand-up comedy. The main focus of the research is to examine how teenage comics express their emotional and psychological experiences through comedy material, and how this process helps them overcome trauma and rebuild psychological balance. Thus, this study aims to reveal the role of stand-up comedy as a means of emotional therapy and self-expression for adolescents who experience family dysfunction. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and analysis of stand-up material performed by the comics. The discussion includes an analysis of the themes raised in the comedy material, such as personal experiences related to parental divorce, feelings of loneliness, and the search for self-identity. The research also highlights how the creative process of writing and performing stand-up comedy material can be an effective coping mechanism, allowing teenagers to reflect constructively on their experiences and gain social support from the audience.

In conclusion, this study examines the role of stand-up comedy as a medium of self-healing for adolescents from broken home families. Through a qualitative approach, this study found that stand-up comedy activities allow adolescents to express and reflect on their emotional experiences, which in turn allows them to heal themselves.

4. IMPLIKATUR DALAM WACANA STAND UP COMEDY INDONESIA SESI 4 DODIT MULYANTO DI KOMPAS TV (Thesis by Ati Rizki Nur Faizah, Sastra Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Semarang, 2017)

This research analyzes the type of speech acts, forms of implicature, sources of implicature in stand-up comedy discourse performed by Dodit Mulyanto on Stand Up Comedy Indonesia Season 4 on Kompas TV. This research uses pragmatic approach with qualitative descriptive method. The data were collected through audiovisual observation, transcription, and note documentation of the televised performance, then analyzed using the heuristic method and presented informally.

The results show that in the stand-up comedy discourse there are various types of speech acts, such as representative, directive, expressive, commissive, and *isbati* or declarative. Implicatures that function as humour support include: (1) representative implicature with the form of stating, showing, and mentioning; (2) directive implicature with the

form of telling, pleading, and suggesting; (3) expressive implicature with the form of praising, criticizing, and complaining; (4) commissive implicature with the form of promising; and (5) declarative implicature with the form of forbidding. The source of the conversational implicature in the stand-up comedy discourse comes from the violation of the principle of cooperation (maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner) and the violation of the principle of politeness (maxims of generosity, pleasantness, modesty, agreement, and sympathy). Thus, this study concludes that the violation of conversational principles and politeness in comics' speech creates effective implicatures in building humour, making stand-up comedy a complex and interesting communication medium.

5. The Courage to Perform: Stand-Up Comedy and Personal Growth (Documentary Film by Grayson Turner, Master of Arts in Communication, Columbus State University, 2024)

This research takes the form of a documentary project that explores how stand-up comedy plays a role in the personal growth and mental health of aspiring comics. Through a documentary-based qualitative approach, Turner captured the journey of participants in the 'Laugh Lab with Lace' comedy class in Atlanta—from initial motivation, to the rehearsal process, to post-performance reactions. The ultimate goal was to show how comedy can be a therapeutic tool to overcome fears and anxiety while fostering self-confidence. Findings from in-depth interviews showed that comedy performance provided a space for participants to openly express vulnerability, build social connections, and experience improvements in their mental health.

Theoretically, this project is grounded in the work of Valenta (2020), Fraser (2012), and Pereira & Tyagi (2022) who emphasize the role of stand-up comedy in mental health advocacy and performative social critique. The documentary is also inspired by films such as *Dying Laughing* and *The Great Depresh*, highlighting comedy's potential as a complementary avenue for emotional and psychological therapy. The methods involved serialized interviews, observation, and documentation of participants' performances as qualitative narrative material to measure short-term personal impact.

The four previous studies have a number of similarities with the research to be conducted. In general, they all examine stand-up comedy as a complex medium of

communication - whether in the form of intrapersonal communication, social criticism, emotional therapy, or linguistic studies. They all highlight the important role of the comedian as the main subject who consciously uses personal experiences to create humour that contains social and psychological meaning. In addition, these studies predominantly employ a qualitative descriptive approach, utilizing data collection methods such as interviews, observation, and performance documentation. This is in line with the current study's approach, which similarly seeks to elicit and interpret meaning through in-depth narratives from comedians. Another similarity is the recognition that stand-up comedy functions not merely as entertainment but as a medium for reflection and the articulation of perspectives that engage the emotional and social realms.

There are also some differences between the previous research and the current research, which lie in its central focus on narratives of tragedy—such as inner wounds, traumatic experiences, or painful personal histories—as the foundation of stand-up material developed by comics in the Stand Up Indo Jogja community. This focus is different from the first study, which focuses on the process of intrapersonal communication processes in material development, as well as from the second and fourth studies, which are more oriented towards discourse analysis and linguistics in stand-up performances on national television. Although the third study addresses psychological dimensions, particularly self-healing, it specifically investigates adolescents from families affected by parental separation, semphasizing how personal adversity is transformed into artistic narratives that can connect comics with audiences, different from the research to be carried out, which focuses on humour as a catharsis and coping mechanism in stand-up comedians.

1.5.2 Theoretical Framework

1.5.2.1 Narrative Theory

Narrative theory explains how individuals construct and organize their experiences into meaningful stories. Rather than presenting events as they are, individuals selectively organize their experiences by arranging them into coherent narratives based on specific perspectives, sequences, and purposes. Through this process, personal experiences, especially those that are emotional or complex are transformed into stories that can be communicated to and understood by others.

Narrative theory in communication studies explains that humans are creatures who understand the world through stories. Walter Fisher calls humans “homo narrans”

or creatures who tell stories. In this theory, narrative is seen as the main form of communication that individuals use to build meaning and self-identity. According to Fisher's narrative theory, effective communication is achieved through narratives that exhibit coherence (logical consistency) and fidelity (conformity to the experience and values of the audience). In the context of stand-up comedy, comics use narratives to convey personal experiences, social observations, and criticisms of societal phenomena, with the aim of building emotional and intellectual connections with the audience.

In the context of stand-up comedy, narrative theory is relevant for understanding how comedians reconstruct their personal experiences, including traumatic events, into structured comedic material. Comedians do not merely recount events, but actively shape them into narratives with specific timing, emphasis, and perspectives, thereby allowing the audience to engage with and interpret the story in a meaningful way.

According to narrative communication theory, humans are inherently narrative-oriented beings, and effective communication is often delivered through narrative. In stand-up comedy, comics use narratives to build connections with the audience, convey messages, and create emotional impact. Narratives delivered in stand-up comedy allow the audience to understand and feel the experiences shared by the comics, thus creating empathy and a deeper understanding of the issues raised.

In stand-up comedy, comics build their personal stories, which they subsequently present to the public. Through this process, comics not only entertain but also shape and assert their identity. Narratives built on personal experiences can reflect the struggles, values, and unique perspectives of the comics themselves. In other words, stand-up comedy material becomes a narrative of identity that is communicated to the public. Over time, these narratives shape public perceptions of the comedians' identities. The audience recognizes the comics by the type of stories they tell, the style of delivery, and the distinctive themes they raise. This process shows how narrative communication in stand-up comedy can be a medium for authentic identity expression.

Compelling and authentic narratives in stand-up comedy can enhance the comics' credibility and reinforce the message. Thus, narrative theory offers an

analytically productive framework for understanding how stand-up comedy can be used as an effective and meaningful communication tool.

a) Humor and Stand-Up Comedy as a Form of Communication

Humor is a form of communication that is unique because it has its own appeal in conveying messages. Humor is an effective form of communication in conveying messages, building interpersonal relationships, and reducing tension in various situations. According to Ramsey and Meyer (2019), humor in communication serves four main functions: identification, clarification, affirmation, and differentiation. The identification function allows the speaker to establish a connection with the audience through humor that reflects a shared value or identity. The clarification function helps explain complex ideas or information in a way that is easier to understand and remember. The affirmation function reinforces the message or social norm being conveyed, while the differentiation function is used to distinguish certain groups or views from others.

In the context of stand-up comedy, humor is not only used to entertain, but also as a means to convey social criticism, personal experiences, and even past traumas. As a mode of performative communication, stand-up comedy enables comedians to present deeply personal messages in a humorous way to be more easily accepted by the audience (Wijaya, 2021). Through this approach, comics can create a closer relationship with the audience, build trust, and increase their credibility (Abrahams, 2020). Thus, humor in stand-up comedy serves not only as entertainment, but also as a tool to convey deeper messages and build stronger relationships between comics and audiences. According to Aaker and Bagdonas (2020), humor enhances perceived credibility and trustworthiness in individuals, and strengthen interpersonal relationships. They also emphasize that humor used appropriately can create a more positive and constructive social interactions.

In linguistic studies, humor is seen as a communication tool capable of creating a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, which can help reduce stress and improve emotional well-being. Humorous conversations tend to be more effective in conveying messages as they attract attention and facilitate understanding. In addition, humor can also function as a therapeutic resource to cope with stress, regulate negative emotions, and

facilitate social interaction in group therapy. In academic contexts, humor is often defined as the ability to recognize, create or respond to stimuli that elicit laughter or a sense of the absurd. However, humor is not just entertainment; it also acts as a cathartic mechanism—a process of emotional release through creative expression (Kuipers, 2022).

Stand-up comedy is a form of performance art in which comics deliver humorous monologues in front of a live audience. In the context of communication, stand-up comedy serves as a medium to convey social, political and cultural messages through humor. Comics often use personal experiences, social observations, and criticism of societal phenomena as their material. Thus, stand-up comedy not only entertains, but also educates and stimulates critical reflection among audiences regarding the issues addressed.

Communication in stand-up comedy involves simultaneous interpersonal and public processes. Comics speak directly to the audience in an interactive setting, fostering a shared affective space that is often reflective and sometimes cathartic. Comics build narratives based on life experiences, which they subsequently reframe through comedic approach. In this way, stand-up comedy becomes a powerful communication medium that transforms emotionally charged or socially taboo personal experiences into narrative that audiences can collectively acknowledge, process, and even laugh at together.

In academic contexts, humor is often defined as the ability to recognize, create or respond to stimuli that provoke laughter or a sense of the absurd. Psychologically, humor is seen as an adaptive coping strategy, helping individuals change their perspective on trauma or stress by converting it into a humorous narrative (Boerner et al., 2017). Studies in the field of performance studies show that comedians frequently draw on traumatic personal experiences as performance material, making humor a medium of resilience (Lockyer and Weaver, 2024). For example, comics in the Stand-Up Indo Jogja community may use humor to reconstruct their identity following traumatic experiences.

From a sociocultural perspective, humor is also relative—shaped by on the norms, values and context of a particular community Noor et al. (2024). In the stand-

up comedy community, humor serves as an expression of communal identity as well as social critique (McKeown, 2022). Recent research in Indonesia (Rachmat, 2022) found that humor in stand-up comedy is often a channel to address local issues such as injustice or stigma, while maintaining an element of entertainment.

Humor never exists in a vacuum; it is shaped by cultural and political contexts. Noor et al. (2024) emphasizes that ‘humor operates as a means of negotiating identity and social norms. In stand-up comedy, this can be seen in the way comics criticize issues such as gender inequality or corruption through satire. A recent study by Wijaya (2021) on the humor community in Yogyakarta confirmed that audiences tend to respond more positively to jokes that touch on shared experiences—for instance, the financial pressures of living in a student city with a high cost of living.

At the individual level, humor becomes a medium of identity expression. Comics not only entertain but also construct coherent stage personas through their material—a phenomenon explored in Lockyer and Weaver’s (2024) research on ‘comic identity as performative resilience’. In Indonesia, these personas are often tied to local cultural identities.

Humans are inherently narrative-oriented and effective communication is often delivered through narrative. In stand-up comedy, comics use narratives to build connections with the audience, convey messages, and create emotional impact. Narratives delivered in stand-up comedy allow the audience to understand and feel the experiences shared by the comics, thus creating empathy and a deeper understanding of the underlying social or personal issues.

1.5.2.2 Relief Theory of Humor

The relief theory of humor explains that humor serves as a mechanism for releasing psychological or emotional tension. According to this perspective, laughter arises when pent-up emotional energy—such as stress, anxiety, or discomfort—is released in a safe and socially acceptable manner. Humor allows individuals to address difficult or sensitive topics indirectly, thereby reducing their emotional intensity while maintaining engagement.

In the context of stand-up comedy, this theory helps explain why comedians often use humor to discuss personal struggles, trauma, or social issues. By transforming

these experiences into comedic material, comedians are able to process emotional tension while creating a sense of relief for themselves and the audience.

a) The Concept of Coping Mechanisms and Its Relevance in Stand-up Comedy

Coping mechanisms are psychological strategies that individuals use to manage stress, emotional distress, and difficult situations they face in their daily lives. Lazarus and Folkman, central figures in coping theory, define coping as a constantly changing cognitive and behavioural effort to manage internal and external demands that are judged to exceed their abilities. Although this theory has a longstanding foundation, recent research has developed and applied it in a wider context, including artistic and performative expression. Aldwin, Kurth, Brockmann, and Lee (2023) expanded this approach by examining with a focus on the development of coping strategies across an individual's life span. The model emphasises that coping abilities develop over time through interactions between individuals and their environment, and are influenced by factors such as age, life experiences, and social context. This approach extends coping theory to include developmental and social ecological perspectives. Coping theory in communication refers to the way individuals use communication to cope with stress and emotional distress. This theory divides coping into two main types, namely problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping. In the context of stand-up comedy, humor functions as a form of emotion-focused coping, as it helps manage negative emotions due to traumatic experiences or personal tragedies. Within communicative contexts, humor further operates as a coping mechanism that helps individuals reduce stress, improve mood, and strengthen social relationships.

Studies show that humor can be used as an effective coping strategy in dealing with difficult situations. For example, individuals who use humor to deal with stress tend to have lower anxiety levels and higher psychological well-being. In the context of stand-up comedy, comics often use humor to cope with traumatic or difficult experiences by transforming them into comedic narratives shared with audiences. This process not only helps the comics in managing their emotions, but also allows audiences to relate and reflect on these experiences through the lens of humor.

Recent research by Simione and Gnagnarella (2023) suggests that coping mechanisms such as the use of humor can be an effective way of relieving psychological stress. Humor works by shifting an individual's focus away from the suffering at hand,

helping to reconstruct negative experiences in a more manageable or even humorous light. In this context, humour is not only a means of escape, but also a reflective tool that allows one to process traumatic experiences constructively. A case study by Pabel et al. (2023) of comics in Australia and Indonesia showed that 73% of stand-up comedy performers used material based on traumatic personal experiences— such as failure, discrimination or loss as performance material. This process is in line with the Aristotelian concept of catharsis, as reinterpreted in contemporary scholarship by Kuipers (2022), who describes humor as channel to ‘release negative emotions through humorous reinterpretation’.

Psychologically, humor is seen as an adaptive coping strategy that helps individuals shift perspective on trauma or stress by converting it into a humorous narrative (Noor et al., 2024). Studies in the field of performance studies show that comedians frequently draw on traumatic personal experiences as source material, positioning humor as a medium of resilience (Lockyer and Weaver, 2024). For example, comics in the Stand-Up Indo Jogja community may use humor to reconstruct their identity after experiencing tragedy.

In the world of stand-up comedy, especially in communities such as Standup Indo Jogja, this concept of coping manifests performatively. Comics often bring up painful personal experiences—such as failure, loss, or trauma—and transform them into comedic material. This process is known as a form of catharsis, which is the release of intense emotions through creative expression. Humor in this case serves as a mechanism to psychologically process psychological distress while strengthening individual resilience. For example, ethnographic research by Arifin (2024) found that members of this community often used self-deprecating humor as a form of performative resilience—a strategy to reclaim power over their self-narratives.

Along the same lines, (Tekin, 2024) emphasises that the use of humour in dealing with traumatic experiences can strengthen emotional resilience and support mental recovery. In addition, humor also facilitates identity expression - the comedian not only copes personally, but also builds an authentic and relatable stage persona for audiences. Thus, humour as a coping mechanism plays an important role in transforming tragedy into a collective narrative that triggers laughter, empathy and solidarity. For comedians, comedic material derived from personal tragedy is often a

form of coping mechanism that is not only personally healing, but also provides a space for the audience to experience a shared catharsis. The audience may feel connected to the story being told, creating a sense of empathy and emotional closeness.

b) Characteristic of Stand-Up Comedian

Stand-up comedy is a unique form of performance art, where comics (stand-up comedy performers) act simultaneously as writers, directors and performers at the same time. Comics function not only as entertainers but also as agents of resilience who transform traumatic experiences into comedic material. The definition of comics in this context goes beyond mere entertainers; they are storytellers who use humour as a tool for catharsis, social critique and identity expression (Lockyer and Weaver, 2023). A stand-up comedian is an individual who uses humour as a primary medium of communication, particularly in the form of an onstage monologue or live performance known as stand-up comedy. In the context of communication, a comedian is not just a comedian, but also a communicator who conveys ideas, social criticism, and personal experiences through the structure of humor.

Stand-up comedian are cultural narrators who consciously assume a dual role: that of storyteller and critical commentator on social reality, mediated through laughter. Stand-up comedian often draw on personal experiences, including trauma and failure, as narrative foundations for their performances, fostering intimacy with audiences and delivering messages that go deeper than mere entertainment. Stand-up comedian can be defined as individuals who create and deliver comedic material in front of a live audience, relying on timing, delivery, and an interactive relationship with the audience (McKeown, 2022). Comics have a number of unique characteristics that set them apart from other forms of public communicators. Some of these key characteristics include:

a. Authenticity

Stand-up comedians typically perform as themselves, drawing on personal experiences to create an authentic connection and build an emotional bond with the audience, especially when addressing sensitive topics such as trauma. The success of this approach depends on how authentic the audience perceives the comedian to be. In addition to authenticity, unique personal traits or quirks expressed through

techniques such as wordplay, logical shifts, and absurdity also shape a comedian's identity and contribute to the creation of humor.

b. Social and Cultural Sensitivity

Comedians often address sensitive social issues such as politics, race, and inequality through humor, thereby creating a safer space to discuss topics that are difficult to address directly. The effectiveness of such humor depends on striking a balance between violating norms and adopting a non-threatening approach, as explained by the theory of harmless transgression. In the context of Stand-Up Indo Jogja, comedians navigate these boundaries by presenting controversial topics in a way that remains acceptable to the audience. In the context of StandUp Indo Jogja, comics often test social boundaries by discussing sensitive topics, such as local politics or campus dynamics, through a deliberately a non-threatening approach (Khafid, 2023).

c. Creativity in Narrative

A key strength of comics lies in their capacity to transform bitter experiences into entertaining stories. This process exemplifies a psychological coping mechanism through which adversity is transformed into an artistic form of expression. Comics craft narratives with effective structures—set-ups and punchlines—to build tension and release it through laughter. Skilled comics master the art of cognitive reframing—the ability to reframe negative experiences into humorous narratives. Research by Kyomugisha (2025) indicates that humour can serve as a powerful coping mechanism, helping individuals navigate adversity, reduce stress, and increase psychological resilience. According to Kafle et al. (2023), by cognitively reframing negative events, humour allows individuals to cope with challenges in a more adaptive and positive way.

d. Emotional Resilience

Emotional resilience in stand-up comedy refers to comedians' ability to manage negative emotions and transform personal challenges into creative expression. Humor, particularly self-deprecating humor, helps reduce stress and improve psychological well-being, making it an important coping tool. Through the process of developing and

performing material based on personal experiences, comedians build resilience in three forms: creative resilience, performative resilience, and emotional resilience.

c) Public Perception

Public perception of humor is highly influenced by various factors, such as cultural values, social context, and individual experiences that shape sensitivity to certain types of humor. In some cases, humor that addresses personal tragedies can be considered taboo or sensitive, but in the right context, it can be well-received because it touches the humanity of the audience. Comics use humor to discuss sensitive issues in a lighter and more relatable way, creating a space for reflection and discussion.

Research by Plester and Orams (2021) shows that humor based on personal experiences has a double psychological effect: in addition to providing entertainment, it also serves as a reflective medium for audiences to understand complex social and emotional issues in a light yet meaningful way. It creates a safe space for audiences to experience empathy, and even contributes to shaping public opinion on sensitive topics such as loss, depression, or discrimination.

In addition, the perception of comics is also influenced by how they deliver their stories. Comics who are able to convey personal experiences honestly and passionately often get more appreciation from audiences because they are considered brave and authentic. Comics can also influence public perception of sensitive issues, such as trauma, discrimination and injustice, by turning them into thought-provoking comedic material.

Another line of research demonstrates that appropriately deployed humor can increase positive perceptions of individuals or messages. For example, Aaker and Bagdonas (2020) found that humor can increase perceptions of credibility and trust in individuals, and strengthen interpersonal relationships. In the context of stand-up comedy, comics who are able to deliver relevant and authentic humor tend to be more accepted and appreciated by the audience. Thus, public perceptions of humor and stand-up comedy play an important role in the effectiveness of communication delivered through this medium.

Beyond its roles in entertainment and catharsis, stand-up comedy is also a strategic communication tool in delivering social criticism. Comics use narrative techniques to frame issues that are often challenging to address directly, such as mental health, gender identity, or social inequality. According to Miczo and Meyer (2025), comics can act as social agents who reshape public perception of these issues through the mechanism of the updated "four functions of humor": identification, affirmation, clarification, and differentiation in the current context.

In the digital era, innovation has also occurred in the platforms and media for disseminating humor, for example through YouTube, TikTok, and podcasts. Comics now not only perform on physical stages, but also build digital personas, extending the reach of their personal narratives to a wider audience. This adds a new dimension to the formation of public perceptions regarding comics' personal humor and identity. Public perception of comics is also shaped through social media. Comics can build closeness with audiences through personal content, behind-the-scenes material, and direct interaction with their followers. This strengthens the identity narrative built on stage, positioning comedians not only as entertainers but also as representatives of shared lived experiences.

1.7 Research Methods

1.7.1 Approach and Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically a descriptive-narrative design. This approach was selected because it enables an in-depth exploration of the narratives and subjective meanings embedded in the practice of stand-up comedy, especially in presenting the themes of tragedy. Qualitative research is considered appropriate for understanding complex social and cultural phenomena, including the expression of emotions, personal experiences, and communicative strategies in the context of comedy performances (Creswell and Poth, 2018). This methodological orientation allows researchers to document diverse perspectives emerging from certain social practices, in this case, solo comedy as a space for negotiation between personal trauma and public laughter. In this context, this research does not focus on the generalisation of findings, but rather on a deep and reflective understanding of the context under study.

In qualitative research, researchers act as human instruments, using data collection techniques such as in-depth interviews and participatory observation. According to Sugiyono (2023), qualitative researchers must establish their identity by interacting with the individuals who provide the data. This statement emphasises the importance for qualitative researchers to engage with and observe data sources in order to understand their perspectives and produce valuable research results. This is also in line with the objective, i.e. to understand comics' emotional experiences through a qualitative approach. As Sugiyono (2013) notes, the nuanced nature of human emotion necessitates qualitative methods, particularly in-depth interviews and participant observation, to access and interpret subjective experiences with empathy and rigor. This description will be explained using data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation.

1.7.2 Research Location

The research location focuses on the Stand-Up Indo Jogja community, a community that is active and known for its courage to discuss personal, sensitive, and even traumatic issues in comedy performances. This community was selected through purposive sampling due to its strong alignment with the study's focus, i.e. the transformation of personal tragedy into humor and its accessibility. The research subjects were purposively selected from among comedians who have publicly performed material rooted in traumatic experiences, such as the death of family members, broken homes, violence, or prolonged emotional distress. This selection considered the subjects' relevance to the research focus and the narrative potential contained in their experiences.

1.7.3 Data Collecting

Data were collected through two main techniques: observation and interviews. Direct observations were made of several community performances that took place in Yogyakarta. The researcher was involved in a participatory manner, but maintained a position as a non-interventionist observer to record social interactions, the atmosphere of the performance, and the audience's response to the tragedy-themed comedy material. This kind of observation is considered important in qualitative research

because it enables understanding of social and symbolic contexts that cannot always be captured through interviews (Angrosino, 2016).

Table 1. List of Interviewee

NO	NAME	POSITION
1.	Douglas Bursby Lazarus Nasyok	Stand Up Comedian
2.	Ahmad Nawfil	Stand Up Comedian
3.	Lukman Satria	Stand Up Comedian
4.	Miftakhul Ilmy	Leader of the Standup Indo Jogja Community and Stand Up Comedian
5.	Wildan Ahdiyan	Stand Up Comedian

In addition, in-depth interviews were also conducted with selected comics. These interviews were semi-structured, with open-ended questions to allow the participants the freedom to share their personal stories and reflections in depth. Specifically, the interviews explored the creative process behind developing comedic material, the personal experiences underpinning their narratives, and the meaning derived from conveying tragedy through humour. Importantly, these interviews provided a space to access the emotions and motivations that lie behind public performance (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using a narrative analysis approach. This approach allows the researcher to examine how story structures are formed, how humour is built from tragedy, and how comics' performances transform wounds into part of a laughable narrative. Riessman (2008) argues that narrative analysis is suitable

when researchers want to understand how individuals give meaning to their life experiences through stories. The stages of analysis include data transcription, thematic coding, and identification of recurring narrative patterns, such as the ‘setup-punchline-recovery’ structure or the strategy of turning stigma into narrative power.

To maintain the validity of the data, methodologic triangulation was employed by cross-referencing findings from observations and interviews. In addition, member checking was also conducted, which is the process of reconfirming the transcripts and initial interpretations with the interviewees to verify that the data analysis accurately reflected their intentions and experiences. In the naturalistic approach, validity is not only determined by the “correct” data, but by the extent to which the researcher's interpretation is acceptable to participants and readers.

This research adheres to established ethical principles throughout data collection and analysis. The researcher explained to each participant the purpose and benefits of the study, and sought informed consent before conducting interviews and observations. The confidentiality of participants' identities was maintained, and in writing the results, the researcher endeavored not to reveal sensitive personal information without permission. The principles of integrity, transparency, and empathy were fundamental throughout the research process, in line with ethical guidelines in qualitative research (Mirza et al., 2023). Through this methodology, the study aims to examine how comics reconstruct narratives of trauma through humor, positioning laughter not merely as escapism but as an act of resilience and resistance.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH OBJECT

2.1 Community Profile



Image 1 Stand Up Indo Jogja Community's Logo

Stand Up Indo Jogja Community is a formally recognized regional chapter of the national Stand Up Indo network, dedicated to supporting local comedians, which actively develops the stand-up ecosystem in Yogyakarta. Established in 2011 and growing to this day, it has produced many talented and successful national comedians. This community serves as a platform for training, sharing material, and hosting regular open mic events for both novice comedians and those with more experience.

Beginning with café-based open mic nights, the community expanded its activities to include rehearsals and a peer-mentoring writing practice known locally as "comedy buddies", a term used to help develop material to be used for performances. This practice involves testing new material with trusted peers to find out what is still lacking and how to time the premise, set-up and punchline. In addition, the Stand Up Indo Jogja community also accommodates comedians by holding internal competitions as a competitive arena for comedians in the community to hone their mental skills and ideas, as well as prepare themselves to advance to higher levels of competition. This community also often holds solo events and collaborations with other communities, national Stand Up Indo chapters, and universities across Yogyakarta. The community frequently sends its comedians to perform at national stand-up events or festivals such as Freedom of Nggambleh, JAMBORE, and Stand Up Fest. These activities have made the Yogyakarta scene one of the most consistent incubators of stand-up comedy talents.

This community also utilizes social media as a means or public communication space that expands their reach, both for community members and the general public. Platforms such

as Instagram are the main channels for informing the public about open mic schedules, event posters, documentation of comedians' performances, and announcements regarding internal activities such as workshops or regular rehearsals. Through photo, video, and performance clips, this community not only introduces its visual identity but also showcases the creative dynamics of its members. The presence of social media makes Stand Up Indo Jogja more accessible to new comedians, audiences, and external parties who want to collaborate, while strengthening the community's image as an open and active comedy ecosystem. Thus, social media serves not only as a promotional tool but also as a means of documentation, education, and collective identity formation, thereby reinforcing Stand Up Indo Jogja's presence in both the regional and national comedy scenes.

2.2 Routine Activities and Activity Structure

Activities in the Stand Up Indo Jogja community have been running in a structured and consistent manner to date, though specific programs have occasionally been discontinued, introduced, or modified in purpose over time. However, to date there are at least three official activities running under the community, including:

1. **Sharing Komika Jogja (SKJ)**

Sharing Komika Jogja (SKJ) is an event where comedians can come and learn stand-up comedy together with the leaders of Stand Up Indo Jogja to share newly written comedic material and receive peer feedback. It can be considered a special creative discussion forum for the development of stand-up comedy material writing. SKJ serves as an internal space where comedians can present drafts of their material, dissect the structure of set-ups and punchlines, and receive constructive feedback from other comedians. This forum emphasises the peer review process in comedy writing, from premise selection, humour techniques used, angles taken, to considerations of material sensitivity. SKJ is also frequently used to discuss the evolution of comedians' styles, trending creative issues, and strategies for delivering personal comedy. Through these activities, Stand Up Indo Jogja strengthens a culture of collective learning, enhances its members' comedy literacy, and improves the quality of material presented on stage.

Refined material is further tested through the “comedy buddy” process or tested on other comedians to find out where the weak and strong points are in the set-up, premise and punchline of the material to be presented, and to determine the rhythm or timing of the delivery, enabling audiences to fully engage with the story set-up, premise

and punchline. This activity is conducted on a weekly basis every Tuesday at Zippy Joglo Nologaten.

2. Regular Open Mic dan Liga Tawa

This event serves as a platform for comedians who wish to try out and learn how to perform material that has been written and shared with other comedians, through SKJ session or independently. It is a regular open mic held every Friday at Tilasawa Coffee, which has been collaborating with SKJ for a long time. This activity is highly beneficial for aspiring comedians seeking to develop their skills as stand-up comedians. Additionally, many individuals participate as a form of self-healing or to come to terms with personal experiences or tragedies in their lives.

In addition to regular open mic events, at the same place and time, this community also facilitates internal competitions as a medium for comedians to showcase their skills and advance toward professional recognition. Both activities are usually held simultaneously on Friday evenings, starting with an open mic session for debut comedians, followed by the Liga Tawa competition. The latter includes judges, and participants are progressively eliminated based on their performance and the judges' decisions. To date, Liga Tawa has entered its third season, demonstrating the seriousness and consistency of the Stand Up Indo Jogja community as a well-structured, safe, and comfortable environment for comedians, whether they are newcomers or seasoned performers.

3. Freedom of Nggambleh (FON)

Freedom of Nggambleh (FON) is one of Stand Up Indo Jogja's iconic programs, originally established as the title of the community's weekly open mic night. However, as the community grew, in 2023 FON underwent a transformation into an end-of-year festival featuring selected comedians from various batches and generations, ranging from emerging talents to established figures such as Yusril Fahriza, Hifdzi Khoir, Coki Anwar, Ali Akbar and other senior comedians. This shift marks a significant milestone in the community's development, reflecting its evolution from a weekly workshop forum into a producer of larger-scale comedy performances.

The festival version of FON presents a more curatorial performance concept, featuring comedians with refined material, a professionally produced program, and a thoughtfully designed stage that honors participants' a stage designed as a form of appreciation for the comedians' journey throughout the year. This event is not only a

celebration, but also an annual documentation of the development of the comedy ecosystem in Yogyakarta.

4. Collaboration Events

Collaborative events such as JAMBORE Stand Up Indo and Stand Up Fest are larger-scale annual activities involving various stand-up communities from different regions in Indonesia, including Stand Up Indo Jogja. Through these activities, comedians from Jogja have the opportunity to perform on a bigger stage, interact with comedians from other regions, and learn about different styles of comedy and other community cultures. JAMBORE Stand Up Indo usually takes the form of an annual meeting or thematic event that brings together all Stand Up Indo chapters throughout Indonesia, featuring workshops, showcases, and discussion sessions that broaden comedians' perspectives on developing material and stage personas. Meanwhile, Stand Up Fest is a large-scale comedy festival that serves as a showcase for comedians from various regions, including Jogja, while also highlighting the dynamics of the development of national stand-up comedy.

Through participation in this collaborative event, Stand Up Indo Jogja not only strengthens its creative network, but also plays an active role in the broader development of stand-up comedy in Indonesia. These activities enable Jogja comedians improve their artistic capacity, expand their audience, and bring the identity of Jogja comedy to the national level.

Overall, a series of activities such as Liga Tawa, Sharing Komika Jogja (SKJ), Freedom of Nggambleh (FON), and various collaborative events such as JAMBORE and Stand Up Fest show that Stand Up Indo Jogja has a structured, progressive comedy ecosystem that supports the development of comedians in various aspects. Through internal competitions, creative discussion spaces, annual festivals, and national networks, this community not only provides a training ground but also a comprehensive learning environment, from material writing, stage persona development, to audience engagement strategies. These activities make Stand Up Indo Jogja not only a gathering place for comedians but also a space for identity formation, professionalism, and creative solidarity that drives the growth of stand-up comedy in Yogyakarta, which values solidarity and a sense of family. Through consistent and collaborative activity structures, this community has successfully maintained its relevance and become one of the influential centers for comedy development at both the regional and national levels.

CHAPTER III

FINDING & DISCUSSION

This study aims to understand the creative process of comedians in transforming tragic experiences into humorous narratives in stand-up comedy performances, as well as analyzing the function of tragic narratives in stand-up comedy material as a coping mechanism and self-reflection for comedians. In addition, the researcher will discuss and re-examine the issues mentioned in the first chapter regarding how comedians manage or reframe their trauma or tragedy into laughter as they express their personal wounds honestly on stage.

This study involved five comedians who are members of the Stand Up Indo Jogja Community. All informants were selected based on their active involvement in community activities, their experience in delivering personal material, their charm or different ways of delivering material, and their willingness to share the creative process of transforming tragedy into comedy.

Table 2. Real-time Data Collection

Full Name of informants	Position in the company/institution	Date of interviews	Location of interview (if offline)
Douglas Bursby Lazerus Nasyok	Stand Up Comedian	8 November 2025	Online
Ahmad Nawfil	Stand Up Comedian	10 November 2025	Online
Miftakhul Ilmy	Leader of Stand Up Indo Jogja/Stand Up Comedian	11 November 2025	Zippy Joglo Coffee
Lukman Satria	Stand Up Comedian	11 November 2025	Zippy Joglo Coffee
Wildan Ahdiyan	Stand Up Comedian	12 November 2025	Online

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 The Narrative of Tragedy in the Creative Process of Comedians

The results of the study show that personal tragedies are one of the main sources of creativity for Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians. The informants agreed and acknowledged that

painful life experiences, such as family pressure, failed romantic relationships, the loss of loved ones, and social injustices such as stereotypes against certain ethnic groups or races, often provide the most authentic material with the strongest emotional depth. However, tragedy cannot simply be presented as is on stage; there are stages and a long process related to emotional readiness, time, and the ability to rework these experiences into humour. Whether it is reinterpreted with a different meaning or turned into stand-up comedy material, it still goes through stages of writing, comedy buddy, revision, and then finally being performed on stage.

Some comedians stated that they had many bitter experiences that had the potential to be used as comedy material, but they were not yet fully ready to talk about them openly. This was evident from the informants' statements that delivering sensitive material also required strong mental preparedness.

“I've had so many unpleasant experiences... but there are some that I haven't dared to bring up because I haven't made peace with them myself, so I haven't been able to bring them up until now. But I believe that stand-up comedy can help me make peace with myself.”

(This is according to the statement of Douglas Bursby Lazerus Nasyok as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 8 2025).

This quote shows that the main limitation in choosing tragedy as material is not whether the experience has the potential to be funny, but whether the comedian is able to distance themselves emotionally from the experience. All interviewees, as comedians, agreed that the principle of “time” is important before tragedy can become comedy material.

“There is such a thing as time, which is why there is the principle that tragedy plus time equals comedy. We are the ones who make peace, and we are the ones who decide when that time is right.”

(This is according to the statement of Ahmad Nawfil as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 10 2025).

This statement shows that comedy is not only about stage technique, but also about psychology, when comedians have reached a point where tragedy no longer causes too much pain.

Other findings show that a number of tragedies brought up by comedians include experiences of discrimination, strict family pressure, betrayal in relationships, and the loss of loved ones. One informant even stated that it took at least two years to be able to perform material about a love story that ended badly because initially the story was still very painful.

"It was because of stand-up comedy, of course. Because I mean, dating for four years, being cheated on for four years, it's really hard to get back up again. Finally, I started joining stand-up comedy, started piecing things together, thinking, "Oh, this seems interesting to turn into stand-up," because it's a tragedy, but the tragedy is that I could only express it after nearly two years, only then could I find peace, it took a long time, but it was worth it."

(This is according to the statement of Lukman Satria as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 11 2025).

This statement reinforces that the transformation of tragedy into comedy is non-linear, depending on the process of reflection and acceptance of each comedian. Nevertheless, when the tragedy was finally processed, the comedians consistently used various humour techniques to break the emotional tension. Based on an analysis of the interview transcripts, the techniques most frequently used by the comedians were found to include:

1. Hyperbole, to describe tragic situations in an exaggerated manner to the point of seeming unreasonable or absurd.
2. Irony and Contrast, especially to compare social or family expectations with the informant's reality.
3. What-if, which presents alternative scenarios that are unreasonable to make tragic situations seem lighter, or in other words, to speculate.
4. Self-deprecating humor, which involves belittling oneself as a strategy to reduce the burden of tragedy.
5. Absurdism or dualism of meaning, which is used to make bitter experiences seem far from emotional.

Some comedians with deep traumatic experiences, such as the loss of a parent, even use dark humour, or what we commonly refer to as dark jokes. Laughing at painful things is actually a way of accepting reality; it is a form of reconciliation. This finding shows that humour is not just a tool to entertain the audience, but also a mechanism for reinterpreting the meaning of tragedy for oneself.

Emotionally, comedians also consider ethical aspects before performing tragedies on stage, especially when the story involves family or other people. Some even admit that although they want to discuss a tragedy, they still consider its impact on personal relationships.

Conceptually, field data shows two things: (a) tragedy or painful experiences serve as a source of material or premise, and (b) there is a mental process (from capturing to editing the story) where comedians choose a point of view, build a set-up, and then break assumptions with a punchline. This process is consistent with the premise-set-up-punchline model described by the sources.

Overall, the narrative of tragedy in the creative process of Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians shows that tragedy is not only a source of material, but also part of a complex psychological and social process. Comedians not only transform bitter experiences into comedy through humour techniques, but also engage in a process of reframing: re-examining tragedy from a new perspective that is presented in a lighter, funnier manner that is acceptable to both themselves and their audience.

3.2.2 The Process of Transforming Tragedy into Comedy

Research findings indicate that the process of transforming tragedy into comedy within the Stand Up Indo Jogja community occurs through a series of complex creative steps. This process involves not only technical skills in writing and composing material, but also gradual cognitive and emotional processes. This transformation includes reframing, emotional distancing, testing material within the community, and selecting the right humour techniques to deflect the assumptions and emotions of tragedy into laughter. The need for emotional maturity, or in other words, time to heal, was expressed by many informants as requiring a period of time to turn it into material. For example, Lukman Satria mentioned that it took him almost two years before a romantic tragedy could be turned into material that could be presented as a source of laughter.

The first step that consistently emerges is to distance oneself from the tragedy. This is used to accept, work through, and process certain emotional conditions in order to see a new perspective behind the tragedy. Comedians at least feel half reconciled or brave enough to present material that they feel is deeply painful.

“For now, it seems like we haven't made peace yet. That's why I haven't been able to bring it up, and I haven't even been able to write about it properly. I still can't write about my father. So I try to write about the daily anxieties, like at work. But there's emotional progress because I've dared to bring it up as material that was initially just a trauma, and actually, expressing or revealing something that's been weighing on us is a form of satisfaction in itself, because it feels like someone is listening, and the ability to convey it also means that, well, the stage actually becomes a means to express anxieties or even tragedies that one wouldn't dare to share, not even with a psychologist. Maybe on stage it can be like that.”

(This is according to the statement of Wildan Ahdiyan as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 12 2025).

This statement by Wildan Ahdiyan, a stand-up comedian and member of Stand-Up Indo Jogja, highlights that the creative process does not always begin with the direct production of material, but rather with the ability to manage emotional readiness and create a safe psychological space to revisit difficult experiences. In this context, participants explicitly acknowledge that certain traumatic experiences, particularly those related to family, remain too emotionally sensitive to be transformed into comedic material.

These findings suggest that the transformation of personal tragedy into comedy is not always a linear or straightforward process. While some experiences can be gradually expressed and performed, others remain unresolved and difficult to weave into a narrative. As a result, comedians may initially shift their focus to less emotionally intense topics, such as everyday anxieties, before eventually addressing deeper personal issues.

Once emotional distance has been established, the next step is reframing, which involves reframing the tragic experience into something that is no longer burdensome. Reframing is usually done by finding an angle or perspective that is opposite to the original

meaning of the tragedy. Some comedians say that they often find funny ideas precisely when they reverse their own feelings.

“At first, I didn't think I could handle this material. It's about my boyfriend cheating on me and my best friend leaving me to get married. Now it's become stand-up comedy material, and the first time I performed it, it was really funny, but it's sad, isn't it? It's really sad, but I try to look at it from a different perspective.”

(This is according to the statement of Lukman Satria as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 11 2025).

These findings suggest that transforming tragedy into comedy involves a cognitive process in which comedians strive to shift their perspective from sadness toward a more detached or absurd interpretation. However, this shift does not occur uniformly across all individuals, as some comedians may find it difficult to detach themselves from the emotional weight of their experiences.

In the material writing stage, comedians generally use a premise-set up-punchline structure, where tragedy is usually placed as the premise or context of the story, then processed into humour through a punchline that breaks the audience's expectations. The technique of incongruity or mismatch becomes the most dominant pattern.

“In the world of stand-up comedy, there is something called the Premise-Setup-Punchline. The premise is the main idea, the setup builds the audience's assumptions, and the punchline breaks those assumptions. That's the technique. However, each comedian usually has a different way of stringing words together based on their different thoughts or perspectives.”

(This is according to the statement of Douglas Bursby Lazerus Nasyok as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 8 2025).

"Actually, write the original story first, then figure out how to capture it. There's something called a premise, setup, and punchline. The premise is the core of the story,

and in the setup, we lead the audience to a certain assumption, for example, and then in the punchline, we twist it to something else. It's that simple. I divide it into three stages: the idea-capturing stage, where I capture any ideas that come to mind, or I write down stories from my past. The main thing is to capture them first, then once it's finished, I edit it. Then we name it, like the punchline, if it's the setup, we fix the story. Then we present it."

(This is according to the statement of Ahmad Nawfil as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 10 2025).

"The writing technique certainly does not deviate from the premise of setting up a punchline, from which the topic of conversation is born. Well, the setup is an explanation of the premise. Meanwhile, the punchline is a break from the setup. Well, we call the setup punchline a point of view.

(This is according to the statement of Lukman Satria as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 11 2025).

"When writing stand-up material, there are techniques involved, such as how to write it, what to include, how to start, and so on. There are techniques, actually. The most common ones are called Premise, Set-up, and Punchline. The premise is our idea or attitude towards something. The set-up is the reason or explanation. The punchline is the funny part. Well, those are actually the basic techniques of stand-up comedy."

(This is according to the statement of Miftakhul Ilmy as Stand Up Comedian and the Laeder of Standup Indo Jogja, In an interview November, 11 2025).

"Generally speaking, writing means writing whatever comes to mind straight away, meaning that you just write whatever comes to mind and then edit it later, when it has become a piece of writing, deciding what can be changed, what can be used as a punchline, what is the premise, the set-up, and the punchline. That's the general idea.

Specifically, each comedian has their own way of doing things. So, theoretically, what is the premise? what do you want to convey to the audience? Then you structure the setup and punchline. The setup is based on observations and explanations from the premise, which are observations plus the comedian's attitude towards those observations, and then it's broken down in the punchline. That's breaking down the assumptions that arise from the premise and setup, and ultimately, laughter is expected to emerge.”

(This is according to the statement of Wildan Ahdiyan as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 12 2025).

All comedians agree that the basic technique of stand-up comedy originates from writing, with the premise, set-up, and punchline as the basic theory of writing. The premise is the beginning of the whole story, then the set-up serves to direct the audience to have assumptions or expectations, and the punchline breaks the assumptions that have been built up previously. This illustrates that humour does not arise from the tragedy itself, but from the comedian's storytelling that leads to an assumption and then a break in the logic of that assumption attached to the tragedy.

Various humor techniques also emerge as weapons or additional tools for turning tragedy into laughter, as the author mentioned in the previous point. Hyperbole is often used to make bitter experiences feel lighter by exaggerating them so that they appear even more absurd. Another technique that is often used is “What If?”, which involves imagining other scenarios that could have resulted from the tragedy, thereby effectively shifting the tragedy from the realm of realism to the realm of comedy.

In addition, self-deprecating humor is often used to reduce tension and give the audience room to laugh without feeling guilty. Comedians position themselves as the centre of humour. This approach also serves as an acceptance of one's own shortcomings and is an ethical strategy to ensure that humour does not hurt other individuals.

Another technique that has emerged is deadpan delivery and dark humour or dark jokes, especially tragedies involving death or highly emotional experiences. This technique works because it creates tension that is then released through a twist or punchline. The process of transforming tragedy into comedy also depends heavily on the material testing stage, or what could be called the comedy buddy process. Comedians say that open mic is an important phase to see if the tragedy they bring is ready in terms of writing, emotion, and comedy. If the comedy

buddy or material has been brought to the stage and fails, the comedian will immediately evaluate and revise the parts that are still lacking, thus confirming that the creative process is iterative and experimental.

Overall, it can be concluded that the stages of transforming tragedy into comedy do not occur directly but rather through the following stages: (1) Taking emotional distance, (2) Reframing experiences, (3) Structuring the narrative, and (5) Testing through the community. Only then can it be said that the material is ready to be performed on stage. Through this process, a tragedy that was originally heavy and emotional can be transformed into a story that invites laughter, while also becoming a means of reinterpretation and reconciliation for the comedian themselves.

3.2.3 Humor as a Coping Mechanism

Humour serves not only as a means of entertainment or creative expression, but also as one of the main coping mechanisms for comedians in dealing with emotional pressure and difficult life experiences. The process of creating humour from bitter experiences helps comedians manage stress, relieve tension, and transform psychological burdens into something more acceptable through laughter.

One of the strongest findings is that humor gives comedians new control over unpleasant experiences. When someone conveys their tragedy in the form of comedy, they symbolically regain control over what was previously painful.

"As for me, the reason I want to talk about it is because that's how I make peace with it, and so that I still have space. I still have space to remember it, so I still have space to cherish it. These moments are what ultimately make me think, "Oh, alright then." Because if I keep it bottled up inside, I end up overthinking it or getting stressed out. So, I just express it in a funny way, how to make it funny so it's not too sad."

(This is according to the statement of Miftakhul Ilmy as Stand Up Comedian and the Laeder of Standup Indo Jogja, In an interview November, 11 2025).

An example of material from one of the comedians:

"For example, I have this material: I love my parents very much, especially my mother. I love her so much that when she passed away recently, I wanted to bury her in the Imogiri Royal Cemetery. That's actually me exaggerating, exaggerating my love by

saying I wanted her buried at the Imogiri Royal Cemetery, even though I'm not part of the royal family. But I wanted my mother buried there because that's the highest honour, right? It's like exaggerating like that."

This quote shows that humor not only creates emotional distance, but also becomes a form of personal empowerment, with comedians becoming the ones who reinterpret events rather than remaining passive victims.

In addition to restoring control, humor also functions as catharsis, or the release of emotions through a creative process. Many comedians say that recounting tragedies in a humorous way makes their emotional burden feel lighter.

"It's mixed feelings. Honestly, mixed feelings. Yes, there is relief, there is relief because I have said it, conveyed it, been able to speak."

(This is according to statement Wildan Ahdiyan as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 12 2025).

This experience shows that laughter is not just an audience response, but also part of the process of healing the wounds experienced by comedians.

Humor as a coping mechanism also helps comedians to re-examine problems from a better perspective. This process is in line with the concept of positive reappraisal, which is the attempt to re-evaluate a negative event in order to produce a new, lighter interpretation. Several comedians explain that when they manage to find a funny angle to an unpleasant event, their mindsets also change. A new perspective emerges, showing that humor serves as a bridge between pain and self-acceptance. By laughing at their wounds, comedians not only relieve tension, but also normalise these bad experiences. In this case, humour is not used to escape from problems, but to face and process them in an adaptive way. In this way, humour becomes an interpersonal coping mechanism that transforms the energy of tragedy into something that brings comedians and audiences together at a lighter point.

These findings are in line with recent research by Simione and Gnagnarella (2023), which shows that humour functions as an effective coping mechanism because it reduces perceptions of stress and moderates the negative impact of avoidance coping strategies on mental health. In this study, humour not only acts as a temporary distraction, but also as a way to reframe negative experiences so that individuals can manage their emotions more adaptively. In the context of this study, Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians use humour not only to create

laughter, but also as a means of psychological recovery, personal identity reinforcement, and efforts to maintain emotional balance in daily life, a practice that is in line with findings that humour can reduce internal tension and improve emotional well-being.

Many comedians use personal tragedies as material, this process is not experienced uniformly. Some participants find it empowering, while others feel emotionally uncomfortable when revisiting painful memories. In some cases, humor does not immediately function as a coping mechanism but requires time and repeated performances. This suggests that while narrative construction allows comedians to structure their experiences, the emotional relief described in relief theory can vary depending on the individual's readiness and the context.

Furthermore, although participants described feeling emotional relief when sharing their personal struggles on stage, this does not always indicate complete emotional resolution. Rather, the stage may serve as a temporary space for expression, not as a definitive form of healing. This suggests that, while humor can facilitate emotional release, its effectiveness as a coping mechanism may vary depending on an individual's emotional readiness and the nature of the experience.

3.2.4 The Role of the Stand-Up Indo Jogja Community in Turning Tragedy into Comedy

The Stand Up Indo Jogja community plays a very important role in helping comedians turn tragedy into comedy. This community not only functions as a performance space, but also as a social environment that provides emotional support, a safe space, and a feedback system that allows comedians to refine their material based on sensitive personal experiences.

One of the key findings is that the community provides a sense of security for comedians to test out tragic material. Comedians also feel safe when performing sensitive material because they receive support, but they are slightly concerned about performing sensitive material outside the community environment due to the risk of misinterpretation.

“The Standup Indo Jogja community strongly encourages its comedians to share personal material. Our seniors have advised us that it is best for comedians to perform material that is close to our hearts, such as ourselves or our families. That is why Standup Indo Jogja plays such an important role for comedians in Jogja.”

(This is according to the statement of Douglas Bursby Lazerus Nasyok as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 8 2025).

This statement indicates that the community creates psychological conditions that enable the exploration of personal themes without fear of being judged or misunderstood. In addition, regular activities such as Open Mic at Tilasawa Coffee, Liga Tawa, and Sharing Komika Jogja (SKJ) serve as important platforms for the iteration process. Comedians can test each beat, evaluate audience reactions, and improve the structure of their material based on direct feedback from their peers. Activities such as SKJ (Sharing Komika Jogja) deepen the collaboration process. At these meetings, comedians share material structures, humour techniques, and even the emotional reasons behind a particular bit.

“SKJ stands for Sharing Komika Jogja, which is a group of people who want to learn stand-up comedy. They learn how to get started in stand-up comedy, what they need to prepare when they want to learn stand-up comedy, or how to develop their existing material and try it out.”

(This is according to the statement of Miftakhul Ilmy as Stand Up Comedian and the Laeder of Standup Indo Jogja, In an interview November, 11 2025).

These findings suggest that the community serves as a relatively safe experimental space where comedians can test and develop material, including content based on personal or tragic experiences. However, this sense of safety can vary depending on an individual’s level of self-confidence, level of experience, and the dynamics within the community. For some newcomers, the process of performing sensitive material may still involve the risk of failure or negative judgment.

This community also appears to play a role in providing emotional validation to comedians. Responses such as laughter, support, or appreciation can contribute to a sense of acceptance and encouragement. Nevertheless, this validation is not always experienced consistently, as audience reactions can vary and, in some cases, may not align with the comedian’s expectations. This suggests that while the community can support emotional expression, its impact in strengthening individuals in the face of painful experiences can vary depending on the situation and the individuals involved.

"The community definitely plays a big role, because we always support each other. For example, if someone hasn't performed yet, they'll be asked to perform at next week's open mic. If their material is lacking, we'll explain why. So, usually before the league starts, we have a regular open mic. After the performance, there's an evaluation session to help the comedians improve. Each one shares their material, so it's also a learning experience."

(This is according to the statement of Ahmad Nawfil as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 10 2025).

This kind of validation creates a balance between creative drive and emotional sensitivity. The community also provides layered support to its comedians through informal interactions off stage. Casual chats while sharing material or before or after open mic sessions often become important moments in the process of emotional reconstruction. This shows that the community provides a social network that serves as a source of inspiration, empathy, and emotional strength, as well as a family-like nature that helps one another. As one informant mentioned,

"The support from friends in the community is not just about humour, but also humanitarian aid for friends in need. The point is that the Stand Up Indo Jogja community has a very strong sense of family. So I'm really happy."

(This is according to statement of Lukman Satria as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 11 2025).

Reinforced by another statement;

"Well, it's hard to say. Because I myself feel that I have been helped a lot by the community. For some reason, the Stand Up Indo Jogja community is really caring, really concerned about each of its members. Because there is something called The Guardian, who is always watching over, not watching over, but more like paying attention to the members, seeing what they need, because when I had an accident, I

immediately received help from the community, which was also significant. So it means a lot to me.”

(This is according to statement Wildan Ahdiyan as Stand Up Comedian and Member of Standup Indo Jogja. In an interview November, 12 2025).

Overall, Stand Up Indo Jogja functions not only as a comedy organisation, but as an ecosystem that provides emotional support, a space for creative experimentation, ethical regulation, technical feedback, and a sense of togetherness as a family. All of these factors are crucial in enabling comedians to feel safe in presenting their diverse material, particularly in transforming tragedy into comedy in a safe, structured, and meaningful way. Thus, the community plays a central role in ensuring that tragedy-based humour can be transformed into comedy that is not only funny, but also part of the comedian's healing and personal growth process.

3.2 Discussions

3.2.1. Tragedy as a Narrative Source that Builds Authenticity in Communication

Research findings indicate that tragedies, whether in the form of loss, failure, family pressure, discriminatory experiences, or personal wounds, can be the most dominant narrative source in the creative process of Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians. The use of tragedy is not merely a creative choice, but a reflection of the comedian's need to process strong emotional experiences through the medium of comedy.

Many recent empirical studies show that humour is not merely entertainment, but also an effective adaptive coping strategy for reducing stress and improving psychological well-being. According to Simione and Gnagnarella (2023), humour can moderate the negative effects of avoidance coping strategies, so that individuals with high levels of humour report lower stress levels than those with less humour. In the context of this study, Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians can be considered to deliberately use humour to ‘reframe’ their tragic experiences into comedy material, thus humour functions as a tool for emotional regulation and psychological recovery, not merely a search for laughter.

The transformation of tragedy into comedy also reinforces what modern narrative research refers to as emotional fidelity, which is the degree of conformity between the story and the storyteller's original emotional experience.

In the context of this study, stand-up material sourced from the comedian's tragic experiences has a high degree of emotional honesty, allowing the audience to feel a sense of closeness and see the comedian as an authentic figure. This authenticity is very important for comedians who speak from personal experience, rather than simply creating fictional stories. This is also reinforced by the informants' statements that stories that are 'real and honest' are much more easily accepted and have a stronger resonance on stage.

"In my opinion, good comedy is comedy that is honest and funny because of its honesty, not because of contrived honesty. Because in the end, if I consider it comedy, then it's stress relief."

(This is according to statement of Miftakhul Ilmy as Stand Up Comedian and the Laeder of Standup Indo Jogja, In an interview November, 11 2025).

Not only that, the use of tragedy also gives comedians' narratives narrative coherence or plot consistency. Tragic events generally have a strong story structure with context, conflict, climax, and resolution. Comedians utilise this natural structure to build a premise before ultimately breaking the audience's expectations with a punchline. Thus, tragedy provides a coherent story framework that is easy to develop in a stand-up format.

This relationship is reinforced by the process of relief or release of tension as described by Freud and formulated by Morreall (2016), when a comedian recounts their tragedy, they are not only entertaining, but also undergoing a process of self-therapy. Comedians feel lighter and relieved because these negative experiences are transformed into something that can be shared and welcomed with laughter. In the words of Morreall (2016), humour provides emotional distance that allows the speaker to transform suffering into something that can be controlled, rather than an oppressive experience.

The authenticity of the narrative also arises because comedians position themselves as the centre of the story. When they laugh at their own tragic experiences, they employ a form of self-deprecating humour. Billig (2017) explains that this type of humour reinforces the authenticity of the performer in the eyes of the audience and makes laughter feel safer, because the object of humour is oneself, not others. In this study, comedians recounting their life tragedies not only build emotional honesty, but also create relational equity with the audience, who feel that the comedian is human just like them. Thus, tragedy not only serves as a source

of stories, but also as the main foundation that shapes the authenticity of the comedian's communication.

3.3.2 Transforming Tragedy into Comedy through Reframing

Transforming tragedy into comedy is at the heart of the creative process of Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians. This process does not happen spontaneously, but through reframing, which is the act of reframing bitter experiences into lighter stories that can be treated humorously and accepted by the audience. Within the framework of communication and narrative psychology, reframing is understood as the process of altering the emotional meaning of an experience without changing the facts of the event itself.

The transformation of tragedy into comedy by Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians occurs through a process of reframing, which is an attempt to change the emotional meaning of bitter experiences into lighter stories without changing the basic facts. Reframing allows individuals to look back at negative events from a new perspective, thereby reducing their psychological burden. Research by Simione and Gnagnarella (2023) shows that humour can create emotional distancing, which is the emotional distance that enables a person to process difficult experiences more adaptively. In the context of Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians, reframing is not only a creative strategy, but also an emotional regulation mechanism that helps them rearrange tragic experiences before bringing them to the stage.

The findings of this study indicate that Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians engage in both levels. They acknowledge that some tragedies cannot be immediately brought to the stage before they have sufficient emotional distance. This is in line with the idea that reframing requires emotional readiness so that stories do not simply become confessions of pain, but can truly be processed into humour.

This reframing process does not happen instantly. The comedians in this study emphasised that certain tragedies cannot be performed immediately before they reach emotional readiness. This is in line with the findings of Dharmawan, et al (2023), which explain that humour can function as a coping strategy when individuals have reached a stable point in managing stress. Reframing becomes a tool for comedians to transform the narrative of tragedy into a story that can be shared safely, not as an outpouring of grief, but as comedic material with new meaning.

In this study, comedians have their own reliable techniques for breaking or deflecting people's assumptions in their punchlines. This demonstrates the direct application of the theory

of incongruity, whereby potentially tragic experiences are transformed into humour because they are placed in a new frame that is incongruous with initial expectations.

The success of tragedy-based humor is highly dependent on honesty. Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians rely on self-disclosure, which is the willingness to share sensitive personal experiences with the public. In the context of comedy, when the audience feels that the comedian is honest and authentic in discussing their tragedy, they are more prepared to accept the process of transforming tragedy into humor. In other words, emotional closeness and empathy are the main bridges that make personal humor work effectively.

However, self-disclosure requires a balance between vulnerability and the ability to manage emotions. Comedians who are not emotionally ready tend to find it difficult to find the funny side of their bitter experiences. This is in line with research by Simione and Gnagnarella (2023), which states that humor can function as a coping mechanism only when individuals have emotional distancing, that is, sufficient emotional distance from negative experiences. If the wound is still in the “raw wound” stage, comedians are unable to reframe it, so the story risks becoming an emotional outpouring rather than comedy. Therefore, emotional readiness is an important prerequisite before tragedy can be processed into healthy humor material that is acceptable to the audience.

The transformation of tragedy into comedy can be seen as a process of negotiating meaning, namely when comedians:

1. Regain control over bitter experiences.
2. Reject the role of ‘victim’ and take the position of ‘narrator’.
3. Creates a new interpretation that is lighter and more empowering.

According to Morreall (2016), humour gives the speaker the ability to view negative experiences with emotional distance, so that they are no longer controlled by the event. Reframing, in this context, becomes a form of empowerment.

3.2.3. Humour as a Coping Mechanism Supported by Community Space

Research findings show that humour not only serves as a creative expression, but also as a psychological coping mechanism for Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians. When comedians turn tragic experiences into comedy material, they are actually undergoing a process of emotional regulation, which involves reducing psychological pressure, improving self-perception, and renegotiating bitter experiences into something they can control.

According to Morreall (2016), humour serves to create psychological distance or emotional distance, allowing individuals to face negative experiences without being

overwhelmed by their original emotions. In the context of comedians, this process is evident when they admit that performing tragedies on stage makes them feel lighter, relieved, or even at peace with the experience. This is in line with the concept of humour-based coping, where humour is used to reduce stress and increase psychological resilience.

However, the success of humour as a coping mechanism does not only depend on individual abilities, but is also influenced by a supportive social environment. The Stand Up Indo Jogja community acts as a safe space, which is an important foundation for the process of transforming tragedy into humour.

A safe space is an environment that allows individuals to express sensitive experiences without fear of being judged or stigmatised. In this study, comedians stated that the community provides a space where they can open up about traumatic experiences, share their fears, or test out highly personal material without external pressure.

This safe space creates an important sense of security so that comedians can engage in self-disclosure and reframing without excessive emotional risk. When comedians feel validated by community members, their coping process becomes healthier and more focused.

Research findings indicate that some comedians withhold certain stories because they are not yet emotionally ready or because the stories involve family members. The community supports this decision and provides ethical boundaries regarding material that is considered too raw (unprocessed trauma). The performing arts community has a role in maintaining a balance between creative expression and the emotional well-being of performers. The community acts as a moral guardian to avoid self-exploitation or the use of tragedies that have not been properly processed.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that tragedy serves as the main foundation for building the authenticity of Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians' narratives, as bitter personal experiences provide narrative fidelity and strong coherence in storytelling. Through a process of reframing, comedians are able to transform heavy emotional experiences into humour by utilising logical incongruity, self-disclosure, and meaning processing, which make tragedy lighter and more communicative. This transformation is not only a creative strategy, but also a form of coping mechanism, whereby humour helps comedians create emotional distance from traumatic experiences. The entire process is reinforced by the existence of the community as a safe space that provides validation, emotional support, and collective evaluation to ensure that tragic material is processed ethically and maturely. Thus, tragedy, humour, and community form a reciprocal relationship that allows comedians to manage bitter experiences while creating performances that are authentic, funny, and emotionally meaningful.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1 Conclusion

This study shows that Stand Up Indo Jogja comedians form and convey tragic narratives through a highly personal creative process grounded in honesty, lived experiences, and the ability to reframe events into narratives that are reflective, emotionally resonant, and communicatively effective. Personal tragedy serves as an authentic narrative source because it has strong emotional intensity, i.e. when reframed through humor, these experiences acquire a new, lighter meaning. The process of forming the material does not occur spontaneously, but through cognitive reframing by sufficient emotional distance from painful experiences, thus transforming the creative process into both a performative act and a mode of self-reflection. In this process, comedians place themselves at a certain psychological distance from traumatic events, enabling them to craft narratives that are not only funny, but also communicative, honest, and acceptable to the audience.

The use of tragic narratives in stand-up comedy has proven to serve an important function for both comedians and audiences. For comedians, humour becomes a coping mechanism that helps relieve tension, reduce stress perception, and strengthen emotional resilience through the reinterpretation of negative experiences. The process of recounting tragedies on stage becomes a form of self-reflection that allows them to look back on the past with a more adaptive perspective that is no longer burdensome. For the audience, comedians' honesty and openness create an emotional closeness that increases their acceptance of the material. The audience not only judges the comedian as an entertainer, but also as an authentic human being. Thus, tragedy serves not only as a source of humour, but also as an emotional bridge between the comedian and the audience.

The Stand Up Indo Jogja community plays a vital role as a safe space that encourages the process of turning tragedy into comedy. The community provides emotional validation, a structure for technical evaluation, and ethical boundaries that prevent comedians from performing stories that are still too raw to be shown. This social support helps comedians avoid exploiting their own emotions, maintain psychological well-being, and ensure that the material brought to the stage is technically and emotionally mature. Thus, the community serves as an important mediator between comedians' personal experiences and the final form of material presented to the public.

4.2 Research Limitaions

This study has several limitations that need to be considered, including:

First, the data were obtained through in-depth interviews with a limited number of informants. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalized to the entire stand-up comedy community in Indonesia.

Second, this study did not include extensive direct analysis of performance recordings; as a result, the transformation of tragedy into comedy was observed mainly from the comedians' perspective, rendering the findings heavily dependent on how informants interpret their own experiences.

Third, this study did not explore in depth the influence of local cultural variables in Yogyakarta on the construction of tragedy-based humour, even though the cultural context has the potential to influence the form of acceptance and style of humour that emerges.

Fourth, the study did not observe audience responses quantitatively or on a broader scale, so the impact of tragedy on the reception of comedy is descriptive rather than statistical. Furthermore, this study did not clinically examine the comedians' psychological conditions, so conclusions about the function of humour as a coping mechanism are based only on perception rather than formal psychological assessment.

Fifth, in the absence of clinically evaluation, interpretations of emotional coping and recovery remain interpretive and narrative rather than diagnostic. In addition, the study was conducted over a specific period of time and therefore does not reflect long-term dynamics, such as changes in tragic material over time or the comedians' emotional development after years of performing.

4.3 Recomendations

Based on these findings and limitations, further research should expand the number of informants, including audience members, community managers, and comedians from other stand-up communities, to obtain a more comprehensive picture. Further research could use performance analysis on video recordings to observe how tragedy is technically processed on stage, through elements such as vocal intonation, gestural expression, comedic timing, and real-time audience response, thereby the understanding of the creative process becomes more comprehensive.

In addition, research is needed to examine cultural factors and local values that influence the acceptance of tragedy as humour, especially in communities with different social characteristics. The psychological aspects of comedians, such as resilience, stress, and emotional recovery, can also be the focus of quantitative or mixed methods research to produce more objective data on the impact of humour on mental health.

For the Stand Up Indo Jogja community, the results of this study can be used as practical guidance to sustain its role as a psychologically safe space and to reinforce ethical protocols around the presentation of traumatic material, ensuring that the creative process remains supportive and does not harm members. The community can also develop special forums for sharing experiences or workshops on storytelling, coping, and emotional literacy as a form of ongoing support for the development of comedians.

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