

## Exploring Power Politics and Hegemonic Struggles through Semiotic Analysis of Political Cartoons

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### Abstract

*The theory of hegemony<sup>1</sup> shows that power relations constrain and control the creativity and productivity in the discourse. The present study attempts to explore the power politics and hegemony controlling the production of political cartoons and constraining the creativity of cartoonists. Forty respondents performed in an experiment by recording their response to the political cartoons displayed on the screen using DMDX software. The participants judged the selected political cartoons as biased or unbiased by using the dual analogue pad. The quantitative analysis shows the higher percentage of unbiased responses for the selected images; however a controversial image was declared 65% biased by the respondents. The respondents also participated in a semi structured interview to decode and judge the selected images. The qualitative analysis reveals that cartoonists also exhibit power politics and hegemonic struggles in their cartoons by using their skills and techniques. It shows that the participants are not only able to decode the images but they are also capable to judge the content of the images and have their own opinions regarding the circumstances, the background of the image, the presentation of political leaders and cartoonists biasness/un-biasness etc. A large number of participants are of the view that cartoonists do not just offer a critique of politicians, political situations and events but they have a deeper understanding and knowledge of politics, politicians and political matters. They expose the hegemonic struggles and power*

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<sup>1</sup> Hegemony is the leadership or dominance especially of one state or social group over others (Oxford dictionary): [https://www.lexico.com/definition/power\\_politics](https://www.lexico.com/definition/power_politics)

*politics by symbolically illustrating the tussle and tactics of parties to attain power and position.*

**Keywords:** political cartoons, power, politics, hegemony, discourse

## INTRODUCTION

In social sciences political power is frequently defined as the ability to control and influence the behavior of people and or the outcome of events. Political power enables people or groups to control the politics, functions or culture of a society. However, power politics in this study refers to the political action by a person or group which makes use of moral or intellectual means to increase their power or influence.

Hegemony is derived from the Greek words ἡγεμών meaning guide, ruler leader and ἡγεμονία meaning rule, leadership. Generally, it means the domination or superiority of a state, social group or even an individual over others (Benedetto, 2008: 81). Prior to Gramsci, the ancient political thought used the term Hegemony with any form of domination or exercise of power. Generally, the term hegemony was used in international politics to denote the domination of one state over others.

The term hegemony must not be taken simply as “domination” because it also involves the intricate process before the realization of the desired power. Gramsci stresses that politics and political activity is basically comprised of attaining and maintaining power. In Gramsci hegemony means supremacy of one group or class over other groups or classes by means other than violence. According to (Gramsci, 1971):

A social group can and indeed must, already exercise ‘leadership’ before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principle conditions for winning of such power); it subsequently becomes dominant when it exercises power, but even if it holds it firmly in its grasp, it must continue to ‘lead’ as well ( Gramsci 1971 57-58).

For Gramsci, power is constituted by dyadic or dual oppositions such as force and consent, violence and civilization, authority and hegemony (Gramsci 1971, 169-170). These oppositions demonstrate Gramsci’s characterizations of the supremacy of a social group in

terms of moral and intellectual leadership over allied and associated groups and the exercise of domination over the antagonistic groups.

Gramsci argues that hegemony always exists between the politico-economic level of reality-that is, where corporativism creates disunity of interests, enabling domination to act as the unifying force-and the ethico-political, that is, where the plurality of interests operate through moral and intellectual hegemonic logic as a unstable equilibria and leadership acts as the unifying force (Gramsci 1971, cited by Howson and Smith 2008: 7). In a foreword to “Hegemony and the Operation of Consensus and Coercion” Lyons (in Howson and Smith, 2008) suggested that Howson and Smith demonstrated the complex relationship between coercion and consensus in the formation of power set-up. A deeper look at the processes involved in the operation of power shows that hegemony is a process that occurs before the power is achieved as well as the outcome of that achievement.

The authors demonstrate the complex interplay between coercion and consensus in the operation of power. Attention to these processes reveals that hegemony is both a process that occurs before power is institutionalized as well as an outcome of that process of institutionalization. It is only by recognizing this complexity that the nexus between power and legitimacy in the production of authority can be properly understood (Lyons in Howson and Smith, 2008: ix).

According to Lyons very few researches in Asia have developed the critical understanding of theoretical origins and implications of the term hegemony; as a result the term has simply become a shorthand for ‘domination’. As Lyons puts it:

While many scholars have been drawn to the analytic potential of the concept of hegemony in their analyses of social and political transformation processes throughout Asia and the Pacific, few have situated their work within a critical understanding of the term’s theoretical origins. As a consequence, the term hegemony simply becomes shorthand for ‘domination,’ and the important insights that it offers to the study of power are lost (Lyons in Howson and Smith, 2008: ix).

The present study is an attempt to analyze the hegemonic struggles and processes that are in play before the domination and power is actually achieved.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Political cartoons have an important recognition in media discourse. The political cartoons were primarily started publishing in an American newspaper by Benjamin Franklin portraying the famous caption *join or die*<sup>2</sup>. The previous research on political cartoon shows that scholars have tried to investigate its multi-dimensional aspects and functions but also recommended further investigation considering it an unexplored area specifically in Pakistani context. Tsakona (2009) examined the visual and verbal means in drawing cartoons and creating humorous effect. He suggested that “the close examination of the verbal and visual elements of cartoons also reveals that humorous mechanisms, such as exaggeration, contradiction, and metaphor, are common for the creation of humor via both verbal and visual means” (1186). Treanor and Mateas (2009) compared “newsgames” and the political cartoons. The news games are like political cartoons but they are less popular and short lived as compared to the political cartoons. They established that through news games the people understand well about certain issues and events. They argued that “Despite the quantity of games that relate to current events, very few newsgames can be said live up to the defining claims that “newsgames” are the video game equivalent of political cartoons a well-developed and established medium for political expression”(1). They explained the reason of unpopularity of newsgames and divided the editorial cartoons into two categories: “the Social Comment cartoon and the proper Political Cartoon. Most editorial cartoons can be considered Social Comment cartoons while Political Cartoons have more specific definitive criteria that must be met. This separation will be utilized to help explicitly state what is missing from most newsgames and what it is that has helped make Political Cartoons become one of the primary mediums of political expression”(2). Political cartoons are the proper channel of understanding the thinking of a cartoonist. The cartoonists make sketch of the political leaders according to their popularity.

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<sup>2</sup> For background of political cartoons see. Ghilzai, S.A. (2020) Seeing Pakistan through the Gaze of Cartoonists-Editorial Cartoons Epitome of National Interest. European Academic Research.

Some scholars argue that cartoons depict the popular public opinion (Edwards, 2005) while others argue that cartoons do not necessarily reflect the public views (Gilmartin and Brunn, 1998; Treanor and Mateas, 2009; Tehseem and Bokhari, 2015). Edwards (2005) and Treanor and Mateas (2009) puts it as:

Cartoons provide a view of voters that supports and supplements views evident in the news media (Edwards, 2005: 1).

Political Cartoons are about specific events in which the author takes an editorial stance or position. The purpose of the cartoon is often to persuade the reader to agree (Treanor and Mateas, 2009: 2).

Political cartoonists know that what they create are not accurate or factual descriptions and would likely not dispute the claim that their work can be understood as propaganda (ibid).

According to Treanor and Mateas (2009) “Political cartoons do not strive to report information, and often hardly report the events of a factual story at all. Their primary function is to communicate the author’s biased, editorial opinion through persuasive visual and textual metaphor. Through understanding the ways in which political cartoons rhetorically communicate, cartoonists author cartoons that serve to persuade the reader to a particular position. So, political cartoons contain the editorial stance of their authors; the cartoonist purposely creates ideologically biased imagery and narratives to persuade the reader to share his stance” (2). They explained that some media groups support some political leaders while others support other leaders. The media groups are also under the influence of government and opposition leaders. Sani, Abdullah & Ali (2012) used agenda setting theory to show how Nigerian political cartoons set social agenda and shape public opinion by depicting “current sociopolitical issues in a given period”(1). Ashfaq and Hussein (2013) argued that the cartoonists play role to change the opinion of the citizens and make their preexisting ideas improve about a politician. The political cartoons are made in a high proportion at the days of election because they can reconstruct or renew the ideas of readers about a politician. They explained that the era of starting of political cartoons in Pakistan was the regime of Dictator Gen. Zia ul Haq (1977-1988). The cartoonist “Nanha” was the first to make cartoons for criticizing the government’s black laws. The media was partially free at that time but his sketches can explain enough about the

government. They also added that the political cartoons are used for pressure in the world for the maintenance of pressure on government. In Denmark the newspaper used cartoons as propaganda against the Muslims of the world by criticizing the Holy figures of Muslims as cartoons. They mentioned that the political cartoonists are not comedians they make a bridge between the opinion of both the viewers and the cartoonist. The cartoonist provides a framework for the opinion of the readers. It creates an image of the politician in the voter's mind in support of one politician and against the other. The viewers do not just get the idea about an issue or event but also enjoy the cartoons. Therefore, cartoons are becoming an interesting and effective way of communication. The cartoons are effective for both literate and illiterate masses of the country; but in Pakistan the cartoons and cartoonists are taken for granted. The cartoon carries a long story inside its caption. The artists should make the cartoons more and more effective to achieve its place of acceptance and popularity. Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) examined Pakistani political cartoons using a multimodal discourse analysis and suggested that the contemporary political cartoons spoil the face of one politician or political party and save the other depending on the political affiliation of the newspaper. They recommended further investigation into other aspects of political cartoons. Jabeen and Ahmad (2018) applied a multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis approach to investigate the Ideological Representations of Pak-US Relations in Political Cartoons. They investigated Pak-US relations in political cartoons created after 9/11 incident and evaluated the construction and deconstruction of realities in them. They argue that political cartoons endorse particular interests and ideologies to shape public perceptions of realities. The above discussion and review reveals that the researchers see political cartoons as tool for shaping and transforming public opinions and perceptions of realities.

However, Ghilzai (2020 a) argues that cartoons reflect popular public opinion and the audience with background knowledge are able to decode and judge them. She demonstrated how the History of Pakistanis' Power Politics can be traced and viewed through the Critical Lenses of Cartoonists. She analyzed the Political struggle in Pakistan from 1947 to 2020. The article shows how the cartoons of a specific period represent the time and period in which they are produced. It reveals the function of cartoons beyond just humor or

politics; cartoons not only record the history, the historical events and situations; but also provide critical lenses to view them simultaneously. She suggests that it is a very unique way for the creation, evaluation and maintenance of history and historical records. Ghilzai (2020 b) further argued that political cartoons are epitome of national interest. They provide the audience opportunity to evaluate and criticize different events, situations and circumstances etc.

## **METHODS**

The Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. An experimental design was used to evaluate the cartoonist's biasness/un-biasness. Forty respondents performed in an experiment by recording their response to the political cartoons displayed on the screen using DMDX software. The participants judged the selected political cartoons as biased or unbiased by using the dual analogue pad. The respondents also participated in a semi structured interview to decode and judge the selected images. The images were selected on the basis of theme relevancy i.e. the images designed to expose power politics and hegemonic struggles were included in both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The selected images used in the experiment are designed by Rahat published atPakbee.com. A controversial image was placed in-between the images to elicit the participants' response. Due to the limited time period it was not possible to explore different themes in a single research paper. The researchers intend to replicate the study with larger data set, larger number of participants and variety of themes.

## **PARTICIPANTS AND DATA COLLECTION**

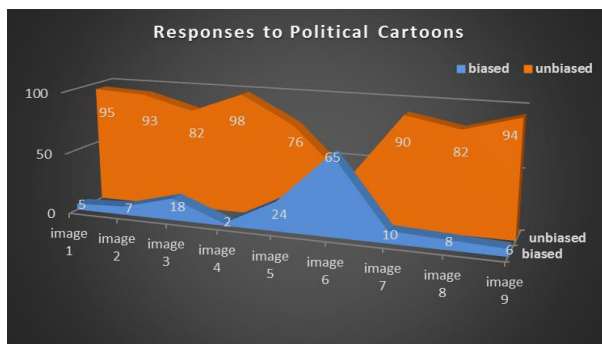
Political cartoons related to the struggle over power, politics and hegemonic struggles were selected randomly. The data was collected at Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad. Forty master level students participated in the study. The researchers showed cartoons to the participants one by one to recode the participants' response to the visual image. The data was collected by displaying the political cartoons to the participants in a quiet room and participants' interview was recorded separately. The participants were given 30

minutes to perform the decoding task. Some of the images used in the present research are analyzed below.

## DATA ANALYSIS

### Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative analysis shows that participants rated the majority of selected images<sup>3</sup> as unbiased except image 5 and 6 (95 %, 93%, 82%, 98%, 76%, 35% 90%, 82%, and 94% respectively). The percentage of biasness of the selected political images is very low except image 5 and 6 (5%, 7%, 18%, 2 %, 24%, 65% 10%, 8%, and 6%) respectively. Overall, the selected images were declared unbiased by the participants. However, the image 5 is declared slightly biased with 24 % of biasness ratings and image 6 is rated highly biased with 65 % biasness. The Graph 1 shows the results of quantitative analysis.



**Graph 1: Responses of participants to political cartoons in percentage, the x-axis shows the images and the Y-axis shows the rating of participants as biased or unbiased images.**

The image 6 is declared as highly biased image because this image is a highly controversial image. In order to see the reaction of participants the image is placed in the middle of the selected material. The results indicate that people are not only capable of decoding the images but they can judge each and every image keeping in view the

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<sup>3</sup> The selected material for the experiment is displayed in the qualitative analysis section. The participants performed the rating task before giving the interviews for the qualitative assessment of images. So that they may not be conscious and develop a strategy to alter or switch their responses.



context and political background of the era during which the image is created or published.

### Qualitative Analysis

A semi structured interview was designed to understand how the participants decode and judge the selected images. The participants were asked to express their opinion about the selected images. Following necessary questions were asked where needed: What does the cartoon mean? Would you please point out the people, the places and things depicted in images? What kind of message it conveys? Do you agree or disagree with the cartoonist opinion? What techniques are used to convey the intended message? Do they use irony or humor? What are the political figures doing in the given context/image? The images decoded by the participants are analyzed and discussed below.



**Image 1. The public versus politicians, a comparison is drawn.**

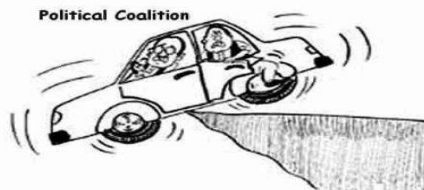
The image 1 shows the politicians and the peoples of Pakistan before the elections. That the people of Pakistan are not capable to meet both ends and the politicians are fighting with each other for taking turns in the government. The prices everyday commodities were raised so much that it was out of reach of common man. The left side cartoon tells us about the peoples of Pakistan that they are not provided with food items and those who are provided cannot buy due to high prices. The cartoon at the right side shows the politicians busy in making plans and fighting with each other for getting power and position in the up-coming government. The packet of ATTA shows all the items of use of daily life and the utility stores shows the government's supply of things. But the politicians are not interested to solve the problems

of common Pakistanis they are interested in the achievement of presidential chair, means the government.



**Image 2 is based on a news caption (2013 elections)**

The image 2 shows a situation in the elections of 2013; many independent candidates won the elections. After PML (N) was handed over the government, the independent candidates were invited to join their party. After sometime, the 25 candidates joined PML (N). The cartoon also explains the situation that PM Nawaz sharif is taking them in their party. The cage shows the party and the birds are the candidates and man looks like Nawaz Sharif.



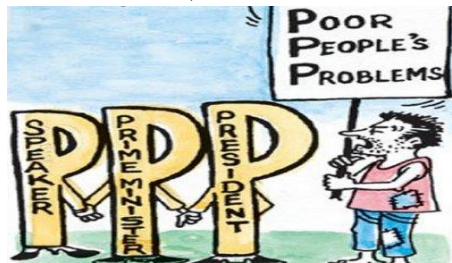
**Image 3 shows the behavior of politicians in odd circumstances.**

The Image 3 shows that when the state, the government and the democracy is in crises the politicians shake hands with each other to face the challenges. In this cartoon the cartoonist sketched the car for government and driver is Asif Ali Zardari the former president of Pakistan (as this cartoon is of 2010) and the person sitting behind the driver is opposition leader Mian Nawaz Sharif, the edge of mountain is the crises which brought difficulties for government. We can explain this cartoon as the government face crisis the opposition offers its energies to take them out of it. It also explains that the opposition and government show that both have different goals but for the maintenance of democracy in Pakistan they come shoulder to shoulder with each other. Political coalition is what the opposite parties called “*muk muka*”.



**Image 4 is based on a news report on Nawaz's deportation (2007)**

In this cartoon the artist tried to conclude a very big news. Chaudry Shujaat Hussain is chairman of Pakistan Muslim League (Q) when Nawaz Sharif returned homeland Pakistan after a long period of deportation. At that time General Musharraf was the president of Pakistan. His government was not allowing the exiled Nawaz Sharif to come back to Pakistan. Meanwhile, when he returned Pakistan the government did not allow him to come and resume his political activities in the country. At that time Shujaat Hussain, former prime minister of Pakistan, encountered difficulties and he was angry before the arrival of Nawaz Sharif. Nawaz Sharif was not allowed to come out of the airport and was deported once again to Dubai. Shujaat's government was secure then and he was happy after the departure of Nawaz Sharif. Chaudry Shujaat Hussain was feeling easy by the exile of Nawaz Sharif (as shown in "after exile").



**Image 5. Shows the PPP (Pakistan Peoples' Party) and the Poor People's Problems.**

This cartoon is biased according to me because the cartoonist has criticized a single party for not obeying their manifesto. This sketch is of the PPP government regime. The cartoonist has criticized the single party that they are not fulfilling their duties. The artist tried to show that the Pakistan Peoples' Party has got the powers of president, prime minister, and speaker, but is not sincere to solve the problems of the poor.

people of Pakistan. The cartoonist also tried to explain the expectations of the citizens of Pakistan that they think that Pakistan peoples' party is established for solving the problems of masses but it is highly against their expectations. They came in power just for themselves not for the people of Pakistan. In this cartoon the man with a play card in his hand denotes the poor people of Pakistan and voters of PPP and the "PPP" in cartoon shows the power of PPP that they can change the life of peoples of Pakistan.



**Image 6 Khalid Hussain 25-09-2019**

The image 6 shows the caricature of Imran Khan the Prime Minister of Pakistan drawing a carriage with US President Donald Trump dangling a mediation carrot in front of him and Indian Prime Minister Modi seated beside Trump. Their body language shows the closer relationship and friendship between India and US. This cartoon is about international relations and it shows a long-time dispute between India and Pakistan on Kashmir issue to which Trump has been offering to play a mediation role. The cartoonist has drawn a sarcasm on US diplomacy here, Trump goes one step forward by offering mediation and goes one step backward by saying that Modi is not agreed and India has rejected the offer. The cartoonist is of the view that Imran Khan is chasing the mediation Carrot in vein keeping in view the US-Pakistan and US-India relations. Some participants viewed it as biased image while others viewed it as unbiased image as shown in the quantitative analysis above. The contrasting views are discussed in detail in the section discussion and conclusion below.



**Image 7 shows the position of PML(Q)**

Image 7 shows that After the regime of General (r) Parvez Musharraf there were so many challenges for the leadership of PML(Q) Shujaat was not happy and easy in the leadership of party. The broken chair shows that the party is in a very challenging situation. Shujaat offers the chairmanship to Msharraf but he did not agree to take the leadership in his hand. The image shows that PML (Q) is in very sympathetic situation therefore, Shujaat wants to get rid of the leadership.



**By Elections :Peoples Party still could not decide to offer ticket. News**

**Image 8 is based on the news about the up-coming elections**

In this cartoon the artist shows us that the elections are imminent but the people's party leadership haven't decided yet, to whom they will offer the ticket of their party and to whom they will not? The person revolving in the circle is Asif Ali Zardari having a ticket in hands. The other person is the political member of his party.



Cases are been prepared against Liaquat Jatoi and Arbab Rahim. News

**Image 9 is based on the news about cases against two politicians (January 2015)**

Cartoon 9 shows that the cases are being prepared for the arresting of two former chief ministers of Sindh Arbab Ghulam Rahim and Liaquat Jatoi, as they were on bail in different cases. The person sharpening knife shows the judges and the knife in this picture are cases, the two former chief ministers of Sindh Arbab Ghulam Rahim and Liaquat Jatoi are the two persons looking in amazement through the wall. This cartoon also shows that their freedom is going to be snatched and they will be soon in the prison.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The participants expressed some positive and negative sentiments about political cartoons in their interviews. The participants stated that political cartoons are an effective way of understanding any issue or message. They are also helpful to engage people in interesting communication. They express the thoughts of an artists or their point of view and simultaneously represent the public thoughts and opinions as well. Cartoons are an effective way of communication. They communicates a lot in such a short time that in today's busy life people find it easy to have a look at them and get some information and amusement instantaneously. Political cartoons are not only humorous but they persuade us to think about certain issues and events. Sometimes, they provoke us to exchange our views about political situations to others as well. The Newspapers are mostly filled with sad news, violent stuff and crime reports which doesn't make the readers feel good obviously, the humorous political cartoons reduce the sad feelings. The artists can build and deconstruct the image of

the political leaders by creating political cartoons. The political cartoons are effective and more influential than the written news because the cartoon sketch is retained for a long time in memory therefore it is taking an important place in the newspaper.

Some participants expressed negative remarks about the political cartoons particularly about image 6 because majority of participants considered it as a biased image. They commented that the political leaders are very respectable for the people belonging to a party. The artist makes sketches of political leaders just for fun but it may hurt the feelings of their followers. The participants expressed their anger in response of the controversial image (6). They are of the opinion that the cartoonists should not be allowed to publish whatever they want. Pakistanis strongly condemn cartoonists and journalists to go anti state. They cannot support enemies in the veil of freedom of speech. They cannot bully an elected Pm in the name of freedom of speech. This cartoon is highly objectionable and would not have been published. There would be better ways for portraying the same message. Cartoonists are not licensed to do whatever they want; it is not the government who pressurized the Newspaper to ban the cartoonist rather the reaction of public made the newspaper ban the artist and to apologize from its readers. We strongly condemn cartoonists who have no idea what criticism is? They should use the freedom of speech with responsibility. Instead of dismissing the cartoonist the government should check how the newspaper allowed to publish a cartoon that is against their policy. This cartoon shows personal hatred of cartoonist for Imran khan. We strongly condemn biasness in the name of freedom of speech. They cannot insult others in the name of freedom of speech. Freedom has limits and everyone should respect each other. There is difference between criticism and insult, the cartoonist just insulted Imran khan. The cartoonist should not have been fired a strict warning would have been enough for him. We want people who follow national agenda in media group; these type of people are not nationalistic. The Cartoonist has insulted the Prime Minister of Pakistan; it hurts the feelings of millions of Pakistanis. This cartoon is disgusting and you will not find such type of cartoon in the world. It is not government's demand to ban such cartoonist rather it is the demand of the public. It's not fair to portray the Prime Minister like this. The cartoonists never made cartoons like this of Nawaz Sharif or Asif ali Zardari, perhaps they were paying

them to avoid harsh criticism. The cartoonist made this image to please the opposite party (Nawaz Sharif). The above discussion reveals that the public is aware of the power politics and hegemonic struggle at play in different forms of discourse. They evaluate and criticize both the content and the political situation. Hence, they express their emotions, opinions or reactions in response of power politics or discourse.

On the other hand, some participants expressed opposite views in response of image 6; this picture reflects government's failure on strategic and diplomatic level, the government should not over react on it rather the government should deliberate to improve diplomatic relations. If we keep on condemning artists so harshly, it will increase the censorship and decrease the originality of the work. In future we may see flattery based cartoons to please either the politicians or the governments but may not be produced for the public or to promote truth. As, the artist Khalid Hussain is banned and fired from his job because of this controversial image some of the participants responded in this context as well. They said they hope the government and the public will tolerate this single image for he has been making people smile with thousands of his cartoons for many years. They hope he will be reinstated soon. In this situation the government, the opposition party, the cartoonist and the cartoon content all of these situation and agencies engaged are unveiling the hegemonic struggles.

Summing up the above discussion, the most noticeable point is that everything published in the newspaper is checked by the editor before publication; without his clearance nothing can be published. Similarly, the cartoons are not published directly sidestepping the editor; the editor is responsible for everything published in the newspaper. Every newspaper has an editorial policy which is applicable before publication to stop anything from appearing in the newspaper if it is against the editorial policy. In the case of the above mentioned case, the editor apologized for the publication of the cartoon and laid down all the responsibility on the cartoonist. Partly, the government is right at its own place because the cartoon appeared on wrong time. Imran Khan was going to address the Kashmir issue at the UNGA on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019, whereas the cartoon is published on 25 September 2019. So, the cartoon appeared before his address; though this cartoon is based on Pakistan's previous



experiences with the US but one cannot let the world know earlier about one's expectations. The cartoonist Khalid Hussain is also right partly in saying that he has no intention to insult the Prime Minister; he has just expressed his opinion on a complex geopolitical situation while the Prime Minister was going on UNGA. He says it was a comical take on the above mentioned situation. Khalid Hussain is a very competent and experienced artist, many of his cartoons analyzed in the previous research (Ghilzai 2020 b) shows that his cartoons have been an embodiment of national interest. The controversial cartoon no doubt express the geopolitical situation very aptly but the cartoonist could not realize the sensitivity of the issue where he is dealing with India. It requires a deeper look to understand the cartoon. The majority of people who see it at surface level will hastily find it very insulting and hurting because they see that that Modi is driving Imran Khan and Imran Khan is posing as a horse, it is not acceptable for Pakistanis. The cartoonist may not necessarily have the idea that the people will find it insulting because it is his daily routine to draw situations symbolically. For instance, an experienced driver drives the car automatically, doesn't change the gear consciously and performs all the actions automatically. Similarly a cartoonist is also doing his work automatically and habitually. It is the responsibility of the editor to provide him an outsider's view and check his work. A deeper look shows that he tried to criticize US not Imran Khan. He presented Imran Khan symbolically to represent the Pakistan, Trump is representing the US and Modi is representing India. The cartoon theme is international relations; there is tension between India and Pakistan because of the Kashmir Issue and Trump offered to play a mediation role as discussed above. If it was between US and Pakistan it was different, with India it is not acceptable for majority of Pakistanis as they see it as 'the cartoonist is supporting the enemy'. Majority of Pakistanis like and love Imran Khan for many reasons; their feelings are hurt seeing him in this posture. Pakistan was rolling as a ball between two families (Sharif family and Bhutto family) who were taking their turns in the government; no one could dare to break these turns and Imran Khan somehow made it possible. Therefore, Imran Khan is the hero and leader for Majority of Pakistanis. The cartoonist may not have wrong intentions but he could not take into accounts the sentiments of people, the sensitivity of the matter and the acceptability of the public. This case is not

clearly a matter of right or wrong but a matter of acceptability. Something that is not acceptable for the both the government and the public irrespective of its being right or wrong. The present study suggests that the newspapers should keep a check on political cartoons for following national agenda and taking care of public sentiments on sensitive issues like this.

In short, Political cartoons play a very effective role in the society. As the newspapers are the important source of the information, political cartoons are also becoming an effective part of the newspaper. Political cartoons are used for many purposes. The artists should make the cartoons for the construction of society and for sketching the positive image of the country. The cartoons in newspapers are very influential therefore the news groups should keep a check for the filtration of the items drawn in the newspapers. Political cartoons are the interesting part of newspapers. The cartoonist should make unbiased cartoons that does not reflect the print media and journalists negatively. The cartoonists should show the real function of media to the people. The cartoons are source of information for the public; they should work in a balanced way to enable common citizens to understand the current situation and empower them for self-government.

The present study also shows that people are capable of decoding and understanding the political cartoons and can judge the content of political cartoons as critically as the cartoonists can do. As Medhurst & DeSousa (1981) writes:

The cartoon is more than mere commentary on what is generally accepted as “true”, for it invites a contrast of high ideals with harsh realities. It is not a condemnation as such for the reader is still free to judge (Medhurst & DeSousa, 1981: 207)

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