



Humor Characterization Analysis in “My Stupid Boss” Indonesian Comedy Movie

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Abstract. Comedy film is a genre of a film which focused on humor and prioritizes comedic elements and laughter. Film with comedy genre communicates its humor message through the use of various humorous techniques. There are 4 categories of humor techniques; language, logic, action and identity. These character traits lead and develop the storyline of the film. Character refers to the appearance, behavioral traits, and actions of a character that differentiate them from others. However, character portrayal that is too flat or overly exaggerated can diminish the comedic impact. “My Stupid Boss” is one of the Indonesian comedy films and directed by Upi Avianto. My Stupid Boss has a strong and definite characteristic of each character. This article aims to analyze the characterization of the comedy characters in the film “My Stupid Boss” and the selected research method is qualitative. The urgency of this article is to assist aspiring comedy film writers in determining the proper characterization of comedy characters.

Keywords: Comedy Film, Humor, Techniques, Characterization, My Stupid Boss.

1 Introduction

Comedy aims to entertain the audience with the elements it contains. The elements of comedy include jokes, characters, situations, and conflicts. Comedy can be applied to many things, one of which is in films. Comedy film is a genre of a film which focuses on humor and prioritizes comedic elements and laughter. Film with comedy genre communicates its humor message through the use of various humorous techniques. There are 4 categories of humor techniques; language, logic, action and identity [1]. The identity of characters in comedy films is very important. These character traits lead and develop the storyline of the film. Character refers to the appearance, behavioral traits, and actions of a character that differentiate them from others according to Berger [2].

Upi Avianto is a director, screenwriter, and producer from Indonesia. Upi Avianto has won several awards, such as the Indonesian Box Office Movie Awards (2017) and the Indonesian Film Festival (2017). In 2016, Upi Avianto wrote and directed the film “My Stupid Boss.” The film also received several awards at the 2016 Indonesian Film

Festival. "My Stupid Boss" is a comedy genre film that has a strong and definite characteristic of each character. This study aims to analyze the characterization of the comedy characters in the film "My Stupid Boss".

2 Methodology

This study uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The qualitative descriptive analysis method involves analyzing, describing, and summarizing various data collected from interviews or observations related to the researched issue that occurs in the field according to Winartha [3]. The source of the analysis comes from the Indonesian film titled "My Stupid Boss" In this research, the analysis is based on Sedita's "The Eight Characters of Comedy [4] and Mckee's "Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting" [5].

3 Result

The Eight Characters of Comedy are logical smart ones, lovable losers, neurotic, dumb, bastard, womanizer or manizer, materialistic, and live in their own world according to Sedita [4].

3.1 Logical Smart One

These characters are calm, reliable, sarcastic, intellectual, well-spoken and brutally honest. In this film, their role is to showcase a significant contrast with the eccentric character, thereby making the eccentric character stand out more.

3.2 Lovable Loser

This character possesses traits of innocence, clumsiness, yet optimism, and a high level of empathy. Overall, this character will capture the hearts of the audience with their kind-hearted nature.

3.3 Neurotic

These characters are like a nerd who is extremely anxious, worried but still perfectionist. They always do things by their own rules.

3.4 Dumb

These characters have a friendly attitude, childlike, no ulterior motive and naive. They always feel happy and give positive vibes.

3.5 Bastard

These characters are known as being mean to others, dry sense of humour, intolerant, and self-centered.

3.6 Womanizer/Manizer

These characters are always flirting with others, narcissistic, seductive and very aggressive. They are proud of their behavior and extremely confident.

3.7 Materialistic

These characters are financially stable or born with a silver spoon, so they don't have to worry about money. What they do is simply seek material goods and feel the need to have trendy items. They are judgmental and full of themselves.

3.8 Live in their own world

These characters are non-judgmental, shameless, exciting but unpredictable. They can say things that are beyond our imagination.

In the book "Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting," by McKee [5] discusses the importance of conflict as a key element in building and developing a story. Conflict at all levels of a story can appear in various forms, including internal character conflict, conflict between characters, and external conflict. These three levels of conflict add complexity and strengthen a story [5]. Internal character conflict is the inner conflict with themselves. It shows the character's thoughts, emotions, personal values, struggles, or dilemmas. This inner conflict affects the character's considerations and decisions, and it can evolve during the course of the story.

4 Discussion

Conflict between characters is a relationship between different characters. Such conflicts can be confrontations, disagreements, rivalries, and differences in the goals each character wishes to achieve. This can add tension to a story and further its development. External conflict involves conflicts that occur outside of the character but influence the character's goals. This type of conflict may take the form of situations or obstacles that obstruct a character from achieving their objectives. The characters in the film "My Stupid Boss" that are outstanding are Diana and Bossman.

4.1 Diana

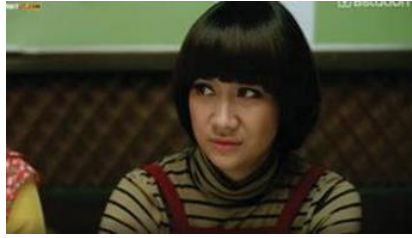


Fig. 1. The Main Protagonist; Diana (Source: Netflix “My Stupid Boss”)

Diana, as can be seen in Figure 1, is the main character in the film “My Stupid Boss”. Diana is the main protagonist character that can be seen throughout the entire story where she is the central and most frequently appearing character. She is a character with specific goals and faces numerous conflicts throughout the course of the story.



Fig. 2. The Main Protagonist; Diana (Source: Netflix “My Stupid Boss”)

In scene at 2.28 minutes, as can be seen in Figure 2, Diana's goals can be observed as follows;

Diana: I am not the type of person who likes to sit at home and do nothing.

Diana: It has been 3 months without a job, and it was enough to make me frustrated

Keeping herself busy instead of staying idle at home is Diana's goal. The conflicts that occur throughout the film are a result of Bossman's behavior in the office, which Diana finds strange and annoying. This can be observed in the scenes at 12:46 and 55:31 minutes, where Diana continues to complain about Bossman's attitude.

Scene 1

Diana: Is he a bit crazy? (talking about Bossman)

Dika: That's just how he is

Diana: How do you say it?.. He was a bit weird, a bit annoying

Scene 2

Diana: You know what? I really, really, really hate him (talking about Bossman), I think he was woken up my inner serial killer

Throughout the movie, Diana consistently experiences conflict with Bossman and frequently complains about his behavior.

Inner: The character Diana has traits of not liking to stay idle at home, being industrious, determined, firm, and emotional. This can be observed in the scenes at 1:29:50;

Bossman: this is your two month's salary

Diana: No need. I don't want it. Give it to me later when our business with the police is settled.

In this dialogue, Diana appears to be determined, firm and angry. She refuses to accept her two-month salary and explicitly states her reasons. She's focused on settling their business with the police before taking her salary. Diana's facial expression appears angry while delivering this dialogue, her response can be seen as a combination of determination, firmness, and anger. Personal: Diana's relationship with her husband is considered harmonious because their very different natures balance each other out. Diana's emotions often run high, while her husband remains calm. Throughout the film, Diana frequently argues with Bossman. She is also seen as a mediator when it comes to talking to Bossman by her coworkers. Example can be seen in scene at 1:16:41;

Bossman: Then you will not be able to misuse the company's money again. I have a principle which is not to trust anyone. If anyone is being corrupt with company money, i'll go to the police

Diana: Did you just accuse me of stealing company money?

Diana: Don't just accuse randomly, prove it!

Bossman: Please calm down when you're talking

From there, it can be seen the conflict between Bossman and Diana, where Diana feels accused by Bossman. Extra-Personal: Diana's environment has changed. Diana has just moved to Malaysia, so she needs to adapt and look for a new job. For example, this can be seen in scene in 1:25 minutes;

Diana: I ended up stranded in Malaysia. I have been living here for three months.

In the analysis of the 8 comedy characters, Diana's character matches with the Logical Smart One. It can be seen from the inner, personal and extra personal conflict of Diana's character. Diana shows her intelligence and initiative, especially in her willingness to work and not sit idle. However, she doesn't always display calmness, as she can become angry and frustrated, particularly when dealing with Bossman. She also spoke well and became a mediator role with her coworkers. In the community, Diana is seen as a hardworking individual, which aligns with the Logical Smart One's traits.

Considering the overall analysis and the complexity of Diana's character, she seems to be a blend of different comedic character types, with a primary alignment with the Logical Smart One due to her intelligence, initiative, and well-spoken personality.

However, her emotional outbursts and the unique dynamics in the film make her character more outstanding. Example can be seen in the scene at 1:06:26 as follows;

Adrian: Who are you calling?

Diana: Bossman

Adrian: It's early in the morning in New York, he'll be sleeping

Diana: That's why i'm calling, i'll get him back now

From there, it can be seen that only Diana is brave enough to take action, show intelligence, initiative, and think about how to take revenge against the bossman's arbitrary treatment. Diana frequently gets angry and frustrated to the point where she contemplates quitting her job because of Bossman.



Fig. 3. Diana at the meeting (Source: Netflix "My Stupid Boss")

Another example of a scene where Diana shows her 'Logical Smart One' well-spoken behavior character is when Bossman asks for opinions, and all the employees look to Diana with hope. Example can be seen in this scene at 30:09 minutes;

Bossman: What do you think? I want to hear your opinions one by one starting with Kerani (everyone looks to Diana)

Diana: Are you sure you want to hear our opinions?

Bossman: Of course. I am a democratic person. Do you think I'm Kim Jong Un? (everyone nodded to Kirana with hopes)

From this, it can be seen how reliable Diana is in the eyes of Bossman's employees. The way the employees look at Diana with hope and fear at the same time, while Diana confidently states her opinion, makes this scene appear funny.

4.2 Bossman



Fig. 4. Bossman (Source:my-stupid-boss-2-reza-rahadian-movie-header.jpg)

Bossman is the main antagonist character that can be seen throughout the entire story where the character opposes the main character, also known as the antagonist. The antagonist is someone who opposes or challenges the protagonist, either directly or indirectly, both physically and mentally. In a story, the antagonist is a character who obstructs the goals of the protagonist. Bossman has the most conflicts with Diana. Example can be seen in this scene at 1:16:41;

Bossman: Then you will not be able to misuse the company’s money again. I have a principle which is not to trust anyone. If anyone is being corrupt with company money, i’ll go to the police

Diana: Did you just accuse me of stealing company money?

Diana: Don’t just accuse randomly, prove it!

Bossman: Please calm down when you’re talking

From there, it can be seen the conflict between Bossman and Diana, where Diana feels accused by Bossman. Inner: Deep down, Bossman grapples with his insecurities and fear of inadequacy. Despite his authoritative and often overbearing exterior, he constantly questions whether he's truly competent in his role. This inner conflict stems from his desire to maintain control and power, while battling self-doubt about his capabilities.

This conflict can be seen when Bossman has a conversation with Diana about Mr. Alung. Bossman looks very agitated and anxious. He fears that he might not be able to maintain his authority and control. Example can be seen in the scene at 1:11:21;

Diana: What’s wrong anyway sir? Why are you so afraid of Mr. Alung?

Bossman: Don't talk carelessly, who is afraid of him? i'm not afraid of him, why should I be afraid if he comes here, he can even bring 100 men here

From there, it can be seen that Bossman can only talk big to cover up his fears. Also, can be seen when Bossman talks to Mr. Alung, the way he laughs nervously while

speaking. Personal: Bossman's relationship with his wife is characterized by his apparent fear of her. Bossman often experiences conflict with his workers, Diana, such as differences of opinion. However, in reality, Bossman is pleased with the way Diana works. This can be seen when Diana resigns, and Bossman persuades her to return to work. This scene occurs at 1:30:30;

Bossman: Yes, I was wrong and I apologized, I'm sorry. C'mon stop being angry
 Bossman: I'll see you at the office, OK?

On the other hand, Bossman often behaves as he pleases with other employees, showing no regard for others' perspectives. For example, the scene at 25:40 minutes;

Bossman: The roof is leaking, if it gets into the machine, the machine will be broken, right?
 Worker: I told you before that the roof was leaking and there were many holes but you wouldn't listen to me
 Bossman: You can fix it
 Worker: It's not my job to repair a leaky roof, my job is to watch the machine

This further emphasizes Bossman's disregard for his employees' roles and expertise. He seems to dismiss their concerns and push tasks onto them that are outside their job descriptions. Extra-personal: Bossman is the CEO of a company, the community sees Bossman as an authoritative and leadership-oriented demeanor. In the analysis of the 8 comedy characters, Bossman's character is the 'Bastard'. Bossman has a unique character. It can be seen from the inner, personal and extra personal conflict of Bossman's character and through his unclear and unusual work rules. His strange character also can be observed in his way of speaking, and even his laughter. Same as his name, he is the boss at the workplace. Bossman is the most outstanding character in the film. He has many negative traits such as a lack of self-awareness about his bad behavior, stinginess, acting as he pleases, and getting angry easily. All of his employees have already shaken their heads at Bossman's behavior.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, Diana and Bossman are two central characters in the film "My Stupid Boss," and their interactions drive the story's comedic and conflict-driven elements. Diana, the film's main protagonist, exhibits a range of traits that place her primarily in the category of the "Logical Smart One." She is characterized by her determination, intelligence, and the ability to take the initiative, making her a standout character in the story. However, her emotional outbursts and complex interpersonal dynamics add depth to her character. On the other hand, Bossman, the film's primary antagonist, is the 'Bastard'. His character shows a lack of self-awareness, arrogance, and a disregard for others' perspectives. The film's humor is driven by the clash between these two characters and the conflicts they create, making "My Stupid Boss" an engaging and entertaining story.

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