

**DEFAMATORY POLITICAL CARTOONS IN
PAKISTANI PRINT MEDIA: A MULTIMODAL
ANALYSIS**

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**Defamatory Political Cartoons in Pakistani Print Media: A
Multimodal Analysis**

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Candidate of **Master of Philosophy** at the National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis **Defamatory Political Cartoons in Pakistani Print Media: A Multimodal Analysis** submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MPhil degree, is my original work and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Defamatory Political Cartoons in Pakistani Print Media: A Multimodal Analysis

Cartoons are a rich source of meaning. In the domain of political cartoons, cartoonists manipulate, falsify, and alter meaning-making processes to control social cognition. They exploit the various modes of communication in the cartoons to achieve their goals. The present study analyzes the cartoonist's ideological mediation to explore the linguistic meaning-making processes in defamatory political cartoons. Kress and Van Leeuwen's Theory of Visual Grammar (1996) and Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach (2006) have been used as the theoretical framework for the study. 25 political cartoons have been selected from Dawn and Minute Mirror newspapers. The cartoons were analyzed qualitatively to generate different themes. The five different themes that emerged from the data include the theme of severe or unjust criticism; the theme of manipulation; the theme of the country's reputation; the theme of humorous remarks; and the theme of spreading hate or threats. Multiple modes of visual grammar in political cartoons have been analyzed by using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) as a method of data analysis, which links the political discourse with the social beliefs of society. This study has found that cartoonists use multiple modes of communication, including visual grammar, macro and micro social levels, and semantic and context models, to influence social cognition. This study has found that not only the visual elements of political cartoons were causing a threat to reputation and self-esteem, but textual elements also supported the cartoonist's ideologically polarized meaning-making processes.

Keywords: Defamatory Political Cartoons; Meaning-Making Processes; Multimodality; Manipulation and Falsification; Pakistani Print Media

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
MCDA	Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis
PDO	Pakistan Defamation Ordinance
PDM	Pakistan Democratic Movement
SC	Supreme Court
PM	Prime Minister
US	United States
IMF	International Monetary Fund

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents for their love, endless support and encouragement throughout my educational tenure. Their support made me able to perform my tasks confidently. They supported me in my every decision and I always met their expectations.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Cartoons are social artifacts designed to react to social phenomena. These cartoons are designed by the cartoonists to draw the attention of a wider audience towards the real issues through multiple modes of communication guided by socially determined intentions (Stockl, 2004). Cartoons have captured attention and are being posted on newspapers, television, magazines, posters, paintings and also on the social media platforms Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and Twitter in the form of images, videos, gifs, animations, etc. Political cartoons are caricature designs in the domain of political discourse to make commentary on politics, politicians, current issues, political parties, governments and their policies in humorous ways to produce meanings to be interpreted by society. Cartoons are multimodal in nature. In keeping with the intent of multiple modes in political cartoons, multimodality has been used in the present study. Multimodality is an approach to address the data that can be located in different modes of communication: gaze, gestures, postures, images, videos, color schemes, symbols, signs, dress code, etc. Saussure (1922) affirms that these modes of communication can be taken as languages and can be analyzed linguistically. The present study explores the meaning-making processes involved in political cartoons.

Meaning-making is not only the characteristic of human beings; everything in this world transmits meanings that help people understand and give reactions to particular situations while actively getting engaged with an event, situation, discourse, or object. The current study explores the meaning-making processes in multiple modes of communication in Dawn and Minute Mirror newspapers. These meaning-making processes are manipulated by the cartoonist through social ideologies. Cartoonists tend to control social cognition by using discursive strategies. The present study explores the ways in which cartoonists manipulate the meaning-making processes in political cartoons through social, cultural and political perspectives to control social cognition. The present study analyzes multiple modes of communication by using the theoretical framework of Kress and Van Leeuwen's Visual Grammar Theory and Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach. Verbal and nonverbal modes of communication are explored through visual grammar by using multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA). MCDA links multiple modes of political

cartoons to common social structures to explore cartoonists linguistic manipulation of meaning-making processes and their influence on social interpretation and cognition.

The discourse in political cartoons is mediated and manipulated through the cartoonist's social ideologies, beliefs, values, norms, structures, practices, etc., to influence the production and comprehension of the particular political narrative being designed through verbal and nonverbal modes of communication. The cartoonist may assign the positive role to the one participant (us) and the negative characteristics to the other participant (them) of the political cartoon on the basis of the intended social group differentiation according to the us vs. them strategy. The context of the political event plays an important role in the interpretation of the discourse, as these political cartoons are time-bound discourses, based on the sociocultural background of a particular society. Multiple social factors mediate the meaning-making processes of political cartoons. Readers need to comprehend the cartoonist's intended linguistic manipulation of information with the help of contextualized knowledge of the political event. These falsified, manipulated and distorted meaning-making processes may cause harm to political leaders, parties, their narratives, individuals, organizations and countries, which may fall under defamation. The present research study explores the cartoonists intentionally crafted false statements, distorted truths and selective editing to divert social cognition by defaming offended entities. Meanings that are being generated through the manipulation of information and by defaming political leaders have critically been analyzed using the theoretical framework of the Theory of Visual Grammar and Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach. Cartoonists manipulate the original linguistic meanings by utilizing the meaning-making processes of the visual grammar and the discursive strategies of semantic and context models of macro and micro level of polarization of the sociocognitive approach. The falsification of meanings may lower the self-esteem of an offended entity. An offended entity can challenge these remarks in court for legal punishment. There have been instances where political cartoonists were driven under the constitutional laws and punished as they were caught making defamatory judgmental statements and 179 cases have already been reported worldwide.

1.1 The Statement of Problem

Political cartoons are one of the main sources of delivering political information and mostly contain exaggeration in the form of wrongful acts, falsification of the information, severe or unjust criticism, etc. Cartoonists tend to associate the negative or

positive ideologies to the particular participants in the cartoons on the basis of social group differentiation according to the us vs. them strategy. Cartoonists design the falsified modes of communication, affected by the sociocultural ideologies. This may offend an individual or an organization because the creation of polarized meanings through discourse can hurt public sentiments and even divert their views by influencing interpretation and social cognition. This study explores meaning-making processes in multiple modes of visual grammar used by the cartoonists which manipulates the linguistic information through discursive strategies.

1.2 Objective of Study

The objectives of the study are:

- To explore the meaning-making processes in defamatory political cartoons and their influence on social cognition.
- To analyze cartoonists' manipulation of linguistic information through discursive strategies.

1.3 Research Questions

This study answers the following research questions:

1. What kind of meaning-making processes are involved in defamatory political cartoons and how do they influence social cognition?
2. How do cartoonists manipulate linguistic information through discursive strategies?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study examines the meaning-making processes by linking them with common social representations of realities, beliefs, ideologies, norms, structures, values, etc. By analyzing the verbal and non-verbal modes of communication, this study delves into the ways in which specific signs, symbols, gestures, postures, etc., are used to associate positive and negative ideologies on the basis of social group differentiation. The current study analyzes meaning-making processes defaming offended entities and also identifies linguistic items used in the cartoons to support falsification and manipulation of information. This study is a gateway for future researchers to do further research on multimodality and critical discourse analysis of defamatory political cartoons and it also

gives recommendations to future researchers. Furthermore, on the basis of the linguistic analysis of defamatory political cartoons, this study provides guidelines for the cartoonists according to the freedom of expression and press freedom in Pakistan by highlighting the boundaries of acceptable speech within the socio-political landscape of the country.

1.5 Delimitation

The study is delimited to political cartoons in the form of images. Other types of political cartoons in the form of animations and videos are not addressed in this research. Only the data from the Pakistani print media is included. Cartoons of Pakistani political leaders and different political scenarios in foreign news agencies are not addressed here. The current study is delimited in terms of a sample size of 25 political cartoons. This study is time-bound, which means collecting the research data from a particular period of time, from January to June 2022.

1.6 Organization of Study

The current research is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is designed for the introduction of the study, containing different parts of the research: research questions, objectives, problem statements and the significance of the research. Moreover, this chapter also highlights the importance of multimodality and critical discourse analysis in the domain of political cartoons.

The second chapter consists of a critical analysis of all the previous research related to the current study. It consists of a critical overview of the related literature, what other researchers in the relevant field have said about this study or particular research problem. This chapter discusses the main aspects of the study: multimodality, critical discourse analysis, rhetorical discursive strategies, defamation and manipulation, political cartoons, etc.

The third chapter talks about the research methodology and the theoretical framework of research study, which describes how this research collected, analyzed and drew research findings and also provides a mind map of how theory or theories inform all aspects of research.

The fourth chapter includes a thorough multimodal critical discourse analysis of the selected data of defamatory political cartoons, which linked the meaning-making processes of political discourse cartoons with the social cognition.

The fifth chapter concludes the research study by mentioning the findings of the study and recommending future researchers to work on and to fill up the research gaps. It also provides guidelines for the cartoonists to be aware of the trouble caused by defamatory cartoons.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a critical appreciation of the works already done in the field in order to find a research gap by following a thematic review, which explains the key terminologies and concepts associated with the present study. This chapter presents a brief overview and critical evaluation of the already established studies by delving into their theoretical implications, methods and findings. This chapter reviews the relevant studies focusing on the fields of political cartoons, multimodality, meaning-making processes, sociocognitive approach, discursive strategies, defamation, controversies in political cartoons, etc.

2.1 Cartoons

A cartoon is a drawing that contains an observable comic strip character in a society, meant to cause humor, laughter, or abuse individuals, organizations and even institutions (Bitner 2003; Lee and Goguen 2003; Osho 2008). Osho (2008) identified six different types of cartoons. 1) general cartoons to represent public issues and let them make a commentary on them; 2) economic trade cartoons to portray issues related to the economy; 3) environmental cartoons to depict sociological designs of health, sports, education, etc. 4) Social cartoons addressing social problems of marriage, parties, etc. 5) gag cartoons designed for the purpose of brainstorming an idea or a particular event; 6) political cartoons designed to portray information related to the political leaders, parties and their narratives (as cited by Akinloye, 2010, p. 71). A current study analyzes the political cartoons of Pakistan. The rest of the types of political cartoons are not addressed in this study.

2.2 Political Cartoons

Political cartoons have been a widely used resource to deliver current political information by drawing witty, humorous and satirical remarks and they also play an important role in posing and publishing social ills, entertainment, etc. by using different linguistic and literary elements with the intention to play a key role in improvement (Akinloye, 2010; Alimi and Shopeju, 1999 cited in Oyedeji, 2013; Omolabi and Zakariyah, 2018 cited in OMOLABI & ABIODUN, 2020). Adejuwon and Shina Alim (2009) have identified two types of political cartoons: cartoons of opinion and cartoons of jokes. The

current study also provides another type of cartoon for manipulation: those that manipulate the piece of information for the sake of humor, satire and defamation. It does not come under opinionated cartoons because there is a difference between an opinion and freedom of speech, which is totally different from defamation. Political cartoons contain multiple modes of communication to deliver a particular manipulated piece of information by creating intended meaning-making processes through specialized visual modes, signs, symbols, etc. The researchers (Barker, 2016; J. L. Edwards, 2001; J. L. Edwards & Ware, 2005; Shaikh, Tariq and Saqlain (2019) have analyzed political cartoons under the domain of election campaigns. But the current study does not study political cartoons during the election campaign. It only focuses on the political discourse of cartoons published in newspapers. Political cartoons are not only limited to the election campaigns. Dilmaç and Kocadal (2018), analyzed the data of political cartoons under the theme of refugees and immigrants; Hoffman & Howard (2007), analyzed the mocking or exaggerated political cartoons of politicians; Jabeen and Ahmad (2018), investigated the political cartoons under the theme of foreign relations between the countries; Van Hecke (2017), analyzed the political cartoons under the theme of Eurozone debt. The current research study also analyzes the political cartoons under five different themes: severe or unjust criticism; manipulation; the country's reputation; humorous remarks; and spreading hate or threats.

2.3 Multimodality in Political Cartoons

Multimodality discusses the data in multiple modes of communication: signs, symbols, text, videos, diagrams, gestures, postures, etc. Multimodality has been one of the most rapidly expanding branches of knowledge in recent years. El-Falaky (2019) also analyzes the political situation and the public revolution in Egypt by taking the cartoon data from Al Ahram and Egyptian newspapers from January 25th, 2011, to June 30th, 2013, to explore how visual images in the different political cartoons are portrayed to depict social identities, values and ideologies under the theoretical framework of visual grammar by Kress and Leeuwen (2006). Multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) has been used to analyze the multimodal data of political cartoons. This study concluded that political cartoons are not only made to criticize political situations. Political cartoons are also designed to portray cultural and social ideologies peacefully, but this study also lacks a constitutional lens of analysis. The current study also provides a thin line for cartoonists not to be trapped or get into trouble by causing manipulation and defamation. Kwon and Roh (2018) explored the multimodal data of political cartoons portraying the tension

between North Korea and the United States (US) on the issue of developing nuclear weapons. Cartoonists tried to mock political statements with the original hair styles of both the political leaders of North Korea and the USA. At the initial stage of data collection, a total of 158 political cartoons were taken from different web pages. Later on, the collected data was filtered through the sampling criteria of the research and 29 cartoons were finalized that best suited the metaphor "stay out of my hair," and then the data was analyzed qualitatively under the theoretical framework of cognitive semantics (pp. 122-123). The same sampling technique is applied in the current study. The total numbers of the cartoons published in two different newspapers are filtered through the sampling criteria. Semotiuk (2019) investigated multimodal text and double decoding interpretations in cartoons depicting Ukrainian and Russian military conflicts. Verbal and nonverbal discursive modes of information in the corpus of 535 political cartoons were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Three stages of analysis were used to achieve the study's research objectives: content analysis, frame analysis and metaphor analysis. In content analysis, the researcher analyzed cartoons with and without text, the type of cartoons, the context and the consequences of the cartoons and in the second stage, ironic and sarcastic aspects of the verbal and non-verbal elements have been framed out as responsibility and aggression, or their combination, according to the Ukraine and Russia military conflict and at the final stage, a metaphorical analysis of the cartoons has been done. Similarly, in the current research study, three stages of the analysis—representational, interactive and compositional—have been conducted to figure out the meaning-making processes of the defamatory political cartoons and their impression on the offended entity have also been examined. Hussein (2019) analyzed political cartoons in Arabic media after Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. A multimodal discourse analysis was used to analyze the multimodal research data within the theoretical framework of visual social semiotic theory. The visual composition of ten political cartoons, highlighted by the Anti-Defamation League, was analyzed in terms of three aspects of the meaning-making processes of visual grammar: representational, interactive and compositional meanings. The research sample was taken from the Arabic-language newspapers of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt, Oman, Iran and the UK by following the purposive sampling technique. The data was based on the theme of Jewish and Israeli dominance of the United States (US) and the data was taken from December 6th to December 18th, 2017. Mainly, the research strategies dealt with the meaning-making process via various semiotic tools, so this study concluded that social semiotics is used by cartoonists to intend particular meanings through

both linguistic and non-linguistic devices. This study only focused on the meaning-making processes in visuals. It lacks social cognition of the intended meaning in relation to contextualized social discourse and the subjective mediation of cartoonists through rhetorical and discursive strategies. The current study addresses these research gaps. Similarly, Ifechelobi and Nwachukwu (2021) have analyzed the five cartoons on the theme of conduit corruption from a population of 50 multimodal political cartoons from Mike Asukwo's Business Day online publications between 2015 and 2018. These researchers have followed the purposive sampling technique and only taken the data that is most suitable to the research theme of conduit corruption. Multimodal critical discourse analysis was followed by the use of the theoretical framework of Kress and Van Leeuwen's social semiotic theory. These researchers used a descriptive research design in order to investigate the potential of visual elements and the creation of meanings in political cartoons through multimodality, as well as how multimodal resources are used to create meanings in order to understand the different dimensions of corruption: the socio-psychological, religious and socio-cultural impact on society. The current research study has followed a qualitative research design and has taken each political cartoon as a subject of study that is analyzed through the research framework. The current study has not discussed a particular case but rather overall political cartoons that create disturbances in terms of severe or unjust criticism, falsification and defamation.

2.4 Visual and Verbal Signs

Visual signage refers to the use of signs, symbols, gestures, postures, colors, dress codes, etc., in political cartoons and verbal signs are the textual pieces in the form of words, phrases, or sentences in political cartoons. Cartoons contain multimodal data of both the visual and verbal information. Omolabi and Abiodun (2020) have qualitatively analyzed the multimodal data of eight Nigerian political cartoons from three different newspapers: The Nation, Daily Trust and The Sun Newspaper, with the aim of analyzing satire and irony about political and social issues by using the theoretical framework of Kress and Leeuwen's social semiotic theory, which investigates the visual meanings of cartoons by focusing on different aspects of the visual discourse: representational, interactive and compositional meanings. These researchers have answered the research questions: how has the medium been structured for a communicative purpose and how have linguistic and non-linguistic features been used to portray a particular piece of information through political cartoons? Omolabi and Abiodun (2020) concluded that cartoons contain different modes of

communication, signs, symbols, coloring, size, frames, texts, linguistic and non-linguistic resources of information which can only be interpreted side by side because each element of cartoons play a role in understanding of the visual information that is being portrayed in cartoons. This current research has also analyzed the different aspects of multimodal data of political through different aspects of visual grammar model, meanings are analyzed separately and completely too to know the different perspective of the research problem but this study is not focusing on the satire and irony of the characters but also the unjust criticism, falsification of information and the defamation against an offended entity is being discussed in cartoon. Similarly, Darmawan and Piliang (2015) also analyze the meanings through freedom of expression of cartoonists in visual communication messages conveyed through online political cartoons in the era of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In this study, freedom of expression was supported by Law Number 40 of 1999 on the press. Discourse analysis of visual communication patterns from 18 political cartoons of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was done with the help of Fairclough's social semiotic discourse analysis. This study concluded that there are represented and interactive participants in political cartoons, which portray the intended meaning as freedom of expression. Meaning can be created through both the verbal and visual signs of the cartoons. Without having a clear understanding of one aspect meaning cannot be fully interpreted. Wardini (2020) investigated the visual and verbal signs in Donald Trump's cartoons to explore the satirical meanings in cartoons by raising questions: what are the satirical visual and verbal components in cartoons and how do these signs in political cartoons of Donald Trump deliver meanings? The research data was collected online via one of the social media platforms Pinterest by formulating a sampling criterion that political cartoons must contain Donald Trump's face or body, as well as textual bubble thoughts and the data was then qualitatively analyzed using the descriptive qualitative method to better identify and evaluate the factual issues. From January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2019, fifty cartoons were taken from three Pinterest accounts: GoComics, analyzed through the theoretical lens of Kress and Leeuwen, Mak Halliday's multimodal meta function, as well as Barthes' denotation and connotation. After receiving significant contributions from field researchers, the researcher analyzed the data collected with her own interpretation. This study found two types of depictions: the visual design depiction of Donald Trump as "big mouthed," "big bellied," "stunted bodied," "big headed," "big mouthed," and "big bodied," and the verbal sign depiction as the power of the leader, authoritarian style, Islamophobia and racism (Wardini, 2020, pp. 30-48). The current study also deals with both the visual

and verbal types of information being delivered in cartoons, but the researcher's aim is to explore the meaning-making processes in political cartoons and how these visual and verbal designs may cause a problem for others. Shaikh, Tariq and Saqlain (2019) evaluated Pakistani political cartoons as a case study research project to inquire the role of general structures and significant features of political cartoons in the development of society. This study evaluates Pakistani political cartoons published during the 2013 election time and the semiotic analysis of cartoons has been followed using the quanto-qualitative method. This study aimed to analyze persuasive language as a communication tool to create an impact on its readers through a social, political, ethical and religious milieu. For this purpose, 400 cartoons were collected as research data from Dawn, The News, The Daily Observer, the Pak discussion forum, Pakbee and defense.pk during the first 90 days of Pakistan's 2013 election campaign and the data was analyzed with the goal of understanding the persuasive use of language through symbolism, exaggeration, labeling, analogy and irony. This study concluded that visual graphics are widely being used to cover political activities in cartoons and this genre has the capability to have an influence social cognition through different verbal and nonverbal techniques, symbolism, exaggeration, labeling, analogy and irony. The current research also argues that visual modes of communication are one source for delivering political activities through caricatures. Cartoonists can use multiple linguistic and paralinguistic techniques to cause influence through their visual designs.

2.5 Meaning Making Processes

Meaning making processes are the processes by which meanings are created. They identify how meanings are produced and delivered to be interpreted by their readers. In political cartoons, meanings are generated through multiple modes of communication: signs, symbols, gestures, postures, text and other means of visual graphics. A meaning-making model is a sociocognitive model that helps people to understand and to give reactions to traumatic situations while actively getting engaged with an event, situation, discourse, or object. Park and Folkman (1997) divide meaning-making models into two types: global and situational meanings. The global meaning system consists of core beliefs and schema about the world and self-interpretation of experiences of the world. It shows how an individual is influenced while making an interpretation of an event. Situational meanings are being appraised on the basis of the context of their environment. Situational meaning addresses the processes and the outcome of the event that causes stress or tension. Situational meaning consists of: 1) Appraised meanings: attribution of the meanings; 2)

Causal attributions: the cause of an event, the reason behind an event, 3) Primary appraisal: the outcome, reaction, threat, challenge, or harm caused by an event. 4) The degree of controllability: the extent to which an event is controllable (pp. 115–144). The current study addresses the meanings made and manipulated by the political cartoonists and the interpretations of the meanings by the readers, which may cause harm to the reputation of the offended entity and may have severe outcomes in the form of a decrease in fan followers due to the manipulated information. Current study only investigates the types of meaning processes from the perspective of theory of visual grammar to know that how political cartoonists use representational, interactive and compositional meaning making processes to create falsified meanings to cause defamation. Chen (2020) analyzed the meaning making processes by investigating the elements of visual grammar. Sixteen political cartoons taken from American political cartoons are used to discuss Sino-US relations with the help of a narratorial perspective of the interpretative meanings with respect to the focalization system (point of view), pathos system and ambience system. Under the domain of visual grammar theory, interpretative meanings were investigated by raising questions about the types of relationships in image roles depicted in Western political cartoons, as well as the portrayal of information by the character to impose judgment on the readers to perceive information as it is presented. This study lacks the interpretative meanings in the social cognitive domain that show how enforced meanings can be interpreted by society, whether the generated discourse is socially influential or not. Secondly, the particular enforced meaning can manipulate the original linguistic stance of an entity, whether these remarks cause defamation for an individual or not. One can manipulate the readers' mind with the help of these meaning-making processes. Seredina and Dekhnich (2022) have also analyzed the expressive potential of political cartoons to manipulate reader's minds. Metaphors and symbols used in verbal and nonverbal language techniques of cartoons have been analyzed by taking 300 political cartoons of the 45th American President, Donald Trump, through the theoretical framework of syntactic and phonetic analysis. These cartoons were taken from Facebook, Twitter, Gorrelart, Cagle, the Tool Pool, the Week, the Widow Daily and the Tribune Content Agency. The manipulating features of cartoons have been noticed through capitalization, font, red color, sound repetition, stress and also syntactic techniques through exclamatory, interrogative and rhetorical sentences. This study concluded that extra-linguistic features of cartoons presented Trump's remarks out of context to manipulate his stance through the media's shaping of public opinion. The current research analyzes the manipulation of a linguistic agenda and the falsification of

information that may cause shame or defamation to the offended entity in its legal terminology. These studies lack an analysis of the meaning-making processes in the legal domain of the constitution and freedom of expression, as each country has its own laws. The current study aims to examine meaning-making processes from a societal standpoint, focusing on the role of visual grammar in constructing the specific intended meaning or ideology. One hundred seventy-nine cases have already been reported worldwide where the construction of falsified and manipulated meaning-making processes in political cartoons has caused legal complications for the designer of visual graphics.

2.6 Discursive Strategies

Discursive strategies are the linguistic tactics to control the production and the interpretation of the discourse to influence social cognition. Kadhim and Abbas (2023) have analyzed the discursive strategies used in the cartoon film *Lion King* to highlight the racism portrayed in this animated movie. This study has analyzed the prejudice and racist ideologies imposed through the multiple modes of communication in the selected film. The study used Van Dijk's model of discourse analysis to find out the agenda of racism through analyzing the language of the characters. The researcher concluded that racism has been propagated through multiple discursive strategies of meanings, topics, level of description, implication, contrast, examples and illustration, disclaimer, actors, modality, evidentiality, hedging and ambiguity, topos, formal structures and sentence syntax. Similarly, Liua et al. (2022) have analyzed the discursive strategies in political cartoon video titled as *How Leaders Are Made* to compare the Chinese and Western election systems through rhetorical devices. Identities, ideologies and power relations have been analyzed to find out the positive self-portrait and negative other representation in this political cartoon video. Verbal, visual and auditory analysis of multimodal critical discourse has been done through Halliday's systemic functional theory. systemic functional theory. The researcher has analyzed the three socio-semiotic analyzes. verbal, visual and auditory analysis of the strategy of persuasion or argumentation. Verbal analysis involves the discursive strategies of rhetoric, reference, transitivity, concealment, modality and metafunction. Visual analysis involves the discursive strategies of setting, dress, posture and body movement, information value, salience, color, rhetoric, transitivity, modality and metafunctions. Auditory analysis involves the discursive strategies of genre, rhythm, pitch, soundscape, mood, rhetoric, transitivity, modality and metafunctions. This study finds that the video contains positive self-representation to highlight the national identity. Naeem, Hussain and

Shah (2022) have also analyzed the ideology in political discourse of the Pakistan Democratic Movement's (PDM) leaders' speech over the period of 2022 with the theoretical underpinnings of critical discourse analysis and Van Dijk's discursive strategies. The researchers aimed to analyze the in- and out-group ideologies of the two PDM leaders, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Bilawal Bhutto. This study analyzes the four speeches of each political leader on three levels of analysis: word class, sentence and discourse. This study concludes that the in-group participants and PDM leaders have used rhetorical and discursive strategies of actor description, authority, distancing, number game, polarization, hyperbole and history as lessons, evidentiality and repetition to portray themselves positively and out-group Imran Khan negatively. The present research study also analyzes the rhetorical and discursive practices involved in the meaning-making processes of the defamatory political cartoons in Pakistani print media. The current research study only analyzes political cartoons in the form of images; cartoons in the form of short videos or animated films have not been taken. Additionally, this study also explores the use of Van Dijk's rhetorical and discursive strategies to portray positive self-representation through negative other representation.

2.7 Recent Researches on Political Cartoons

Defamation and defamatory remarks are concerned with the falsification, exaggeration and unlawful acts committed against an offended entity. These defamatory remarks in political cartoons are possible due to the meaning-making processes that may threaten the personal reputation of an offended entity. Nieto (2020) critically analyzed defamation as a language crime in the forms of libel, slander and techno-speech with a sociopragmatic approach to study by critically analyzing it through the theory of impoliteness to answer research questions related to the investigation of whether the theory of impoliteness is appropriate to evidence in linguistic defamation cases and whether it promotes defamatory statements. This research analyzes a corpus of 150 judgments in defamatory cases from 2013–2017 given by the High Court of Spain under the Article Law of Arts 205-210. The researcher analyzed the data with the help of Spanish defamation law and the theory of impoliteness. This research concluded that not each case was a face-damaging defamation act; there were minor injuries that could not be taken as a criminal act and were later removed from the defamation act of 2015 and are now taken as freedom of expression. This study helps to formulate a theoretical basis for the current study to check whether political cartoons are causing severe injuries to reputations or if they only cause

minor injuries. Ghilzai and Bajwa (2020) also analyze the political scenarios through the eyes of cartoonists, raising the question of how Pakistan's internal and external political matters are being portrayed through the political cartoons published in editorials, which develop a particular image of the scenario in the minds of the readers by creating humorous remarks. Cartoons can transmit a particular narrative in an easy way that can easily be understood by readers because they are extensively used to point out social evils. The main purpose of the researcher was to analyze the language used in political cartoons by explaining how linguistic items are used in cartoons to convey particular internal and external political situations. The study followed the visual analysis of cartoons under the theoretical framework of Kress and Leeuwen's (1996) *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. This study concludes that political cartoons are mostly used to criticize and satirize political situations, but these cartoons actually depict the true images of the matter because the cartoonists were concerned about the welfare of the country, so these political cartoons are the epitome of national interest. However, the current study raises criticism on this point by providing political cartoons with unjust criticism, violations of ethical publishing rules and defamation caused by political cartoons by referring to historical cases where these cartoons were not in accordance with the pinnacle of national interests. This study was mainly focused on history and how cartoons influenced the psyche of readers and it lacks constitutional outcomes. Therefore, the current study takes insights from Pakistan's defamation ordinance by inquiring into the ways in which defamation occurs in cartoons and how defamatory visual elements can be challenged and investigated legally to ask for the punishment of the cartoon's creator. Sarwar, Husnain and Sabir (2021) have also investigated the political cartoons made during the time of the Panama Leaks. The data for this research was taken from two English newspapers, Dawn and The Nation, from April 2016 to July 2017. The primary goal of this research was to investigate how political cartoons depict the Panama crisis. Statistical and content analysis of the research data was followed to evaluate the nature, degree, frequency and stance developed through the cartoons by analyzing them through agenda-setting theory. All of the cartoons on panama issues were taken as a sample for the research and all of the cartoons in both of the newspapers were declared the population of the study. This study also lacks a legal analysis of political cartoons. Furthermore, the current study focuses on meaning-making processes in order to qualitatively analyze multimodal defamatory political discourse. Similarly, Ashfaq (2019) examined the representation of the United States (US) through the eyes of Pakistani cartoonists before and after the 9/11 attack. The researcher collected data from

three different English newspapers in Pakistan from January 1991 to March 2013 in order to understand how political cartoons are used to represent political scenarios by analyzing the data using the Barthes model of semiotic analysis to examine the representation of the United States (US) in the eyes of the Pakistani community and cartoonists. The study concluded that anti-American images were present throughout the time period and America was represented as the only interest-specific state that only worked with its own interest-based agenda. This research study discussed US interest-based phenomena through the eyes of Pakistan, but the current study does not address an external political scenario in the Pakistani press. The current study only analyzes the cartoons made on Pakistani politics in Pakistani newspapers to explore the particular political interest-based narrative of cartoonists by creating different meaning-making processes that are based on manipulation and defamation of a political leader, party, or organization. But this research found the disparaging political cartoons that Ashfaq and Russomanno (2018) address in another study. They were of the view that political cartoons are an important element of newspapers and editorials, but contain offensive, disparaging and hateful remarks, which can have severe outcomes. The main purpose of this research article was to provide ethical considerations to cartoonists by analyzing political cartoons from multiple theoretical perspectives, from humor to satire. Similarly, the current study provides the ethical considerations for the Pakistani cartoonists to design the best possible content that should not contain falsification, defamatory statements, hateful speech, offensive remarks, etc. In other research, Ashfaq and Shami (2016) differentiated cartoons from other genres of journalism by using Charlie Hebdo's controversial cartoons as research data. Charlie Hebdo has been considered the most controversial publication, as it has published anti-religion, anti-racist and extremist jokes, including those about Islam, Catholicism, Judaism, etc., (Sneed, 2015). Political cartoons can be unfair, unjust, falsified, violent and defamatory (Anderson, 1988; Ashfaq, 2012; Harrison, 1981). Ashfaq and Shami (2016) critically examined the controversies caused by Charlie Hebdo's cartoon and the reaction posed by the world by drawing a line between the two schools of thought, one of them taking it as a form of freedom of expression and the other criticizing the unjust and violent publications by giving derogatory religious remarks. So, one must draw a line between the humor and the offensiveness of political cartoons. Ashfaq and Shami (2016) discussed the publication of the cartoons of Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). And as a reaction, twelve staff members of Charlie Hebdo were killed in an attack on the headquarters of the magazine. Controversial cartoons can have severe responses from readers. The main

argument of the research can be analyzed with the multiple defamation ordinances of different countries. Similarly, Hakam (2009) used critical discourse analysis to investigate the Holy Prophet (PBUH) cartoon controversy, using 422 articles from Arab news media discourse to investigate a society's reaction to the controversy. which concluded that articles over the controversy were regarding the control of sociocultural disputes. The controversy was viewed negatively by society because the cartoons' content hurt its feelings. It concludes that cartoonists use their bias and unbiasedness to control the social cognition. Waqar, Naz and Ghani (2020) used semiotic analysis to conduct research on the persuasion of national interest agendas in Pakistani Newspapers Dawn and The Nation. The study has been divided into two parts: semiotics resources were analyzed in the first part of the study and written pieces of information were analyzed in the second. The semiotics part of the study can never be completely understood without a better interpretation of the discourse provided in the caption or in the cartoon itself. The study is based on a qualitative comparative analysis of the descriptive data of political cartoons. But the data for this study also followed a sampling criterion of Army-related cartoons published in the newspapers from December 17, 2014, to March 15, 2015. The Theory of Semiotics (1957), Fairclough's three-dimensional model of semiotic interpretation, has been used as a framework for the study in order to better meet the research objectives of exploring persuasive modes of semiotics and discourse in political cartoons. The study concluded that the Dawn newspaper has depicted a lower number of national interest-based agendas as compared to The Nation, which has positively contributed to national interest agendas. This study states that not all of the cartoons in newspapers are in favor of national agendas; they may also cause harm to national or individual interests.

Ghilzai (2020) conducted experimental research on the bias and unbiasedness of cartoonists' depictions in political cartoons influenced by power politics and hegemony. Political cartoons were shown to the forty respondents from Quaid-e-Azam University and their responses were recorded. The participants judged these cartoons as readers and shared their opinions about cartoons, whether they were biased or unbiased. The quantitative responses of the participants were qualitatively analyzed and the qualitative responses in terms of semi-structured interviews were also recorded. Participants response show a higher number of unbiased cartoonists, but 65% bias was reported in controversial cartoons. This study concludes that readers can understand and respond to the cartoons and cartoonists play power politics in their cartoons that can be noticed through bias. The

current research study also focuses on the bias of the cartoonists, which may create a problem for the offended entity. The present study explores the biased use of discursive strategies and the construction of falsified portrayals. Eldin (2022) also argues that cartoons are the source of communication to represent a suppressed class through criticizing the authorities because of their unjust policies and practices. He argued that cartoons can have a better impact on their readers than a column because cartoonists can depict real-life scenarios in their visual graphics. But pragmatics is an important factor in the delivery and interpretation of particular information. Without prior information about the particular stance being portrayed in cartoons, it may be difficult to understand the intended information effectively. This study analyzed its research data on Al-Ahram weekly newspaper cartoons under the pragmatic devices of implicature and Gricean maxims to better understand the function of implicit and explicit meanings in political cartoons. The main aim of the study was to explore why cartoonists heavily depend on the use of pragmatic devices to deliver their message and what role speech acts play in the creation of meaning. But the current study only focuses on the meaning-making process with reference to the legal perspective. It's a fact that cartoonists depend on pragmatic devices; they use verbal and nonverbal information at the same time. One must be aware of the background situation to understand cartoons clearly. The current study not only aims to identify these meaning-making processes in visual graphics but also how these meaning-making processes are causing defamatory remarks for the mentioned entity. Talani, Piliang and Ahmad (2017) have taken previously conducted studies as research data with a particular objective to explore the significance of visual graphics in cartoon editorials and to investigate the different aspects of criticism and controversy caused by cartoonists. These researchers have taken the research data of other researchers who have already reviewed the different cartoon editorials from the pre and post-reform eras of Indonesia to examine the impact of socio-political critique. Sunarto (2005) concluded that there is a relationship between culture, society, the arts, politics and the partisanship of the media, which is why editorial cartoons are designed to have a better impact through the use of color, metaphors and an emotive stance. A variety of metaphors have been used to depict the social and cultural aspects of society that urge the emotive stance of the readers. Political cartoons in the era of Soekarno became one of the main sources of political criticism in the form of attacking ideologies, unjust criticism and defending the political affiliation of particular parties. The current research study has also examined the different ways of using political cartoons as a source of unjust criticism and defamation of the offended entity (as cited in

Darmawan, & Piliang, 2015, p. 197). Talani and Piliang (2018) argued that the visual language in cartoons contains three powers: symbolic, representational and metaphorical (p. 152). The current research has examined the various representational meanings of political cartoons in order to determine the effect of visual signs and symbols in causing defamation. Azhar et al. (2021) also analyzed linguistic and social semiotic aspects of Pakistani political cartoons with the aim of highlighting social injustices, social evil and criticism by raising problems: what kinds of social issues are being portrayed through selected political cartoons, how linguistics and semiotic elements used in the political cartoons are representing the true nature of the cartoonist's perception and how linguistics and semiotic elements of cartoons attract the public's opinion. The main aim of this study is to identify the role of cartoons in educating society by portraying injustice and corruption as social evils. This study addresses the research questions: what kinds of issues are being highlighted through cartoons, what kinds of linguistic and semiotic features aid in message effectiveness and how these features influence the readers. This research qualitatively analyzes eight political cartoons from three different Pakistani newspapers, Dawn, The News and The Nation. A random sampling technique was followed to collect the research data. To analyze linguistic and semiotic features of multimodal cartoons, the visual communication model was used as a theoretical framework, which resulted in the fact that the drawer (cartoonist) draws or depicts the harsh realities of society via analogy, exaggeration, symbolism, satire, irony and humor that construct opinions in readers. This study concluded that verbal communication in cartoons can be avoided, but verbal communication in articles cannot be avoided and can create troubles and issues. Political cartoons in Pakistan create disturbances by striking directly into the minds of the viewers as the cartoons discuss political scenarios in visual graphics. Political cartoons may cause controversies and can only be interpreted in particular sociopolitical scenarios. One must be aware of the background knowledge of a particular cartoon. The current research study also analyzed Pakistani political cartoons and it proved through analysis that the verbal information portrayed through political cartoons can never be avoided because controversy in cartoons can lead to legal problems. Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) used six cartoons of Imran Khan, the chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), to critically examine the face-saving and face-sabotaging nature of political cartoons. The research questions addressed in this study included: how do political cartoons in Pakistani newspapers cause face spoiling for one party while saving faces for others and how do newspaper political affiliations unfold? These six political cartoons are taken from two newspapers, The News

and *The Nation* and are analyzed qualitatively by using a framework of visual social semiotics. This study concluded that the newspapers are causing embarrassment to one party while saving the face of others, as evidenced by their data analysis, which revealed that one of the newspapers has political affiliations, one of which is pro-government and the other is anti-government. This current research is also focused on the development of particular intended meanings through these political cartoons and how these cartoons are creating different types of meanings by combining different modes of communication, as each mode plays an important role in the creation of meanings. Pedrazzini and Royaards (2022) have also focused on two types of controversial cartoons to conduct research on the conflicts between freedom of speech and the right to satire, as well as the protection of these rights. The discourse analysis of the case studies of cartoons published in *Charlie Hebdo* and *El Universal* has been done. Two controversial cases of political cartoons, Felixe's cartoons on the Amatrice earthquake and Bonil's cartoons about journalist Fernando Villavicencio's house, have been taken as a case study research design to better capture the legal data of the complaints against these two particular cases of cartoons. For this purpose, the researcher has also formulated a questionnaire with the help of the cartoonists' association and then 500 cartoonists were approached via email to have a response. The current research study does not contain particular questionnaire that need to be filled out by the respondents, or the interview that needed to be recorded. The present research study only focuses on the manipulation of meaning-making processes through the use of subjective rhetorical and discursive strategies in political cartoons.

The falsified meaning-making processes and the discursive strategies of defamatory political cartoons in Pakistani print media have not yet gained the attention of linguists. This study addresses this research gap by analyzing the verbal and nonverbal linguistic elements of defamatory political cartoons to explore the manipulation of their original linguistic meanings. Additionally, this study explores the role of the cartoonist's linguistic mediation and manipulation of the meaning-making processes to control the interpretation and social cognition by utilizing the visual grammar and the discursive strategies of the sociocognitive approach.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology for the study. First of all, a theoretical framework of Kress and Van Leeuwen's Theory of Visual Grammar and Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach has been employed, which is followed by research design, sampling and data analysis methods. Secondly, the research design has been systematically planned to answer the research questions. Thirdly, a research sample has been selected out of the vast amount of data. Lastly, the data analysis section presents the plan through which the data has been analyzed.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the present study comprises the following two theories: 1) Theory of Visual Grammar; 2) Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach.

3.2.1 Theory of Visual Grammar

Kress and Leeuwen (1996) believed that language is not the only means of communication; one may communicate through a semiotic system. As the language has its syntactic grammar, which addresses how grammar makes it possible to generate multiple sentence structures, the same is the case with graphics, where visual grammar connects different signs, symbols, gestures, postures, etc., to create visual meaning. We may define visual grammar as a set of rules and regulations to convey a piece of information by combining multiple modes of communication into visual graphics. The theory of visual grammar helps to figure out the humorous and satirical meaning-making processes used in the cartoons.

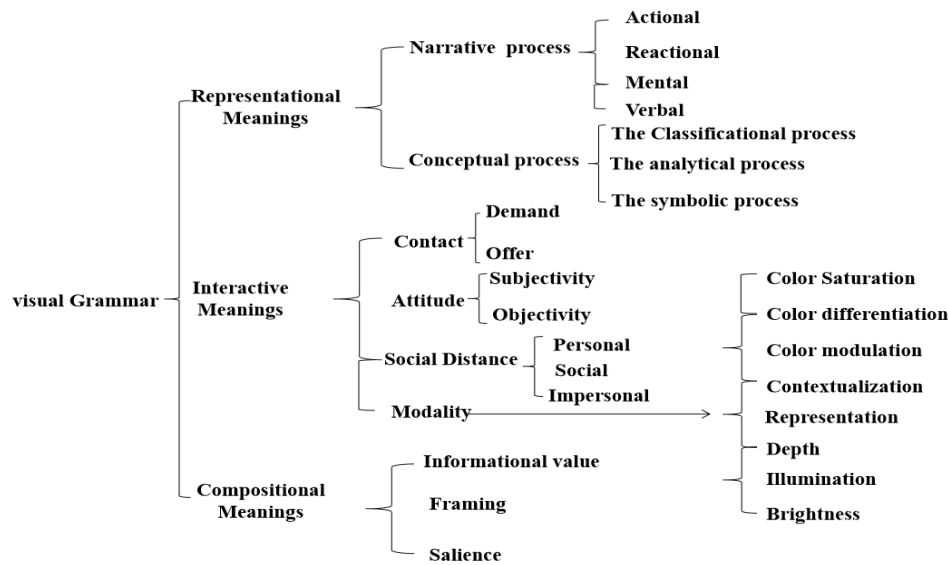


Figure 1. Theory of Visual Grammar

As the research data is multimodal, it highlights how different aspects of visual graphics are connected and create a particular meaning. Three types of visual meanings are analyzed in the present study, 1) representational meaning, 2) interactive meaning and 3) compositional meaning. The primary purpose of applying visual design theory is to highlight the different meaning-making processes involved in defamatory political cartoons. For this purpose, the current study only highlights the prevalent elements of visual grammar theory in each political cartoon by using representational and interactive meaning-making processes.

3.2.1.1 Representational Meanings

Representational meanings are divided into two processes: Narrative processes and Conceptual processes. The narrative process unfolds the happenings of the event, not only in the form of telling stories but also with the vectorial representation of the participants of the event. The participants taking part in the action are connected to the vectors. Participants do not only interact with each other; objects in visual graphics also play an important role in narrating the event, which is further divided into four processes: actional, reactional, mental and verbal processes.

- **Actional:** Action happens in the visuals, where actors from the event form vectors to represent the event.

- **Reactional:** Represented participants react to an event by acting as reactors. They react in the form of gaze, eyeline, angle of view, glance, etc. It also forms a vectorial pattern with the participants by describing the happenings of the event.
- **Mental:** The information in the visuals can be supported by thought bubbles that contain feelings, thoughts and perceptions regarding an event. In the mental processes of representational narrative meaning, we are concerned with the cognitive abilities of the readers. Participants act as viewers and reactors comprehends the sentiments with their cognitive abilities.
- **Verbal:** Verbal processes of narrative representation mean dealing with the speech bubble and supportive textual information that help reactors become speakers.

The conceptual process is more stable, static, or passive in terms of types, structure and meaning and it lacks vectorial patterns, which means the participants are not being engaged or interconnected to each other by vectors. Conceptual processes only represent the passive concepts as delivered by the visuals. The conceptual process can be divided into three categories:

- The classificational process talks about superordinate and subordinate concepts. Superordinate participant or actor rule over subordinates or may have the main role in the visuals.
- The analytical process discusses the part-whole structure of the visual.
- The symbolic process talks about what visual elements symbolize or mean.

3.2.1.2 Interactive Meaning

Interactive meaning provides information about the happenings in the visuals by noticing the different aspects of interaction, contact, social distance and attitude of the represented participants. Contact addresses the demand and offer phenomenon that a visual graphic demand or offers: the offer being offered in advertisements. Social distance (close personal distance, far personal distance, close social distance, far social distance, public distance) can be noticed with different gestures (smile, cold stare, seductive pout, finger pointed out, defensive gesture) and angle point of view (high angle, low angle, eye level angle) between the represented participants and viewers. The attitudes of the represented participants are subjective (action-oriented) and objective (knowledge-oriented) in nature. Modality talks about the different modes used in cartoons to portray information: text,

diagrams, signs and symbols. people. places, etc., which support the reliability and credibility of the visuals. There are eight multimodality markers in low and high modality: color saturation, color differentiation, color modulation, contextualization, representation, depth, illumination and brightness.

3.2.1.3 Compositional Meanings

Compositional meanings address the composite visual meanings without separately analyzing each mode of the data. Composite meanings are generated by combining the overall meanings conveyed through different visual modes through these three interrelated systems:

- **Informational Value:** The different placements of signs and symbols can portray different informational values.
- **Framing:** Framing devices connect different elements of the visual, whether all the elements used belong to the same particular events.
- **Salience:** The represented and interactive participants are used to create interest for the viewers in degrees, different sizes of the objects, foreground and background information, color, tone, sharpness, brightness, depth, etc.

3.2.2 Van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach

Van Dijk (2006, 2009) presented the multidisciplinary approach of cognitive science and social psychology under the paradigm of critical discourse analysis. The cognitive interface mediates between comprehension and the interpretation of discourse and society. According to Van Dijk (2009), the common social representation of social realities—beliefs, ideologies, practices, attitudes, values, etc.—is known as social cognition. Van Dijk basically explains how discourse is affected by social cognition. The discourse and society are not directly interlinked; there is a need for a contextual mediator, which is mainly known as mental models. Mental models control our everyday production and the perception of text and talk through a subjective representation of the situation or happenings of an event. The sociocognitive approach divides the mental model into two different models: semantic models and context models. Where semantic models deal with the functions of language, context models deal with pragmatic understandings of a communicative situation or the happening of an event. Context models control the

participants' production and interpretation of the meanings of a situation or the happening of an event. Context also controls the social cognition of discursive events.

Van Dijk (2006) states that mental models play an important role in the comprehension and understanding of discursive events in society. People tend to portray themselves positively and others negatively, with the intention of controlling the discourses of social groups through ideologies. These positive and negative ideologies are polarized based on social group differentiation through micro- and macro-polarization. The macro-level of analysis deals with power relations, dominance and the social inequalities of society and the micro-level of analysis deals with the discursive strategies of language use and the verbal interaction of discourse. According to Van Dijk (2006), four types of polarization can be noticed at the macro level of analysis: emphasizing our good things; emphasizing their bad things; de-emphasizing our bad things; and de-emphasizing their good things. Under the micro-level of analysis, there are twenty-seven different discursive strategies: Actor Description; Authority; Burden; Categorization; Comparison; Consensus; Counterfactual; Disclaimer; Euphemism; Evidentiality; Example/Illustration; Generalization; Hyperbole; Implication; Irony; Lexicalization; Metaphor; National self-glorification; Negative other-presentation; Norm expression; Number Game; Polarization; Populism; Positive self-presentation; Presupposition; Vagueness; and Victimization. The researcher only addresses those discursive strategies that are found in the data. Through these micro- and macro-level analyzes, the researcher explores the polarization of the cartoonists' ideologies through cognitive mental structures.

In this study, political cartoonists do not only depict thoughts but also ideologies, beliefs and social structures of social cognition. Society is a complex combination of social and societal structures due to the multiple cultural and historical perspectives. When the cartoonists make meanings according to sociopolitical factors in society by manipulating the linguistic pieces of information, cognition and interpretation can be mediated through the contextual model. But cartoonists not only mediate; they also manipulate the linguistic information in support of us and against us. According to van Dijk (2006), context is important to understand and interpret the text and talk in discourse. Even as is the case with political cartoons, one must be familiar with the context of the political event and then beliefs, ideologies, values, social factors, etc., also mediate. Cartoonists can manipulate and mediate to divert the interpretation of political cartoons by defaming an individual or an organization.

Each meaning-making process under the theoretical lens may not be found in each political cartoon. This study only explored the prevalent modes of communication through the representational (narrative and conceptual processes) and interactive (contact, social distance and attitude) meaning-making processes. The separate and composite analysis of the multiple modes involved in the meaning-making processes has also been explored by associating them to the surface, literal and lexical levels of analysis. This study has analyzed the cartoonist's mediation through multiple modes on a semantic and context models of macro and micro-level social analysis. Four levels of macro analysis (emphasis on our good things, emphasis on their bad things, de-emphasis on their good things and de-emphasis on our bad things) have been inquired into in each defamatory political cartoon. Only highlighted positive or negative ideologies have been identified on the basis of the social group differentiation of the actors involved in the meaning-making processes. Cartoonists' mediation has also been identified by analyzing the prevalent discursive strategies. Only the highlighted discursive strategies supporting the falsified meaning-making processes in each political cartoon have been identified.

3.2 Research Design

The qualitative research design has been used in the present study. Under the qualitative research design, case study research design is followed as the current study evaluates the contextual in-depth knowledge of particular cases of real-life time-bound activities to understand the different aspects of the research problem (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2017). The current study evaluates the contextual knowledge of particular cases of manipulated meaning-making processes in defamatory political cartoons on macro and micro levels of analysis of social cognition.

3.3 Sampling

A purposive sampling technique has been used to select the sample for the study. This study has selected 25 defamatory political cartoons, 7 from Dawn and 18 from Minute Mirror newspapers, scrutinized from 355 political cartoons over a time span of January 1st to June 30th, 2022. These newspapers publish political cartoons in the form of instantly recognizable characters, naming participants, institutions, political parties and countries along with their particular signs and symbols.

3.3.1 Sampling Criteria

The sample of the study has been purposefully selected to meet the research objectives of exploring meaning-making processes in defamatory political cartoons. This study has identified sampling criteria by utilizing the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (2002) as a reference model. Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO) states that any wrongful action or publication that may cause a problem, threaten, or lower their reputation and self-esteem by criticizing, spreading hate, manipulating their stance and making humorous remarks may fall under the defamation law and action can be taken against the originator. There are two forms of defamation: slander and libel. The defamation caused in written form is called libel and oral defamatory remarks fall under slander defamation. Manipulation refers to intentionally crafted false statements, distorted truths and selective editing to mislead others or cause harm to the offended entity. Falsification refers to the act of making falsified statements intentionally to cause harm to the honor and self-esteem of the offended identity. The researcher has set the following insights of the Ordinance as a sampling criteria to check whether a political cartoon fall under defamation or not:

- 1) Whether these remarks fall under libel or slander (section 3).
- 2) It must be a false statement, whether an oral or written statement (section 3).
- 3) It must be published or circulated through any means of communication: a newspaper, social media, news agencies, etc. (section 3).
- 4) If wrongful information is being circulated, it means the damage has already occurred. The plaintiff does not need to prove damages (section 4).
- 5) The government, federal or provincial legislative assemblies, judicial proceedings, court orders and parliamentary proceedings have absolute privilege over defamation.

This study has also set sampling criteria on the basis of the linguistic elements used in the defamatory political cartoons to make the data more representative of the research objectives.

- 1) Only those cartoons that contain both textual and graphical data have been selected for the sample.
- 2) Only those cartoons that manipulate linguistic meanings have been accessed.

3) Only those cartoons have been taken as a sample that cause defamation against someone (a person on an individual basis) or something (a political party, an organization, or a political narrative)

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) has been used as a method of data analysis that links the meaning-making processes of political cartoons to society to investigate how cartoonists control social cognition through ideology, values, beliefs, social structures, etc. The researcher has followed four steps of data analysis. The first step of the analysis deals with the literal and surface level associations to the understandings of the readers of the political cartoons and the ways in which they may perceive the pictorial depiction. The second step of the analysis deals with multimodal meaning-making processes through representational (narrative and conceptual processes) and interactive meanings (contact, social distance and attitude) of the visual grammar theory, where each element of the defamatory political cartoon has been analyzed. The third step of the analysis deals with contextualized mediation, falsification and manipulation of the information through the rhetorical and discursive strategies of the sociocognitive approach. The cartoonist's manipulation of meaning-making processes has been analyzed under the lens of two mental models: semantic and context models of macro- and micro-level analysis. The fourth step of the analysis deals with the validation and representativeness of the data on the basis of the reference model of the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), ways through which multiple modes: signs, symbols, gestures, postures, settings, actions, characters, tone, contact, verbal and non-verbal modes, sizes and placements of the object, modality, etc., have been manipulated and falsified on the basis of social group differentiation at the macro and micro level of analysis to control the social cognition with an intention to cause harm to the reputation of the offended entities.

First of all, all the cartoons were analyzed to identify the themes. All the political cartoons were studied carefully on the basis of the story being presented, symbols being used, tone of the statements, settings of the happenings of an event, dialogue being used, purpose of designing cartoons and actions being taken in political cartoons and then the categories that emerged out of them were noted. Similar cartoons were put into one category and others were put into another category. Then again, these categories were analyzed carefully to name the themes and general names of themes were arrived at. Additionally, the use of processes and expressions of meaning in political cartoons helped

the researcher identify themes of the study because the cartoonists were using particular concepts to address political events. Furthermore, these themes are also based on the dimensions of the theoretical framework supporting the research objectives of falsification and the manipulation of meaning-making processes. These major themes identified are: the theme of severe or unjust criticism; the theme of manipulation; the theme of a country's reputation; the theme of humorous remarks; and the theme of spreading hate or threats.

All 25 political cartoons were categorized under these five themes. Three political cartoons have been categorized under the theme of severe or unjust criticism; three political cartoons have been categorized under the theme of manipulation; nine political cartoons have been categorized under the theme of a country's reputation; six political cartoons have been categorized under the theme of humorous remarks; and four political cartoons have been categorized under the theme of spreading hate or threats. These categorized political cartoons under the different themes have been codified and labeled according to the unfolding of an event, the story being presented, the characters being depicted and the dialogues being used in each political cartoon, which are analyzed later. Each codified subject of the study under a particular category of the themes has been analyzed separately with the help of the theoretical framework of the study. First, the meaning-making processes have been analyzed through the representational, interactive and compositional meaning-making processes of visual grammar theory and then these meaning-making processes are analyzed according to Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach, which shows how these meaning-making processes are being polarized through rhetorical discursive strategies to defame offended entities.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has discussed the research methods employed in the study. First of all, it has presented how a theoretical framework has been employed to analyze the research data, followed by the case study research design, sampling criteria and data analysis procedure. The next chapter presents the analysis of the data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Theme of Severe or Unjust Criticism



Figure 2 PDM's Long March



Figure 3 PMLN's Govt



Figure 4 Allies are to be taken along.

Figure 2 and 3 are taken from the Minute Mirror newspaper of Pakistan, published on February 14 and May 12, 2022 and Figure 4 is taken from the Dawn newspaper, published on April 14, 2022. In these three figures, the cartoonists have shown visual graphics of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman, Shehbaz Shareef, Asif Ali Zardari and the representatives of their allies' parties under the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). On the surface, these figures are associated with Pakistani politics, where political leaders Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari are represented as beasts of burden. The literal meanings of these three cartoons are associated with dystopian and historical fiction. These figures illustrate the dehumanizing effects of slavery, oppression and subjugation, where individuals are treated as beasts of burden and are exploited for labor in the novel *Beloved* written by Toni Morrison. This novel explores the dehumanization of the slaves in America and examines their psychological and emotional trauma.

Meanings in these three figures are represented through different visual grammar elements: objects, structures, activities and relations. The narrative process of these political cartoons is divided into four parts: actional, reactional, mental and verbal. The actional process of narrative representation in Figure 2, the actors are connected through the vectorial elements used in this cartoon: the cart, rope and belts around the neck. But since these actors are not physically in contact with each other, only vector representations can be noticed. But in Figures 3 and 4, the participants of the cartoons who are sitting in a cart have a vectorial connection between them but not with Shehbaz Shareef, who is driving the cart. In the reactional process of narrative representation in Figure 2, the represented participants, Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari, react to the happening of an event through their gaze in the same direction as Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman. But in Figures 3 and 4, the reactants seem to be enjoying and mocking Shahbaz Shareef for his efforts to run the government's cart and taking his allies along. In the mental process of narrative representation, the cognitive abilities of the viewer get involved in interpreting the cartoon according to their social cognition. Normally, donkeys or horses are used to draw these types of vehicles, but in Figure 2, two political leaders are drawing a "Long March" vehicle for the main participant. It shows that they are acting as political puppets, as they are drawing the cart on their knees. But in Figures 3 and 4, one political leader, who is the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan, is driving the cart with the burden of his allies who are enjoying the ride. The verbal process in Cartoon 2 contains only one word, "LONG MARCH," which clarifies the pictorial representation of what the picture is about. The situation is unclear without the speech or verbal process, but by linking it to the current event, it becomes clear that the Figure 2 is all about the "LONG MARCH" and political protest movement with the desire to gain power. The Long March in Pakistan refers to the anti-government public protest against. In Figure 3, three verbal responses can be noticed: PMLN, GOVT and HEHEHE. PMLN (Pakistan Muslim League Noon) refers to the Pakistani political party founded by Mian Nawaz Shareef. Govt refers to the government of Pakistan. Hehe refers to the laughter made by the allies sitting in the cart. It shows that the main participant (Prime Minister from PMLN) in the cartoon is truly putting all his energies into it and other members of the government are mocking him. But in Figure 4, verbal responses "ALLIES TO BE TAKEN ALONG!" and "IMF" written on the wheel of the cart show that the Shahbaz Shareef is doing his utmost efforts to take his allies along, but the cart which is running on the actual force of "IMF," can collapse. Allies in the verbal phrase refers to the PDM allies consisting of 13 parties: Balochistan Awami Party;

Muttahida Qaumi Movement—Pakistan; National Democratic Movement; Pakistan Muslim League (Q); Balochistan National Party (Mengal); Jamiat Ahle Hadith; Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam; Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan; National Party (Bizenjo); Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz); Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party; Qaumi Watan Party; Jamhoori Wattan Party. Their representatives can also be recognized sitting in the carts of Figures 3 and 4. The IMF, or International Monetary Fund, is a major funding agency to financially support countries in times of crisis. The verbal information of these three figures clearly depicts the political and economic situation of the country, which cannot be understood without a verbal response.

The classificational process talks about the superordinate and subordinate concepts in the cartoon. In Figure 2, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman is acting as the superordinate actor who has a sword in his hand and Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari, who are moving on their knees, are subordinate actors. It clearly shows that the main actor is actually managing power relations through the rope that is in his hand. He can give direction to the subordinate actors. Reactional actors in this cartoon react accordingly as ordered by the main actor because they are directly bound to the direction and orders delivered through the rope. But in Figures 3 and 4, the main actor Shehbaz Shareef who is driving the cart is shown as the superordinate because he is putting all his energies into taking his allies and the government along with him to take part in the country's economy and prosperity, but subordinate characters are mocking at him. The symbolic process talks about what visual elements symbolize or mean. Figure 2 depicts participants who are acting as political puppets and slaves, bowing down or moving on their knees because they are being directed by the rope and the belt around their neck. But in Figures 3 and 4, the main actor symbolizes being trapped, depicted through stars and sweat, showing that Shehbaz Shareef is putting all his energies into it, but the rest of participants are only mocking at him. He is acting as a political puppet in others hands.

The contact addresses the demand and offer phenomena. In Figure 2, the main actor demands power through a sword, which is a symbol of power. In Figures 3 and 4, the main actor demands the efforts of the subordinate characters, but their reaction shows that the reactants are not willing to fulfill the demand. There is a distance between the superordinate and the subordinate actors in Figure 2. The actors have a faraway personal distance as they are not discussing personal interests with physical contact. In Figures 3 and 4, the subordinate characters have a close personal and social distance from each other but a far

personal and social distance from the main actor. The subjective nature of the attitude has been portrayed by the cartoonist in these three cartoons; no objective or knowledge-based orientation has been noticed. The characters have subjective responses in these cartoons.

Van Dijk's social cognitive model analyzes the discourse in a particular context of society on both the macro and micro levels of social cognition. The macro level of analysis of Figure 2 includes two groups: the in-group contains the depiction of Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari and the out-group contains the portrayal of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman. It emphasizes their bad things by portraying him with the sword and using the other two political leaders to meet his political objectives. It also de-emphasizes their good things by depicting two political leaders as animals with a cart on their knees and a belt around their necks. Figure 3 and 4 use the macro level of analysis by categorizing the characters in the form of Van Dijk's us vs. them. These figures emphasize our good things through the utmost efforts of PMLN's Shehbaz Shareef to run the government. These figures emphasize their bad things through the portrayal of allies enjoying and mocking at Shehbaz Shareef. These figures also de-emphasize their good things, as they showed their support for Shehbaz Shareef through their vote to build up a government.

Van Dijk's micro-level analysis of social cognition includes rhetorical and discursive strategies. Figures 2, 3 and 4 contain actor description, categorization, burden, populism, irony, hyperbole, polarization and victimization. Actor description in Figure 2 contain three characters: Asif Ali Zardari, Shehbaz Shareef and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman, who are leading the Long March for their political demonstration. Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari have been negatively described, but Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman has been depicted in power as being the head of PDM. Actor description in Figure 3 and 4 describe out-group members negatively by positively highlighting Shehbaz Shareef as the only member of the government making his utmost effort to run the government. According to the Van Dijk categorization, the cartoonists have categorized the in- and out-group members according to their political attitudes and ideological orientations. In Figure 2, the portrayal of Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari in the form of animals dragging cart on their knees with belts around their necks has been compared to the depiction of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman leading the cart with a sword in his hand. Exaggeration of the semantic meanings and polarization of the information depict that Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari are being victimized through their depiction. In Figures 3 and 4, the categorization of the characters is highly polarized because the hyperbolic expression depicts that other

parties who are in a collateral government are making fun of PM Shehbaz instead of playing their constructive role in the government. Only PM Shehbaz is actively engaged in running the government and is making his utmost efforts to get the country out of trouble. Which is burdening the populism concept of the allies who have supported Shehbaz Shareef to form a government. Figure 2 contains irony in the form of contradiction between the action of the participants and the lexical item "Long March," and Figure 4 contains the irony of the cart being run on the wheels of the IMF. In Figure 2, there is an ideological burden on Shehbaz Shareef and Asif Ali Zardari even more than the cart itself. Dragging cart on the knees and having ropes around their necks cause a political and ideological burden on their narratives. Having a sword in the hand of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman burdens the concept of political populism and peaceful demonstration.

Van Dijk's sociocognitive model also talks about the role of context. The context model mediator here is the cartoonist, who is mediating through the manipulated visual discourse and imposing his or her ideology on readers. As these cartoons are subjective in nature, there is a mediator, or context model, because several factors are mediating in these cartoons too. Social, political and ideological factors mediate.

According to the analysis of the visual grammar and Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach, it has been noticed that the meaning-making processes of Figures 2, 3 and 4 have been falsified. The representational, interactive and compositional meaning-making processes are posing a threat to the personal and party narratives of political leaders. According to the insights of the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), these figures fall under libel defamation because of their publication in the Minute Mirror and Dawn newspapers. The visual grammar and the sociocognitive approach conclude that cartoonists have used multiple modes of communication to falsify their meaning-making processes. The actional, reactional, mental and verbal representations in Figures 2, 3 and 4 are manipulated through the rhetorical strategies of Van Dijk's macro- and micro-level social cognition of the context. These political cartoons contain derogatory remarks about political parties. These types of meanings contain wrongful and false statements, which may lower the reputation of offended entities. Cartoonists have posted a false or wrong piece of information in a comical way by altering or manipulating the actual linguistic meanings. These types of cartoons are not based on a real-life scenario where these political leaders actually acted the same as depicted in the cartoons, so falsified information is being spread through multiple linguistic strategies of actor description, categorization, burden,

populism, irony, hyperbole, polarization and victimization. All of the supporting data, including visual grammar elements, Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach and the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance 2002, demonstrate that these cartoons defame political leaders and their narrative through unjust and severe criticism.

4.2 Theme of Manipulation



Figure 5 Blindfold Judiciary



Figure 6 Supreme Court interference in Politics



Figure 7 Burden of Political Issues on Court

These political cartoons, figures 5, 6 and 7, were published in the Minute Mirror newspaper on February 1, May 31 and June 4, respectively. The cartoonist has made the visual graphics of the political leaders Rana Sanallah, Maryam Nawaz Shareef, Shehbaz Shareef, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Bilawal Bhutto along with the character and symbols of judicial institution. The surface-level analysis of figures 5 and 6 presents the comprehension that the judiciary is being influenced by political leaders, while figure 7 depicts that the judiciary is influencing political leaders. The literal meanings of figures 5 and 6 are associated with the American graphic novel *The Sandman* written by Neil Gaiman, which encounters a lady justice representing the judicial system in the country. Lady Justice has been portrayed with the judicial symbols of a sword and scale in her hand.

This novel also explores the complex themes of power, morality and justice, often influenced by societal and political structures as represented in figures 5 and 6. While figure 7 is associated with the literary art *Blind Justice* designed by a Polish artist, Jan Matejko, He portrayed a blindfolded justice lady holding symbols of scale and sword in her hand while a block rests on her head, which symbolizes the political burden on the judiciary.

The representational meanings involve narrative and conceptual processes. The narrative processes of the representational meanings show that the participants in these figures are not physically connected to the vectorial representation of each other but are interacting with the help of objects being used in these cartoons. Narrative processes further divides into actional, reactional, mental and verbal processes. In the actional process of Figure 5, the actor Rana Sanaullah is not forming a direct vectorial connection with the character representing the judiciary. Maryam Nawaz Shareef in Figure 6 is forming a vector connection through objects by having a sword and scale in her hand. But there is no physical connection between Maryam and the random character representing the public. In Figure 7, Shehbaz Shareef, Bilawal Bhutto and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman don't have a direct connection with the judiciary, but having the burden of political affairs on the head forms a connection through political affiliations. Reactional participants also react to the happening of an event. In Figure 5, Rana Sanaullah reacts in anger as his high level of gaze from the lower position, pointing out his finger and having a long stick in his hand act as Sultan Rahi tells the story of attempts to influence the judiciary. In Figure 6, Maryam Nawaz reacts by taking up the judicial charge depicted through the scale and sword in her hand. In Figure 7, Shehbaz Shareef, Fazal-ul-Rehman and Bilawal react with the stunned faces represented through frowned eyebrows and tilted eyes. The judicial character takes the burden of political issues on the head, wears bandages on the eyes and holds the scale and sword in his hand. The mental process of Figure 5 deals with the cognitive perceptions of influencing judicial affairs and challenging their authority. Figure 6 deals with the direct taking up of the judicial charge by holding their symbolic elements of authority: scale and sword. The depiction also questions the credibility of the judicial system. Figure 7 deals with the concept of direct judicial influence in the political affairs of the country. The verbal responses have been pointed out in these cartoons, which play important role in understanding and comprehending the context of the portrayal of objects with respect to the political scenarios. In Figure 5, only one verbal text, "RANA," in capitalized letters can be noticed, which shows that Rana Sanaullah is challenging the judiciary and laws. In

Figure 6, the text "MARYAM WISHES SC TO STAY AWAY FROM POLITICAL WRANGLING" It's an allegation by Maryam Nawaz that the Supreme Court (SC) must stay away from political affairs in Pakistan, but the way her character has been portrayed shows that she is clearly interfering with the Supreme Court (SC). In Figure 7, the verbal response "POLITICAL AFFAIRS" shows that the one who holds the power to provide justice to the political is now carrying the burden of political affairs and is interfering in political affairs.

The conceptual processes of the representational meanings of figures 5, 6 and 7 state that they belong to the whole political scenario of Pakistan, where political leaders are putting pressure on legal institutions by posing their political agenda. Participants in these figures have the role of superordinate and subordinate actors. In Figure 5, Rana Sana Ullah is acting as a superordinate participant but at a lower position than the judicial participant, who has a power in his hand that is depicted through the sword and scale. In Figure 6, Maryam Nawaz is acting as a superordinate participant who has taken charge of the judiciary by taking a scale and sword in her hand. A public general character looking at her is acting as a subordinate participant. In Figure 7, the judiciary is acting as a superordinate participant, while Bilawal Bhutto, Shehbaz Shareef and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman are acting as subordinate characters who are directly looking at the judiciary. The symbolic processes of the conceptual representational meanings show that Figure 5 symbolizes that the one who is in power can challenge the judiciary too; the way Rana has pointed out the finger shows that the judiciary is being influenced; Figure 6 shows that the judiciary is interrupted by one of the political leaders Maryam Nawaz Shareef and is now being directed as she wants it to be according to her political intention; and Figure 7 symbolizes that the judiciary is directly influencing political affairs and taking responsibility of political issues.

Interactive meaning-making processes have also been noticed, contact, social distance and the attitude of the participants in the cartoons. Contact in Figure 5, where Rana Sanaullah demands power through unlawful means as he poses to have it forcefully. Contact in Figure 6 demands the Supreme Court (SC) must stay away from political affairs. Contact in Figure 7 demands the same as in Figure 6, but here it is being portrayed through the gaze and the eyeline of three political leaders: Shehbaz Shareef, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Bilawal Bhutto. Far personal distance has been noticed in Figure 5, where Rana Sana Ullah is pointing out his finger in an aggressive way from a lower position to

the main actor and making a defensive gesture by holding a stick, wearing a costume of film hero Sultan Rahi, having a high angle point of view at a lower position as compared to the main actor. Contact in Figure 6 shows a defensive gesture of the main actor, who is holding a sword and a scale in her hand. No eye-level engagement between the main actor and the general character has been noticed, which shows a far personal distance. The gaze of three political leaders from a low angle eyeline in Figure 7 shows a far personal and far social distance between the superior and subordinate participants. These three cartoons are of a subjective nature, where the cartoonist has posed his subjective remarks.

Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach links these figures to the macro- and micro-levels of analysis. The macro level of analysis of Figure 5 contains an in and out group to represent us vs. them. Rana Sanaullah has been placed in an in-group and the judiciary has been depicted as being in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by portraying the bandage in the eye of the judicial character, which de-emphasizes their good things of providing justice to the public for what they are made for. This Figure also de-emphasizes our bad ways of challenging or trying to influence the judiciary. The macro level of analysis in Figure 6 places Maryam Nawaz Shareef in an in-group and the judiciary in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by directly posing the charge of political wrangling on the Supreme Court (SC) by de-emphasizing their good things of providing justice to the public. The macro level of analysis in Figure 7 contains three political leaders, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman, Shehbaz Shareef and Bilawal Bhutto, in an in-group and a judicial member in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by directly posing the charge of taking the burden of political issues and interfering in political matters by de-emphasizing their good things of providing justice to the public.

According to Van Dijk's sociocognitive micro-level analysis of figures 5, 6 and 7, they contain actor description, categorization, authority, hyperbole, irony, negative other-presentation, lexicalization, polarization, populism and victimization.

The actor description in Figure 5 describes that the in-group actor Rana Sanaullah is challenging the judicial norms and the out-group judicial member is depicted with a bandage on his eye. The cartoonist has depicted both groups negatively. The actor description in Figure 6 contains the public general character and Maryam Nawaz Shareef, where she is directly influencing the judiciary by holding a scale and sword in her hand. The action is also being supported through lexicalization. The actor description in Figure 7 contains three political leaders and a judiciary member. The outer group representing them

is depicted as the one who is overburdened with political issues but has taken up the bandage in his eye to negate them. This portrays the judiciary negatively. In Figure 6, the cartoonist has categorized the actors and participants of the political cartoon contrary to the lexical or verbal statement, which states that the judiciary is interfering in political affairs, but in the pictorial description, Maryam Nawaz is holding symbols of the judiciary, which depict that the politicians are interfering in judicial matters. The categorization of the smaller-sized public character depicts confusion and tension among politicians and the judiciary. In Figure 6, the symbol of authority for justice: the sword and scale are portrayed in the hands of Maryam Nawaz Shareef, but no judiciary member has been portrayed. The meaning-making processes are polarized through the negative representation of others in these three figures. The judiciary has been depicted as a mediator in political affairs. The hyperbolic expressions have been used in the micro-level analysis of the sociocognitive approach. The political leaders wishing for the Supreme Court (SC) not to take part in political issues are actually bringing the political issues to the judicial institution, but they are now using the populism technique of discursive strategy to influence the public by calling themselves the victims of the Supreme Court (SC) interference in political affairs. The depiction of the Maryam's interference in judicial matters and asking the judiciary not to interfere in political affairs contains an ironic statement.

Judicial institutions can be honestly and positively criticized, but they cannot be influenced. No one can challenge or control the courts as a member of the assembly, or when someone criticizes or tries to put allegations on the courts, evidence must be provided or these evidences must be submitted to the courts. The judiciary has a bandage on its eye; it depicts that if one challenges the judicial institutions or tries to influence them, manipulating or involving courts in political affiliations or affairs through unlawful means can have damage on a public level. The public does believe in accountability or judicial institutions; that's why they look for justice from courts. Cartoons with bandages on the eye, political issues burdening the head and the character of a political leader influencing judicial matters by holding a scale and sword in her hand can cause a social loss to the self-esteem of the institute. Van Dijk's context model also plays a significant role in the portrayal of the information in the political cartoons. In the above discussion of the micro- and macro-levels of the social cognitive approach, the cartoonist has used actor description, categorization, authority, hyperbole, irony, negative other-presentation, lexicalization,

polarization, populism and victimization as discursive strategies to polarize the meaning-making processes.

According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), it has been noticed that the representational, interactive and compositional meanings of the cartoons posted on Minute Mirror newspapers manipulated the linguistic meanings to defame the accountability institutions of Pakistan. These cartoons are published in the Minute Mirror newspaper, so according to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), these figures fall under libel defamation. The cartoonist has not criticized a specific judge or court in figures 5 and 7, but the whole judicial system. In Figure 6, the cartoonist has used the verbal remarks of Maryam Nawaz Shareef but manipulated the judicial system in his portrayal of the court's symbolic power of the sword and scale in the hands of a political leader. In this research, the researcher is not only concerned with the recognizable characters but also points out the names of the institutions, objects and countries. The visual grammar theory and sociocognitive approach analysis show that the cartoonists manipulate the meaning-making processes through using multiple modes of communication subjectively to validate the political agenda of judicial interference in political affairs. The cartoonists have highlighted the power relation discourse by pointing out the negative characteristics of the outgroup by portraying the bandage over the eye. The cartoonist used actor description, authority, hyperbole, negative other-presentation, polarization, populism and victimization to defame the judiciary by polarizing the meanings. These three cartoons are deemed to be manipulating linguistic agendas, portraying figures in an exaggerated way, supporting allegations against the judiciary and also causing defamation against the intended entity. According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (2002), there is no need to prove damage to the offended institution. Damage in the case of public interest has already been caused; these cartoons can pose a real legal threat to the cartoonist.

4.3 Theme of Country's Reputation



Figure 8 Dollars Killing

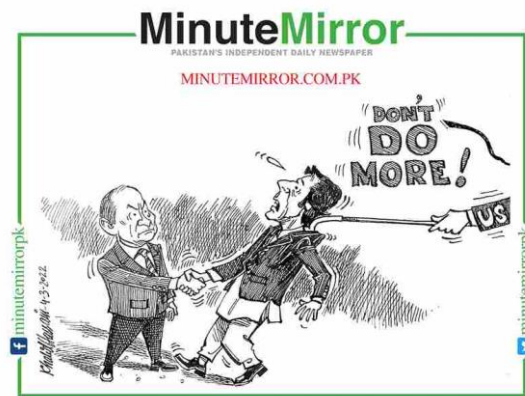


Figure 9 Don't do more!



Figure 10 Foreign Influence



Figure 11 Pakistani Passport Under Feet

These four political cartoons, figures 8, 9, 10 and 11 have been published in the Minute Mirror newspaper on January 16, March 4, April 4 and April 27, respectively. These four figures portray the character designs of Hamad Azhar, Imran Khan, Vladimir Putin, Mian Nawaz Shareef, random public character along with the signs and symbols of pistol, dollars, country flag and passport. The surface-level meanings of Figure 8 deal with Hamad Azhar causing harm to the public for the sake of dollars to be received by the IMF. While the literal meanings of Figure 8 are associated with the French novel *Les Misérables* written by Victor Hugo, where a corrupt and greedy finance minister Monsieur Bamatabois under Napoleon's regime causes harm to the public for the sake of money. He exploits his position in corrupt practices for personal gain at the cost of the poor public. The surface-level meanings of Figures 9 and 10 depict that Pakistani foreign diplomacy is influenced by the US. The literal meanings of Figure 9 are associated with *House of Cards* a famous American TV series by Michael Dobbs. The protagonist of the novel, a ruthless political leader named Frank Underwood became the president of America, portrayed as being influenced by two foreign entities: Russia and China. This novel explores the ways in which the protagonist got involved in corrupt practices and was influenced by foreign countries,

which resulted in harm to the country. The literal meanings of Figure 10 are associated with *The Manchurian Candidate* where US presidential candidate Raymond Shaw has been surrounded by Soviet and Chinese agents and manipulated his candidacy through foreign influence. The surface-level meanings of Figure 11 defame the Pakistani passport under the feet of Nawaz Shareef. The literal meanings of Figure 11 are associated with *The Kite Runner* written by Khalid Hosseini. The protagonist, Amir and his father, Baba, are forced to flee from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Their passports have been scrutinized and defamed by the border military. Despite Baba's influential reputation in Afghanistan, his passport has become a symbol of derogation and shame in the eyes of the authorities.

Meaning-making processes in these cartoons are represented and interacted with the help of multiple modes of communication, signs, symbols, gestures, postures and text that cooperate with the main theme of the study. Representation meaning-making processes identify that the sign of a dollar, pistol, stick grabbing from the collar, Pakistani national flag symbol, Quaid's Sherwani and cap and also a passport, along with the verbal information of "INFLATION," "IMF", "DON'T DO MORE", "FOREIGN INFLUENCE," and "PAKISTAN," also contribute to the particular agenda of theme. The vectorial representation of the participants has been depicted in figures 8, 9 and 10, as there is a physical connection that shows that actors are connected with the vectors and are taking part in action. In Figure 8, Hamad Azhar is forming a vector with the random public character by pointing out an inflation gun. In Figure 9, there is a physical vectorial connection between the participants: Imran Khan and Putin are shaking hands while a stick of a US hidden character is dragging him from the collar. In Figure 10, there is a direct physical vectorial connection between the Pakistani representative character and the foreign influence. In Figure 11, the particular action has been depicted in the thought bubble form, but no particular vectorial representation has been shown between the participants. Reactants in cartoons are also posing their reactions accordingly. In Figure 8, where the Hamad Azhar is pointing out an inflation gun on the head of the public character to get dollars from the IMF. The reactant: a random character reacts with the raised eyebrow and stunned face show that he is totally surprised by the authorities, who are in a position to control inflation but are now looking for dollars to cause serious harm to the public. A star on head shows his worries and he is also not happy with the way the Hamad Azhar is hiding his eye with an arm. In Figure 9, the main actor is hidden behind the screen but is visible through a hand on which verbal information "US" is written. Reactants in Figure 9 are the

Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan Imran Khan and President of Russia Vladimir Putin. Imran Khan is captured with the hockey stick in the hands of US authorities. The reaction shows that he was going to have relations with Russia but is now trapped. His opened mouth, a drop of tears and the way he is being dragged show that he is being controlled by the US. The second reactant Vladimir Putin tries to hold his hand tightly and his facial reaction and upward eyeline gaze to Imran Khan depicts that he is not happy with the way Imran Khan is being controlled. In Figure 10, the reactant participant is depicted on a country level. A random character wearing a traditional Quaid's Sherwani and a cap with the Pakistani flag printed on it is trying his utmost to get rid of foreign influence in the country. The participant's facial representation shows that he is trying hard to get escaped. The way he is captured is causing a troublesome situation for the actor. In Figure 11, the reactant participant Nawaz Shareef himself is the main participant. The thought bubble depicts that he is too happy to receive his passport and is now using it as a magical carpet to fly to Pakistan. The mental processes in Figure 8 represent the rise in the inflation rate due to government policies and taking loans from the IMF, but the way the cartoon is portrayed shows that government authorities are pointing out the inflation gun, only to get dollars from the IMF. The government can cause more harm or pressure on the poor by getting more dollars. The more dollars, the more pressure is going to be built up on the poor. But the signs of the pistol show that government is pressurizing the public through raising inflation, only to receive money from the IMF and even from the public in the form of taxes. The opposite directions of the feet confuse the government's priorities. Figure 9 represents that the authoritative power of a country is being controlled by the foreign influence of the US and they are now dragging the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan as slave and imposing their decisions on him. The way Imran Khan is bent back towards the US, depicted through a stick grabbing his neck collar, proves to be defamatory against a country's reputation. A country cannot be controlled in this way, where the PM is being dragged around as a political puppet and is unable to establish new relations with other countries. Figure 10 also presents the foreign influence, but the way the character has been portrayed shows that the foreign influence is even bigger than the character itself. The use of the Pakistani national flag symbol on the cap and the traditional dress of the Sherwani represent that the whole country is trapped by foreign influence and now it is impossible to get rid of it. Figure 11 represents that one of the political leaders, Nawaz Shareef, is too happy to receive his passport, but the thought bubble depicts that it is being used as the magical carpet by Nawaz Shareef to get back to his homeland. The representation of a

country is lying under his feet and the text "Islamic Republic Passport" is also written on it. Similarly, the verbal responses have also been printed on these cartoons. Textual pieces of information also contribute to the understanding of the intended message of cartoonists. In Figure 8, two textual elements, "INFLATION" AND "IMF" have been printed out. It shows that government authorities are raising inflation to get financial assistance from the IMF. In Figure 9, "DON'T DO MORE" and the name of the country, "US" printed on the hand show that the US is interfering in Pakistan's affairs by demanding that Pakistan not do more working relationships with other countries. It highlights the political invasion of one's country. The same concept was backed up in the next day's political cartoon (Figure 10) with the verbal remarks of "Foreign Influence," which depict Pakistan as totally under-controlled by inescapable foreign influence. In Figure 11, three verbal texts, "NAWAZ SHAREEF ISSUED A NEW PASSPORT TO RETURN HOME" "PAKISTAN" and "ISLAMIC REPUBLIC PASSPORT" are found. These remarks show that Nawaz Shareef has been issued a new passport to get back to his homeland.

The conceptual processes of these figures deal with the classificational, analytical and symbolic processes of their meanings. According to the classificational processes, in Figure 8, the IMF character is acting as a superordinate participant who is influencing subordinate participants in the cartoons. In Figure 9, the US hidden characters are depicted as the superordinate participants, while Imran Khan and Putin are acting as subordinate actors. In Figure 10, the hidden character influencing the foreign affairs of Pakistan is acting as a superordinate actor and the Pakistani representative character is acting as a subordinate participant. In Figure 11, only one participant, Nawaz Shareef, has been portrayed. The analytical process of Figure 8 deals with the part and whole relation of Pakistan's economic condition and the rising inflation in the country. The part and whole relation of figures 9 and 10 highlights the foreign influence in the policy matters of Pakistan. The analytic process in Figure 11 deals with Pakistani politics.

The happenings of the event have also been depicted through the interactive elements of political cartoons. The contact demand and offer phenomenon of Figure 8 shows that a rise in inflation is required by the IMF. The IMF demands a rise in inflation to deposit debt, but the way it is being pointed out is not the demand of the IMF. It depicts the IMF offering more dollars to pressurize or loot the public. Figure 9 demands that Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan not establish new relations or friendships with other countries. The US only demands that Imran Khan act upon the directions given by them. In Figure

10, Pakistan is being trapped by foreign influence. Attempts made by the Pakistanis show that it demands an escape from foreign influences. In Figure 11, the Pakistani government has issued the passport to Nawaz Shareef, which shows an offer of a new passport to fulfill the demand to get back home.

Social distance also takes part in the interactional meaning-making processes. In Figure 8, public distance can be noticed by pointing out the gun directly at the head of the public random character by naming it an inflation gun. Hamad Azhar does not have an eye contact level with the public participant, but looking at the dollars provided by the IMF depicts a far social distance to the public participant and a close personal distance to the IMF dollars. Social distance in Figure 9 depicts that there is a close personal distance between Imran Khan and Putin that can be seen through a handshake and there is a far personal and far social distance between Imran Khan and the US that can be seen through the dragging of a stick and directly addressing not to hold ties with others. Far social distance can also be noticed through the angle of view depicted through the position or size of an object. The social distance in Figure 10 shows the close personal and social distance between the participants. Pakistani character has been captured through foreign influence and is not allowed to reverse back to country-level authority. A defensive gesture shows that it tries to get rid of it, but the size of the hand is even bigger than the Pakistani character, which shows that efforts are going in vain. Social distance in Figure 11 is depicted through the same character in different positions; the angle of view at the thought bubble and the smiling face of Nawaz Sharif show personal distance. All of the meaning-making processes represented in these four cartoons show that these are subjectively oriented figures that share a cartoonist's intended agenda behind these objects. No objective or knowledge-oriented information has been noticed in these political cartoons. All of the pictorial objects individually and compositely cooperate with the meaning-making processes and deliver the intended meanings, but the change of the sizes of objects and the eye-level point of view can change the meanings of these figures.

These multiple modes of communication and the meaning-making processes in cartoons also have common social representations according to social beliefs, ideologies and practices. Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach links it with social cognition through macro- and micro-level analysis. The macro level of social cognition in Figure 8 places the random character and Hamad Azhar in an in-group and the IMF in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by polarizing the meanings in the form of giving money to

directly cause harm to the public. It de-emphasizes our bad things by using the word "INFLATION" for a gun and also, hiding his face under an arm emphasizes that they are doing it unintentionally. It de-emphasizes their good things for what the IMF is meant for: supporting poor countries in times of trouble. It is not the IMF that goes to help poor countries; it is the country itself that asks for financial assistance. Figure 9 places PM Imran Khan and Vladimir Putin in an in-group and a hidden character naming the US in an out-group. It emphasizes our good things by formulating new friends in the region and strengthening working relationships between two countries; it emphasizes their bad things by depicting US foreign influence through capturing PM Imran Khan from his collar. Figure 10 places a character of Pakistan wearing a cap with the national flag symbol in an in-group and the hand with a written note of "FOREIGN INFLUENCE" capturing the in-group character has been placed in an out-group with the concept of us vs. them. It emphasizes our good things by depicting our efforts to get rid of foreign influence; it emphasizes our bad things by portraying the direct portrayal of Pakistan's character with its national flag. Figure 11 places the smiling and happy Nawaz Shareef in an in-group and his mental thoughts in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by depicting that the country's passport is under his feet and he is flying on the national passport.

Micro-level sociocognitive analysis of figures 8, 9, 10 and 11 involves actor description, categorization, positive self and negative other representation, euphemism, hyperbole, polarization, disclaimer, evidentiality, authority and victimization.

The actor's description of Figure 8 negatively portrays in-group member Hamad Azhar as out-group member "IMF" for causing direct harm to the in-group member "public" in the form of inflation. The actor description of Figure 9 positively describes the in-group members Imran Khan and Vladimir Putin for having a good working relationship and negatively describes the out-group USA member as a direct foreign influence in Pakistani foreign affairs. The actor's description of Figure 10 positively highlights the role of the Pakistani character trying to get out of foreign influence and the foreign outgroup member has been negatively described as directly holding and influencing the other country's foreign affairs. The actor's description of Figure 11 negatively portrays the out-group member who is using a Pakistani national passport as a magical carpet under his feet.

Characters categorization in Figure 8, where Hamad Azhar has pointed an inflation gun, depicts that the public is under a severe financial burden (Topos); characterial categorization in Figure 9, the PM Imran Khan and the sovereignty of the country are under

a burden (Topos) of US foreign influence. The character categorization of Figure 10 also portrays that a country's sovereignty is affected by foreign influence. In Figure 11, the same entity has been categorized as both an in-group and an out-group member to polarize the meaning-making processes. Only in Figure 8, the discursive strategy of disclaimer has been used by trying to save our face through the depiction of Hamad Azhar, where he tries to hide his eyes behind an arm. It contains the euphemism by using the lexical item "INFLATION" public. Through the rhetorical discursive strategy on a micro level, the cartoonist used evidentiality by mentioning the relevant authorities, the IMF and US, to validate his generalization of foreign influence based on the illustrations of giving dollars, using a stick and ordering "NOT TO DO MORE." The meaning-making processes in Figure 9 have been manipulated through the cartoonist's use of the US vs. Them strategy to depict positive national-glorification and negative other representation. The use of hyperbolic expressions through designing signs and symbols of Dollar, a gun pointed at the head of a public representative, holding a PM from the collar through a stick, capturing a country's representative actor through a direct influence and a former PM using a Pakistani national passport as a magical carpet under his feet clearly point out that cartoonists have polarized the meaning-making processes to victimize the country, its representatives and its symbols in the form of a passport and national flag.

Van Dijk's sociocognitive context model plays an important role in creating the violated meaning-making processes. The context in Figure 8 shows that the IMF is controlling the economy of Pakistan directly. It orders the government to raise the inflation rate in the country only to meet its own guarantee to get money back from the Pakistani community, who themselves are not directly involved in the loan or debt schemes of the government. But the way guns are pointed out by Hamad Azhar depicts that the government is attempting to kill the public by raising inflation in the country only to get dollars from the IMF. The context model in Figure 9 directly talks about the ties at the country level that play a key role in the political affairs of the world and also in the economy of the country. Imran Khan is trying to maintain working relationship with Russia, as shown in the Figure. Imran Khan met Putin, but the US is not happy with this meeting and is trying to manipulate the country's authority by asking him not to do more. The foreign influence was again depicted in the next day's cartoon Figure 10. Pakistan is being controlled by the foreign influences. But the use of the Pakistani flag is derogatory to the country's honor. In Figure 11, Nawaz Shareef is trying to get his passport back. But the thought bubble where the

Pakistani passport is under his feet is a socially unacceptable pictorial description where the country's symbol and representation are being defamed or violated by the cartoonist.

The meaning-making processes through visual grammar and Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach identify that cartoonists have manipulated the linguistic pieces of information to cause harm to the country's reputation. According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (2002), the information is published and circulated among readers of the newspaper; it falls under libel defamation. The aspects of visual grammar, representational, interactive and compositional meanings, along with the micro- and macro-level sociocognitive analysis of the context model of figures 8, 9, 10 and 11, conclude that cartoonists exaggerated and violated the actual information through wrongful and falsified pieces of information. The cartoonist has used the rhetorical discursive strategies of actor description, categorization, positive self and negative other representation, euphemism, hyperbole, polarization, disclaimer, evidentiality, authority and victimization to validate his implied negatively manipulated portrayals of the country's reputation. This polarization of meanings causes harm to the country's reputation. Figure 8: Government representatives have been held responsible for killing the public through rising inflation to get dollars from the IMF. Foreign aid has been portrayed as a direct foreign influence on country-level policies. Figure 9 depicts the US influence in a derogatory way, where a PM of Pakistan has been grabbed and dragged from a collar through a stick. Similarly, in Figure 10, Pakistan has been captured under foreign influence. Figure 11: The reputation of Pakistani passports has been defamed. The multiple modes of communication in these four figures fall under the defamation ordinance, where cartoonists have caused harm to the country's reputation.



Figure 12 Terrorism in Pakistan



Figure 13 IMF's Alms to Pakistan



Figure 14 Inflation for Dollars

These three figures, 12, 13 and 14, were published in the Minute Mirror newspaper on April 28, 29 and May 28, 2022, respectively. These political cartoons design the characters of Shahbaz Shareef, a random public character, a representative of the IMF and a character representing terrorism. On the surface level, the portrayal of terrorism along with the symbol of the Pakistani flag in Figure 12 causes disturbances to the sense of security and stability. The literal meanings of Figure 12 are associated with *The Sum of All Fears* by Tom Clancy, where a nuclear bomb was detonated by a neo-Nazi group on the occasion of a Super Bowl event taking place in Debcer, Colorado, which led to tensions between America and Russia. The portrayal of acts of terrorism on American soil has been denounced as defamatory to the security and stability of the United States. On the surface level meanings of Figure 13, Shahbaz Shareef has been depicted as a beggar in front of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), not for the betterment of the public but to fulfill the needs of the government. The literal meanings of Figure 13 are associated with the character Odumegwu Ojukwu of novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* who has been begging from international organizations and funding agencies on a humanitarian basis to feed the people of Biafra. The surface-level meanings of Figure 14 deal with the violence and social unrest caused by Shahbaz Shareef's personal interests in receiving dollars from IMF officials. The literal meanings of Figure 14 are associated with *The Dictator's Handbook* written by Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and Alastair, which explores the violent, oppressive and manipulative ways through which the political powers and governance utilize to gain their personal goals instead of prioritizing the well-being of the well-being of the public.

The meaning-making processes have been represented through multiple modes of information in these political cartoons to tell the story of the happening of the event in different ways. As the narrative processes of the event in Figure 12 depict, there is a vectorial connection between terrorism and Pakistan. Terrorism is going to hug Pakistan; it depicts the happenings of terrorism in Pakistan. In Figure 13, a vectorial representation

is being represented through the participants, the IMF, the Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif and the public. There is a direct vectorial connection between the IMF and Shehbaz Shareef, as the IMF is pounding alms penny by penny in the bowl that is in the hand of Shehbaz Shareef. There is an indirect vectorial representation between the Shehbaz Shareef's decision to hike petrol prices and the public condition shown through the random character in torn garments. The actional process of Figure 14 forms a vector between the participants of the cartoons, IMF, Shehbaz Shareef and the public. Reactional participants react to the happenings of the event. In Figure 12, the character of the "terrorism" is forming a connection with Pakistan. The facial gestures of the Pakistani character are fearful and not happy to welcome terror in the country. It is refusing to hug and stopping itself from moving forward. In Figure 13, the actor IMF is acting as a boss with a cigar in his mouth and enjoying giving alms to the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan. Shehbaz Shareef is also making smiling gestures by receiving alms as a beggar. Public reaction can be monitored through the random character, with torn clothes who is weeping due to the hike in petrol prices. The symbols of stars, tears and fire show that raising inflation in the country has set him on fire. In Figure 14, IMF is working as a main participant in the cartoon and forming a relationship with the Shehbaz Shareef. Shehbaz Shareef PM is using a stick to beat the public character on the demand of the IMF to receive more dollars. IMF asks do more for more dollars. Shehbaz beats on the head of public general character who is half naked in front of him and the blood is flowing down from the head. IMF is posing happiness on the violent depiction of Shehbaz Shareef and the public character is weeping over violence. In Figure 12, the mental representational narrative meanings and cognitive abilities of the participants talk about the happenings of terrorism in Pakistan. With this pictorial description, people may fall prey to the fear of being terrorized in the country, while the representation of Pakistan as safe country for tourists can be affected. This type of visual graphic causes harm to the country's reputation and identity. In Figure 13, the mental representational narrative meanings provide the concept that Pakistan's Prime Minister (PM) is begging in front of the IMF to get money and also increases petrol prices in the country, which raises the inflation rate in the country. Begging in front of the IMF, causes a derogatory portrayal of a country's reputation. In Figure 14, the mental concept represents that Shehbaz Shareef is beating a public random character only to get amount of money from the IMF, the member of the IMF is happy and asking him to beat more to receive more. But actually, it talks about the increase in the inflation rate in Pakistan only on the demand of the IMF and the government authorities are never going to take care of the public

and poor people of the country. The pathetic condition of the poor man has been shown, but the authorities are exerting more and more pressure in the form of taxes on the poor to meet the IMF agenda. Verbal responses in the form of text have been printed out to connect the visual with the happening of an event. In Figure 12, only one word, "TERRORISM," was included, which shows that Pakistan is going to be hit by the rise in terrorism. In Figure 13, two verbal responses can be seen: "PETROL PRICES" and "PETROL PRICES UP BY RS30 PER LITRE." This figure is about the rise in petrol prices by the Pakistani government and the pathetic condition of the public. In Figure 14, two texts can be found: "DO MORE FOR MORE..." and "INFLATION," which show that the government is imposing a high inflation rate on the poor on the demand of the IMF. And the IMF is urging the government to pressurize the public by raising poverty and inflation in the country to receive more dollars.

The conceptual narratives of representational meaning-making processes discuss classificational, analytical and symbolic processes. The classificational process of Figure 12 shows that the character of terrorism is acting as the main superordinate actor and Pakistan is acting as a subordinate participant in this cartoon. In figures 13 and 14, the member of the IMF is acting as the main participant. While the subordinate characters Shehbaz Sharief and the public general character are being controlled by the IMF.

These multiple modes of visual graphics are interacting with each other to deliver the particular intended meanings through contact, social distance and attitude. Contact in Figure 12 offers terrorism, which may raise uncertainty among the readers. Contact in Figure 13 IMF demands rise in the inflation rate by increasing the petrol prices in the country. The offer of having more dollars depends on the rise of inflation and the petroleum prices in the country. It clearly shows the demand and offer phenomenon being associated with the verbal and visual graphics of the particular cartoon. In Figure 14, the verbal statement "do more for..." shows that IMF is offering more dollars in his hand only to raise inflation in the country or to pressurize the Pakistani public. Far-personal and close-social distance can be noticed through the attempt to hug by the terrorist main actor and the resisting element of the subordinate Pakistani actor in Figure 12. In Figure 13, the close personal and public distance has been shown by the direct giving of alms in the Shehbaz Shareef's Bowl and the hike in petrol prices through government and public relations. There has been no direct relationship shown among these subordinate characters, but the public distance can be seen through the rise in petrol prices. In Figure 14, the close personal

and social distance can be seen through the IMF member who is offering more dollars for more inflation and the violence of Shehbaz Shareef on the public random character. The attitude of these three figures is subjective, where the cartoonist has manipulated linguistic pieces of information subjectively with his own particular point of view.

Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach involves two levels of analysis: macro and micro. The macro level of analysis of Figure 12 contains the character of Pakistan wearing a cap with its national flag placed in an in-group and the terrorist with the bomb face has been placed in the out-group according to the us vs. them strategy. Figure 12 emphasizes their bad things as the terrorism is heading towards Pakistan and a bomb has been designed as a face of the terrorism. The macro level of analysis of Figure 13 contains the general character in an in-group and Shehbaz Shareef and an IMF member have been placed in out-group members. Figure 13 emphasizes their bad things of receiving alms from the IMF official as a beggar and having a direct influence on the public in the form of petrol prices. The Figure 14 displays the general character of the public in an in-group and an IMF official along with the Shehbaz Shareef has been displayed in an out-group. It emphasizes their bad things by negatively portraying their characters and stating that they harm the public to get more dollars.

The micro-level analysis of figures 12, 13 and 14 involves actor description, categorization, polarization, burden, evidentiality, example/illustration, generalization, euphemism, irony and victimization as the rhetorical discursive strategies. In the actor description, in three pictures, the out-group members (them) are negatively described because they have a direct influence on or cause physical or financial harm to the in-group participants. The characters are categorized on the basis of our strategy to highlight the negative impression of the out-group members. Evidentiality has been used as a discursive strategy in these three cartoons by portraying the country flag in Figure 12 and the name of the IMF in figures 13 and 14 to validate the authority of an international institution. On the basis of illustrations, the generalization of the harm (burden or topos) to the in-group members has been polarized in the form of meaning-making processes. In Figure 12, the international reputation of Pakistan is directly being harmed through terrorism; in Figure 13, the burden on the public in the form of an increase in petrol prices has been depicted; and in Figure 14, the direct physical harm has been shown in the figure where Shehbaz Shareef is beating a public general character to get more dollars from the IMF. In Figure 14, the cartoonist has used euphemism by using the word "inflation" for the violent action

of beating a public random character in the direction of an ironical statement, “do more for...” In these three figures, the participants have been victimized through action being taken. In Figure 12, terrorism has affected the reputation of Pakistan. In Figure 13, the public has been affected by the actions of the government and the IMF. In Figure 14, the public has been victimized by the direction of the IMF.

Van Dijk’s social cognition of the context highlighted that meaning-making processes in the political cartoons play key role in understanding the multiple factors of manipulation and exaggeration of the meanings being delivered through the cartoons. Figure 12 shows that by portraying this type of terrorist character, a wave of fear can be spread across the country, making it challenging for a country to show its safe representation to the world. Most of the countries are facing terrorism, but showing a particular country with the terrorism character having a bomb type face can be harmful to the country’s reputation. Figure 13 shows that the Prime Minister (PM) of an atomic country is begging for dollars from the IMF and they are controlling him to raise petrol prices in the country. The public is already too poor and is unable to bear expenses for basic rights in their lives, but still the government raises RS 30 per liter. Figure 14 shows Shehbaz Shareef beating or pressurizing the public only to get more dollars from the IMF, as it demands and offers to raise inflation and poverty in the country to have more dollars. More pressure will be put on and more dollars will be offered. The Figure of a violent oppressor has been portrayed.

According to the analysis of the multiple modes of communication in figures 12, 13 and 14, with the help of the theoretical framework of visual grammar and a sociocognitive approach, it has been found that the cartoonists have manipulated the linguistic modes of information through subjective polarization. These cartoons fall under libel defamation because they were publicly spread through the Minute Mirror newspaper. Meaning-making processes have been manipulated through portraying the characters negatively, as in Figure 12, the portrayal of Pakistan has been depicted with terrorism; in Figure 13, the country’s representative has been negatively portrayed receiving alms penny by penny from the IMF official, which is socially derogatory remarks; and in Figure 14, PM Shehbaz Shareef is beating the public with a stick only to get money. All of these characters and other multiple modes are exaggerated to support the main theme of the country’s defamation through the use of multiple discursive practices of actor description, categorization, polarization, burden, evidentiality, example/illustration, generalization,

euphemism, irony and victimization, which, according to the insights of the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), supports the country's defamation.

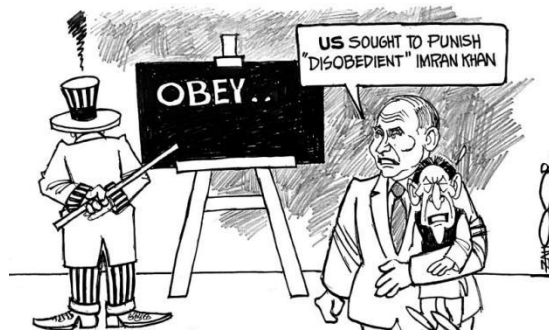


Figure 15 US Punish Disobedient Imran Khan



Figure 16 IMF, Pakistan Public Sitting

These two political cartoons were published in the Dawn newspaper on April 6 and 29, 2022, respectively. These two figures involve the character designs of Joe Biden, Imran Khan, Miftah Ismail, an IMF representative and a random public character. On a surface level of analysis, Figure 15 portrays the consequences faced by Imran Khan for not obeying the orders of the United States. The literal meanings of Figure 15 are associated with *The Tailor of Panama* written by John le Carré, where Prime Minister Osnard faces consequences for not obeying the orders given by the authorities of the United States. The novel unfolded the manipulation, exploitation and betrayals in the foreign affairs of Panama. On a surface level, Figure 16 refers to Miftah Ismail's sitting on a living human chair to engage in technical-level dialogue between the government of Pakistan and the IMF. The literal meanings of Figure 16 are associated with the particular scene in the novel *A Voyage to Laputa* also titled as *Gulliver's Travels* written by Jonathan Swift, where a Minister of State prefers to have his subjects kneel down in front of him, forming a living human chair. This scene represents the power dynamics under the minister's rule and a lack of dignity and honor for the people.

The narrative process of the representational meaning-making processes in Figure 15 tells us the story of the event through the vectorial connection of the character of Joe Biden and Imran Khan, who are directly in contact with each other. Joe Biden holds him in his arms as a child. It also forms an indirect vector with the unseen character, who is only showing his back and acting as a boss, ordering Imran Khan to "Obey". In Figure 16, there is a direct vectorial connection between three represented participants: an IMF member, Miftah Ismail and a general character representing the public, which shows that table talk is taking place between Pakistani officials and an IMF member. Miftah Ismail holds a direct vectorial connection with the public, as he is sitting on the back of the public character. In

the happening of an event, there is a reaction of the reactants too, who are performing an action in the visual graphics. In Figure 16, the angry facial reaction of Joe Biden shows that he is not happy with the disobedient Imran Khan. Imran Khan reacts as a man who got trapped and is now afraid of being punished. Another hidden character has been shown, who holds a stick in his hands and reacts as a boss and orders to obey. In Figure 16, the IMF member is the main actor who is not happy with the progress and development of the economy of Pakistan. Miftah Ismail is confused and tensed about not being accepted and the fact that he holds his hands closed to his arms shows that he is uncomfortable and not confident in his discussion. A general public character who is listening to the dialogue of both the members reacts with an opened mouth. Torn clothes and a drop of tear show that the public is going to be stressed with more burdens, even bigger than the Miftah's. There is eye-level contact between the IMF and Miftah Ismail, but not with the public character. It shows that the result of the table talk is not going to affect Miftah but the one on whom he is sitting. Mental and sociocognitive responses in Figure 15 show that Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan was threatened with punishment by US President Joe Biden. Joe Biden has captured PM Imran Khan as a disobedient child who creates disruption. But the sociocognitive abilities create a problematic situation. The president of a reputable country who has not used this verbal phrase is being quoted along with his recognizable drawing. It can create hatred for interfering in the foreign affairs of other countries by directly ordering Imran Khan to obey whatever is being ordered. Figure 16 presents the technical table talk between the IMF and Pakistani officials, showing that Miftah Ismail is using the poor man as a chair in his dialogue and is sitting on him. The general character representing the public is bending on his knee to provide support to sit him and have a discussion. But Miftah is not confident in the discussion with the IMF and might agree to the IMF's decision to raise the inflation rate or to burden the poor with it. That can be seen through the reaction of a public character's open mouth and a symbol of a teardrop. Verbal response in Figure 15, "US SOUGHT TO PUNISH DISOBEDIENT IMRAN KHAN" and "OBEY" written on a blackboard. It shows that Joe Biden is trying to teach Imran Khan the lesson of obeying his orders and wants to punish him for his already-conducted mistakes and disobedient acts. The verbal representation in Figure 16 ("IMF, PAKISTAN TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS BEGIN") and "IMF" printed on the hat of the IMF member support the visual graphic elements that table talk is all about the debt and the funding process for Pakistan.

In Figure 15, the character who does not show his face and orders Imran Khan to obey is acting as a superordinate participant in the cartoon. Joe Biden plays a key role in the figure, wanting to punish disobedient Imran Khan, who is acting as a subordinate participant of the cartoons. In Figure 16, the IMF official is acting as a main or superordinate participant in the cartoon and has the power to provide loan to Pakistan. Miftah Ismail and the random character under him are acting as the subordinate participants, who are being controlled or led by the IMF. The analytical process of both the figures deals with Pakistan's political and economic situation. The stick and the symbol of US hat in Figure 15 symbolize the power and authority of US who can lead or direct Imran Khan according to his will. In Figure 16, the torn piece of cloth and the drop of tear symbolize the situation of the Pakistani public and how much they are being deprived of their basic rights.

The demand and offer phenomenon in Figure 15 shows that if Imran Khan is going to obey their order, they are not going to punish him. Figure 16 demands debt from the IMF. In Figure 15, close personal and far social distance can be seen. The direct capture of Imran Khan in the hands of Joe Biden depicts close personal distance and there is far social distance between Imran Khan and the character who is asking him to obey. In Figure 16, a close social distance can be noticed between the IMF character and Miftah Ismail as they are sitting at the same table and discussing the same matter with straight eye contact. But there is a public distance between the public random character and Miftah Ismail. Both of these cartoons are subjectively oriented and portray the subjective opinions of cartoonists.

Van Dijk's sociocognitive macro and micro-analysis studies the level of power relations and social inequalities through rhetorical and discursive strategies. The macro level of Figure 15 contains Imran Khan in an in-group and Joe Biden in an out-group. The out-group has been negatively represented and has a direct effect on the in-group participant. It emphasizes their bad things by using the phrase "Us sought to punish disobedient Imran Khan," which clearly depicts that Joe Biden is influencing the foreign affairs of the country and directing him to obey the orders. The macro level of Figure 16 contains the public character in an in-group and Miftah Ismail and IMF officials in an out-group, who have a direct influence on the in-group participant. It contains a negative portrayal of Miftah Ismail. It emphasizes their bad things through the portrayal of the usage of a public character as a sitting chair.

The micro-level of social cognition in figures 15 and 16 includes actor description, categorization, comparison, lexicalization, polarization, evidentiality, illustration, generalization and victimization. The actor description in Figure 15 has been negatively portrayed through the lexicalization of “DISOBEDIENT, PUNISHMENT and OBEY” for PM Imran Khan. The actor's description in Figure 16 has been negatively portrayed through the depiction of Miftah sitting in public and using him as a chair. The actors in both figures have been categorized in a way to polarize the meaning-making processes of the cartoons. Additionally, the cartoonist has used evidentiality by mentioning the authorities “US and IMF” to validate his generalizations on the basis of illustration. In Figure 15, Imran Khan is being victimized by posing a charge of being disobedient and in Figure 16, the public character is being victimized by the government and IMF officials, which will result in a rise in inflation.

The social cognition of the Van Dijk’s context in Figure 15, in Pakistani context: Imran Khan, who was the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan at the time of publication of the cartoons, is being captured and ordered and is being treated as a disobedient child who does not obey the direction or orders being delivered to him. Displaying the order with the verbal response on the board shows that one country is being controlled through foreign influence. That is totally against the country’s dignity and honor. Figure 16 portrays the PDM government holding a technical-level dialogue session with the IMF on behalf of the Pakistani people. But it shows that Miftah Ismail is not serious in his dialogue and is accepting unacceptable orders being imposed on the public, as can be seen from the reaction of the general character on whom Miftah is sitting.

According to the insights of the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), figures 15 and 16 fall under libel information as these falsified meaning-making processes have been published in the newspaper and are causing harm to the country’s reputation too. The falsified verbal remarks in Figure 15—“US sought to punish disobedient Imran Khan”—and the portrayal of capturing PM of Pakistan Imran Khan in childish ways and ordering him to “obey” the US contain derogation. In Figure 16, Miftah Ismail, using a public general character as a chair in an international-level dialogue with the IMF, portrays the subjective polarization of the meanings. The cartoonists use actor description, categorization, comparison, lexicalization, polarization, evidentiality, illustration, generalization and victimization in figures 15 and 16 as discursive strategies to mediate in the meaning-making processes through their subjective social ideologies. The sociocognitive approach

highlights the ways in which cartoonists use multiple modes of visual elements to falsify and polarize meanings to cause a threat to the honor of their country, which lies under the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO).

4.4 Theme of Humorous Remarks



Figure 17 Basket or Barking Journalism

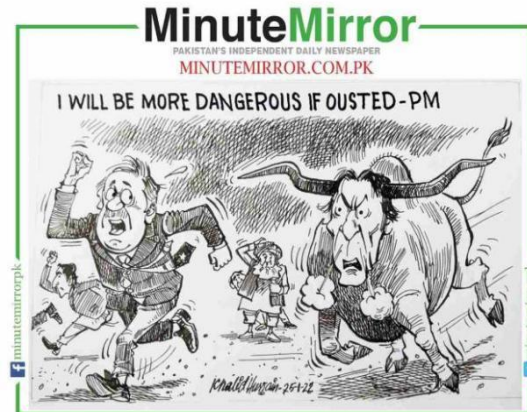


Figure 18 Imran Khan: The Dangerous Bull



Figure 19 Members of National Assembly: Loutay

These three cartoons have been published in the Minute Mirror newspaper on January 6, 25th and March 23rd of 2022. On a surface level meaning of Figure 17, the credibility of journalist Javed Chaudhary has been defamed by associating him with the act of barking. The literal meanings of Figure 17 are associated with the politically thrilling novel *House of Cards* by Michael Dobbs. The journalists Zoe Barnes and Tom Hammerschmidt are portrayed as manipulative and opportunistic. They compromise the ethics of journalism for the sake of personal gain, which leads to their personal downfall along with public distrust of the media. On the surface level meanings of Figure 18, Imran Khan has been depicted as a violent bull who crushes opposition parties for the sake of political maneuvering. The literal meanings of Figure 18 are associated with George

Orwell's *Animal Farm* where the character Napoleon, a pig representing Joseph Stalin, has been manipulated through power dynamics and violence. He uses loyal dogs to crush opposition and to control other animals on the farm. On a surface level meaning of Figure 19, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman has been depicted as the one who is trying to secure votes for non-confidence through unethical and non-democratic means. The literal meanings of Figure 19 are associated with Alexandre Dumas' novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*, where the central character Fernand Mondego has secured a seat in the Chamber of Deputies (a constitutional assembly) through unethical means of bribery, deceit and manipulation.

The narrative process or the story of happening events in these cartoons forms a vector with the participants of the cartoons that can be seen in Figure 17 via verbal interaction between the participants of Javed Chaudhary and a random character. In Figure 18, the narrative processes share the event of a race between the dangerous bull of Imran Khan and the opposition party members Shehbaz Shareef, Bilawal Bhutto and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman. In Figure 19, there is a vectorial connection between Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and the members of the national assembly who are being represented as Loutay (Ewers) a Pakistani political term. Participants in these cartoons react to the happening of the event. In Figure 17, where a journalist, Javed Chaudhary, is introducing himself to the general character. Random character posed a question by pointing out humorous remarks about which journalism, whether he belongs to the journalism of basket or barking. The reaction of the general character is humorous that can be noticed through his laughter and Javed Chaudhary looks astonished at this phrase that can be seen through the eye-level glance. In Figure 18 the dangerous bull of Imran Khan is running behind opposition parties and giving them a tough time on the ground. The bull's aggressiveness shows that it is too dangerous to be handled. Shahbaz Shareef and Bilawal Bhutto are running to save themselves from the dangerous bull of Khan. The fearful faces of opposition leaders, Shehbaz Shareef looking back at the bull while running with his full energy, Bilawal Bhutto running to save himself and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman holding his turban, depict that they are worried and fearful about the dangerous bull. In Figure 19, the members of the national assembly who are presented as ewers (Loutay) and PDM leader Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman are the participants of the cartoons. Maulana is using "flute," a musical instrument for members of the national assembly and in reaction, they are following Maulana melodically. The mental narrative process of the representative meanings of cartoon 17 shows that there is a conversation taking place between the two participants, but one of them is mocking the

other by questioning his profession as basket one or Bar..k..I...? (barking one). The cognitive abilities question the whole profession of journalism after seeing this cartoon. Cartoon 18 provides the perception of being crushed by the dangerous bull of Imran Khan. Opposition parties are fearful of the dangerous bull running behind them. Figure 19 represents that the members of the national assembly are blindly following the PDM leader. Verbal responses printed on these figures strongly cooperate with cognitive perception or mental narrative meanings. Figure 17 dialogue contains two verbal phrases by the participants: a) I AM A JOURNALIST and b) WHICH ONE BASKET OR BAR...K...I...? It depicts that the profession has been divided into two phases: basket and barking. One of the types is the basket one, which is of no use because of friendly opposition and the second one severely criticizes others, which is why it's labeled as barking. The verbal response "I WILL BE MORE DANGEROUS IF OUSTED-PM" in Figure 18 links these verbal responses to the signs and symbols used in the caricature. It seems that Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan, who is portrayed as a dangerous bull, is threatening other opposition parties that he will be more dangerous if ousted. Figure 19 only contains one verbal response, "PDM," that links cartoons with the political scenario of "changing political affiliations through money" only to support PDM. The same political charge has been printed out without providing solid legal evidence.

The classificational process of the conceptual processes talks about the superordinate and subordinate characters in the cartoons and assigns them different roles that need to be performed. In Figure 17, Javed Chaudhary is acting as a superordinate participant and the random character is acting as subordinate general character. In Figure 18, the dangerous bull of Imran Khan is acting as the main superordinate character; on the other hand, other opposition political leaders Shahbaz Shareef, Bilawal Bhutto and Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman are acting as the subordinate characters. In Figure 19, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman is acting as the superordinate participant and the members of national assembly are portrayed as subordinate participants.

Different interactional aspects of these cartoons provide more descriptive information about the figures, as contact in Figure 17 demands an honorary representation of the profession; Figure 18 demands political stability and offers peace in the case of not being ousted; and in Figure 19, no direct demand and offer phenomenon can be noticed, but it pragmatically demands the change of political affiliations. Different aspects of interaction can be noticed through the different uses of social distance between the

participants. Close personal distance can be noticed in Figure 17, where two participants are interacting with each other and one of them makes fun of the other. The same level of eyeline glance can be noticed and the smiling face of the general character supports the theme of humorous remarks. In Figure 18, there is close personal distance to Shahbaz Shareef and far personal and far social distance between Bilawal and Maulana. Because the dangerous bull is running behind Shahbaz Shareef, the rest of the two are fearful of their turn too, but they are far away from the dangerous bull. Shahbaz Shareef looking back at the bull while running depicts the fear of being crushed. While there is a far distance between the bull and Bilawal and the size of his character is bit smaller, which shows that he is running from a far distance, the same type of small size character of Maulana holding his turban shows that he has been left far behind in this race. But the aggressive mode of the dangerous bull of Imran Khan and the same level of bigger character of Shahbaz Shareef create a close personal distance. Close social distance can be noticed in Figure 19, where a PDM leader is acting as a snake charmer but is represented as an "ewer charmer." He is charming the flock of ewers with his instrumental flute and they are directly following him and walking behind Maulana. Maulana keeps his left eye on the members of the national assembly, whether they are following him back or not.

Van Dijk's macro level of social-cognitive analysis of Figure 17 has placed a public character in an in-group participant and Javed Chaudhary, a journalist of politics, has been displayed in an out-group participant. The out-group member has been severely criticized for creating a negative representation. It emphasizes their bad things by comparing the credibility of a journalist to the barking of a dog. It de-emphasizes their good things by not supporting or mentioning the good services of a journalist. Figure 18 places the opposition members of the assembly, Shehbaz Shareef, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Bilawal Bhutto in an in-group participant and the animal depiction of PM Imran Khan has been placed in an out-group member. The out-group participant (them) has been negatively represented in Bull Shape, who is causing harm to others. It emphasizes the negative characteristics or bad things of the outgroup participant. Figure 19 contains the character of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman in an in-group and symbolical assembly members in the form of "Loutay" have been placed in an out-group. The symbolic representation has been negatively displayed in the cartoon. It emphasizes their bad things, as they deceived their political party.

The micro-levels of social cognition in figures 17, 18 and 19 include actor description, categorization, counterfactual, polarization, negative other-presentation,

populism and victimization. The actor's description of Figure 17 portrays the Javed Chaudhary character negatively by pointing him out as the Barking Journalist. Vague and incomplete spellings of the word "barking" represent that the speaker is reluctant to use it but is doing it to make fun of him. The actor's description of Figure 18 portrays the character of Imran Khan as a violent bull; the animal representation has been negatively displayed. Other actors in the cartoon are running from the fear of a dangerous bull. In the Figure 19, the actor's description of national assembly members has been negatively portrayed in the form of "Loutay." The cartoonist has polarized the meaning-making processes of these three figures through the discursive strategy of categorization of the characters of Javed Chaudhary, Imran Khan as the dangerous bull and the assembly members as "Loutay." These figures point to negative other representations to polarize the meanings. The use of the "if" in Figure 18 points out Van Dijk's rhetorical strategy of the "counterfactual," which refers to the speech of Imran Khan, where he mentions that he would be more dangerous if ousted, which supports populism's discursive strategy, where political leaders express their strategy to gain more popularity. The rhetorical linguistic analysis shows that Imran Khan has used this counterfactual only for the purpose of populism, not to actually be the dangerous bull to crush opposition in the field. Micro-level analysis shows that cartoonists' polarization of meaning-making processes victimized Javed Chaudhary in Figure 17, Imran Khan in Figure 18 and the members of the national assembly in Figure 19.

By linking it with the social cognition of the context model, it relates these figures to the social beliefs and ideologies of the particular social background of Pakistan. Figure 17 talks about the profession of journalism in Basket and Bar...k..I. (Barking), which means the journalism is being represented with friendly opposition due to the corrupt practices. Secondly the profession is being criticized with barking, which is the quality of "dogs." The journalists who criticize others are being represented as dogs who bark at others for no reason. It is quite derogatory to refer to a human being as a dog who barks at others. The context of Figure 18 relates to the speech of Imran Khan, where he said that he would be more dangerous if ousted, but it did not mean that he would be a dangerous bull who could crush others. And on the other hand, he was still the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan at the time of publishing this cartoon. How can a Prime Minister (PM) who is the representative of a country be portrayed as an animal or bull? It is against the freedom of speech to portray a human being as an animal. Figure 19 links it with the political corruption of buying members of the national assembly to vote against the no confidence motion against the

sitting Prime Minister (PM). PDM leader Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman is using a musical instrument to attract them. But supporting the political charge of "Loutay" as representing the members of assembly who are elected by the majority of Pakistani public and now they are representing them in assembly would be defamatory against the public itself where these members are being violated.

The defamation ordinance places these political cartoons under the libel defamation as these figures were published in the Minute Mirror newspaper. According to the theory of visual grammar and social cognition of the context model, the cartoonists in figures 17, 18 and 19 have used the representative and interactive meaning-making processes and rhetorical devices of actor description, categorization, counterfactual, polarization, negative other-presentation, populism and victimization to falsify the information being delivered by emphasizing the negative characteristics of the journalist Javed Chaudhary in Figure 17, comparing him with the dog barking, the animal portrayal of the dangerous bull of Imran Khan in Figure 18 and the representation of the assembly member as Loutay" (ewers). The harm to the offended entities, Javed Chaudhary, Imran Khan and assembly members, has been provided, which, according to the PDO, is not even required to be proved. This type of defamation has been placed under the theme of humorous remarks, which contains derogatory humorous remarks against the offended entities.



Figure 20 The government is setting the public on Fire



Figure 21 Govt abolishing subsidies



Figure 22 Pak-US strained ties

These political cartoons were published in Minute Mirror newspapers on June 5, 15 and 29, respectively and link with the political instability in Pakistan. On the surface meanings of the Figures 20 and 21, the implementation of economic policies by the government of Pakistan has been criticized. These economic policies are setting the public on fire by raising inflation in the country. The literal meanings of Figures 20 and 21 are associated with Ayn Rand's novel *Atlas Shrugged*. The novel explores the ways in which the government attempts to implement various economic policies that lead to social unrest and economic decline in the country. On a surface level of Figure 22, Shahbaz Shareef (Prime Minister of Pakistan) has been depicted as violent against the public for the sake of dollars by IMF representatives. The literal meanings of Figure 22 are associated with *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. The main character, Madam Defarge, who was leading the revolutionary group, gets involved in acts of terror and violence against the enemies in the name of their own brand of justice.

The narrative processes in these cartoons represent a happening event by creating a story or event through combining multiple modes of communication and investigating the vectorial representation between the participants of the event. In Figure 20, the PDM government is setting the public on fire by raising gas prices and is saying sorry for taking tough decisions. It forms an indirect vectorial representation as they are not physically in contact with each other, but a gas pipeline leading towards PDM leaders forms a vector. Figure 21 forms a vectorial representation between Miftah Ismail and a general public character who is being hanged. A rope in Miftah's hand, tied to the chair, creates a vectorial connection between the participants. Figure 22 forms an indirect vector as Imran Khan, who has been represented as a horse, collapsed on the US senator and injured him. The happening of the event forms vectors between the participants.

Participants react to the happening of the event in cartoons, as in Figure 20, where the public character is crying because he was set on fire by the PDM government and the government members are trying to pretend that they are worried about the incident. All of them are looking at the general public character who was caught by fire. Shahbaz Shareef is holding his head, Bilawal is covering his mouth, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Zardari and other government members are showing their worries by their facial reactions. The participants in Figure 21 are reacting to the rise of the inflation rate in a country where a public character is being hanged due to the inflation but is standing on the chair of the subsidies provided by the last government that help him stay alive. But the new government finance minister wants to abolish these subsidies by dragging chair with a rope. Consequently, it will cause the death of the man who was hanged and tied with ropes. The teardrop and the opened mouth of the public character show that he is crying and calling for help to maintain subsidies. In Figure 22, two participants react to the event; Imran Khan as an animal horse who got uncontrolled and dropped its rider, who was the US Senator. The horse is looking back at its rider aggressively with his furious facial reactions, while the signs and symbols of stars show that Senator is in pain due to falling on the ground and is now crying in pain, which can be seen through his opened mouth and the facial reaction, but pointing at Imran Khan, who is acting as a horse in this visual, shows that he is responsible for this incident. The cognitive abilities help to understand the happenings of the event in the pictorial graphics. Figure 20 deals with the irresponsibility of the government by raising gas prices and now they are pretending to feel the pain of inflation or the rise of gas prices. Figure 21 shows that the government itself is trying to cause the death of the poor people in the country by snatching their basic livelihood rights and the subsidies that are given to them, who were already living hand to mouth. Abolishing the subsidies or dragging the chair, causes the death of the public. Figure 22 depicts Imran Khan's incident of dropping his rider on the ground that caused him pain and also, he is responsible for the PAK-US relationship by showing aggressive facial reactions. The textual pieces of information in these figures cooperate with the ideas and the mental abilities of these cartoons. The text in the figures "GAS PRICES" and "SORRY, WE ARE FORCED TO TAKE TOUGH DECISIONS," supports the idea that the government itself is trying to raise inflation by raising gas prices as high as the flames are depicted. And at the same time, they are showing sympathy by saying that the government is forced to take difficult decisions. Three textual pieces in Figure 21: "SUBSIDIES", "INFLATION," and "COUNTRY TO DEFAULT IF SUBSIDIES ARE NOT ABOLISHED" support the visual

graphics element depicting that the government is trying to snatch the basic necessities of life from the poor, who are currently standing at the point of collapse. The verbal statement in Figure 22, “IMRAN RESPONSIBLE FOR STRAINED TIES—US SENATOR,” directly held Imran Khan responsible for the strained ties between Pakistan and the United States (US).

The participants of cartoons are performing actions differently as superordinate and subordinate characters. In Figure 20, the man set on fire is acting as a subordinate character with a bigger sketch, but the rest of the government members who have authority to control gas prices or the cause of inflation in the country are acting as superordinate characters. In Figure 21, finance minister Miftah Ismail is acting as the superordinate participant and the public character is acting as a subordinate participant in the cartoon. In Figure 22, the horse with the facial resemblance to Imran Khan is acting as the main superordinate participant and the US senator who was dropped from the horse ride to the ground is a subordinate character. These three figures are representing the part and whole relation to Pakistani politics that is being symbolically represented through the visual elements of faces, the characterial graphics of the political leaders, the use of the name of the country, etc. In Figure 20, the worried faces, tear drops and a star symbolize the concern of the government members, while the opened mouth of the random character, a drop of tear and a sound wave symbolically represent the pain being felt. In Figure 21, the rope tied around the neck symbolically represents death. In Figure 22, throwing the bridle and the horse stirrup iron away symbolically represent that Imran Khan is not willing to give him a ride and the symbols of stars show that the US senator is in pain.

All of these multiple modes of graphic representation are interacting with each other and delivering the meaning-making processes of the figures. In Figure 20, there is no physical contact between the superordinate and subordinate participant, but the demand and offer phenomena show that the public is demanding reduction of gas prices. Figure 21 demands the continuity of the subsidies given by the former government, but the government offers the country default in response to maintaining these subsidies. Figure 22 demands good working relationships and equilateral ties between PAK and the US. The different positions of the multiple modes of communication cause different social distances, as in figures 20 and 21, where public distance can be noticed. All of the tough decisions against the public can affect them, but in Figure 20, there is no direct contact between the government and the public. Only one gas pipeline can be seen, which shows that the

government is directly causing pressure and inflation in the public. In Figure 21, the public participant is tied with the rope around his loin and neck and is being hanged. A rope in the hand of Miftah Ismail, which is also tied to the chair, shows the public is affected by the government's decision to abolish subsidies. A far personal distance can be seen in Figure 22, where Imran Khan's horse causes the collapse of a US senator and he is now pointing out that the fall of their working relationship is due to Imran Khan; there is no physical contact between them. These three cartoons propagate the personal views of the cartoonists, which are totally subjective based on the mental structures of the cartoonists. Multiple modes of visual elements, separately and collectively, provide the meaning-making process of the cartoons and the use of framing devices in these figures belongs to the one single frame or the theme of the cartoons. But by changing the position and size of the elements, signs and symbols, we can change the meaning-making processes.

Van Dijk's macro-level analysis of Figure 20 contains a public character being set on fire by an in-group member and the government official along with their allies are presented in the out-group. The out-group participants are negatively portrayed as being responsible for setting in-group participants on fire through rising gas prices as high as the flames. This figure emphasizes the bad things about out-group participants who are raising gas prices without taking care of the public. The macro level of analysis of Figure 21 places the Miftah Ismail in an in-group and the public character in an out-group. The out-group member has been referred to as the reason for the country's default, as they have been awarded the subsidy by the former government. It emphasizes their bad things, as the public benefits from the subsidy, but actually it causes a loss to the government. It emphasizes our good things through the phrase "country to default if subsidy is not abolished," which depicts that Miftah Ismail is making efforts to save the country from default. The macro level of analysis of Figure 22 places the US senator in an in-group and the animal depiction of Imran Khan in an out-group. Imran Khan has been negatively depicted through animal illustration and held responsible for the strained ties.

The rhetorical discursive strategies of micro-level analysis of the social cognition of figures 20, 21 and 22 include actor description, categorization, euphemism, counterfactual, polarization, generalization and victimization. Actors in Figure 20 are negatively portrayed as they are directly involved in rising gas prices and are saying they are forced to take tough decisions only to maintain populism. The actor description in Figure 21 has been depicted negatively by emphasizing our good things of saving the

country from default and their bad things of benefiting from the subsidy, which is the cause of a country default. The actor's description of Figure 22 has been negatively portrayed through animal depiction and pointing out the bad things by calling Imran Khan responsible for strained ties, which saves our face and gets rid of the public charge of foreign influence in the country. Cartoonists have categorized the figures in a way to polarize the meanings to highlight the bad things about them (out-group participants). The cartoonist has used the euphemism strategy through using the word of "gas prices" for the action of setting a random public character on fire through taking tough decisions. Figure 21 contains the counterfactual strategy, as the country's default has been directly linked to the fact of abolishing subsidies by using the "IF." The action has been justified through a counterfactual strategy. These three figures use the victimization of the participants involved in the cartoons. In Figure 20, the public is being victimized due to the tough decisions of the government and government representatives are being politically victimized. In Figure 21, the public is being victimized by the government's decision to abolish subsidies. In Figure 22, a US senator has been victimized by the actions of Imran Khan.

Van Dijk's context of the social cognition of Figure 20 deals with the misuse of power by the government. As the government is taking steps against the capability of the poor, instead of raising the per capita income of a person, they are causing an increase in inflation. On the other hand, the government is not raising income, which causes a budget collapse. It means that the government itself is setting people on fire. Figure 21 deals with the government's efforts to hang people to death by abolishing the subsidiary chair where they are living their lives. Figure 22 deals with the country-level working relationship, so it should not be portrayed with aggressive gestures and portraying a human being in animal form is derogatory. The government's portrayal of setting its public to the death level is problematic. The public may get hurt and it may cause hatred among people.

According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), figures 20, 21 and 22 fall under libel defamation as they are publicly spread in the Minute Mirror newspaper. The Minute Mirror newspaper does not have the privilege of defamation. The theoretical analysis of the multiple modes of communication concludes that the cartoonist has falsified these portrayals by using different elements of visual grammar and rhetorical strategies of actor description, categorization, euphemism, counterfactual, polarization, generalization and victimization. The linguistic analysis of the rhetorical strategies of social cognition

concludes that figures 20, 21 and 22 are polarized. The publication of falsified and manipulated meanings comes under the defamation ordinance. These humorous remarks cause harm to the offended entities, self-esteem and honor.

4.5 Theme of Spreading Hate / Threat



Figure 23 No-Confidence Motion



Figure 24 Accountability as a State Terror



Figure 25 The government is crushing the public under its feet



Figure 26 Punjab on a Fire

These political cartoons were published in Dawn newspapers on January 14, 28, February 27 and May 8, respectively. On a surface level of Figure 23, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman has been depicted as a violent character who is filling gun powder into the bullets that are going to be used against the government. The literal meanings of Figure 23 are associated with *V for Vendetta* by Alan Moore, where the character V becomes an image of resistance against the totalitarian regime. He wears the mask of Guy Fawkes and gets involved in the terror activities of using bullets, guns and other explosives to resist Adam Sutler's oppressive government. On the surface level of Figure 24, Imran Khan's vision of accountability has been portrayed as the government's tactics to control opposition parties. While he literal meanings are associated with George Orwell's classic novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. This novel explores the use of military instruments by the government led by Big Brother. The government uses the police and military to ensure accountability and loyalty to the party's ideology. They monitor their citizens through surveillance and interrogation. These actions are supported by maintaining orders and ensuring public well-

being. However, it is contrary to reality because these actions are only to control the opposition's authority. On a surface level of Figure 25, the manipulation and exploitation of the Pakistani government have been portrayed through crushing the public under the feet in the name of controlling inflation. While the literal meanings are associated with *The Hunger Games*, written by Suzanne Collins. This novel explores the ways in which the government of Panem (Capitol) manipulates the public economically, which indirectly raises inflation. The government exploits basic rights through forced labor, resource hoarding, unfair trade practices, agricultural disruption and controlling the economy. These types of manipulations and exploitation contribute to inflation and social unrest. On a surface level of Figure 26, the governor of Punjab has been portrayed as the source of unrest and instability in the region and he himself is calling for help to ensure his own interests. While the literal meanings are associated with the novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, written by Gabriel García Márquez. The novel explores the ways in which a political figure, Colonel Gerineldo Marquez, manipulates the situation to maintain his power. He exploited the existing tensions in the town of Macondo to provoke conflicts and rivalry among different groups. He uses violence as a tool to maintain his authority and power in the region by spreading a wave of fear. Whenever he feels that his authority and power are being manipulated, he calls for help from the higher military authorities or government to protect the interests of the state.

The action in these three figures is being unfolded by the vectorial representation among the participants that creates a story of the event being portrayed. In Figure 23, the action of political terrorism has been depicted, where two political leaders, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman and Shahbaz Shareef, are forming vectors by filling the gun powder in the bullet that is going to be used against the sitting Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan. In Figure 24, the Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan, Imran Khan, is using accountability as state terror against the opposition parties. Imran Khan is using Shahzad Akbar and Musadiq Abbasi as explosive material in the canon of political terror and accountability. In Figure 25, the Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan, depicted through the symbol of Pishawri chappal, is crushing the public under his feet. The public is forming a vectorial representation with the action of the government being represented through the Pishawri Chappal that Imran Khan used to wear. A direct vectorial representation of an action is being depicted in this political cartoon. Action in Figure 26 forms the vectorial representation of the steps being taken by the governor of Punjab, who is setting Punjab on fire. The direct actional process is

represented through the flame in his hand, which plays a key role in portraying the character representation in the cartoon. These participants in the figure react according to the framed meaning-making processes. The participants in the figures react to the happening of the event, as in Figure 23, where Maulana is actively taking part in filling the gun powder and his facial gestures, frowned eyes and curled eyebrows depict he is trying to be violent to spread terror. Shahbaz Shareef is folding his arms around his loins, which portrays him as not actively taking part in filling explosive material but as an eyewitness to the action or persuading Maulana to act. Imran Khan, being the only participant in Figure 24, reacts aggressively by folding his sleeves and using two of his cabinet members as explosive material against opposition parties in the name of accountability. In Figure 25, the participant's recognizable face has not been portrayed, but this research also analyzes the signs, symbols and names of institutions and countries. The depiction of Pishawri Chappal with the use of the word "GOVERNMENT," denotes PM Imran Khan, who is crushing the public brutally under his feet. Public participants are running to save themselves from being crushed. The Governor of Punjab is acting and reacting as a sole participant in Figure 26, where he is depicted as responsible for setting Punjab on fire and in his reaction, he himself is calling for help too. All of these meaning-making signs and symbols and the reactors of the cartoons are supported with textual and verbal information. Figure 23 contains three verbal responses, "Gun Powder" written on the turban of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman, "NO-CONFIDENCE," and "MOTION" written on the explosive bullets, which support the act of terrorism, but the verbal depiction links it with the political terror. Figure 24 contains three verbal responses, "ACCOUNTABILITY" written on the canon, "MUSADIQ ABBASI" and "SHAHZAD AKBAR" written on the explosive canon shells. The pictorial and verbal depictions both link it with state terrorism. Only one verbal response, "GOVT TAKING STEPS TO CONTROL INFLATION," can be seen in Figure 25, which links it with Imran Khan, who was in government at the time of the publication of the cartoon. By linking the verbal response to the signs and symbols used in this cartoon, it is implied that the cartoonist is mocking the government and that there is a distinction between the words of mouth and the actions being taken on the ground level. In Figure 26, four verbal responses "PUNJAB", "GOVERNOR", "HELP," and "HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE," have been displayed that support the message or the action of Governor Punjab setting the province on fire and calling for help himself. It shows the double-faced strategy of the governor of Punjab.

In Figure 23, Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman is acting as the superordinate participant of the cartoon who is directly involved in filling the bullets with gun powder, whereas Shahbaz Sharief is acting as the subordinate participant of the cartoon who is not directly involved in these terror activities. In figures 24 and 26, one main participant is involved in the action. In Figure 24, Imran Khan is acting as a superordinate participant and in Figure 26, Governor Punjab is playing the key role. In Figure 25, the main participant is hidden behind the scene, but his shoes are designed, which symbolizes the identity of Imran Khan. Two public figures with general character identities are acting as subordinate characters. These four political cartoons deal with the part and whole relation of the Pakistani political situation.

Interactive aspects of the visual graphics, contact in Figure 23, demand power relations in terms of using their political right of no confidence motion against the sitting Prime Minister (PM) of Pakistan. But it offers the use of bullets and gun powder in case political attempts fail; it refers to political anarchy. Figure 24 offers terror against the opposition parties in the name of accountability and demands satisfactory political engineering. In Figure 25: A superordinate participant offers the crushing of poor people under their feet; on the other hand, subordinate participants who are running demand control over inflation and set them free from the government pressure of being crushed. Figure 26, where Governor Punjab is offering political anarchy and instability by setting Punjab on fire through highly inflammable material and on the other hand, he is demanding help from others to save Punjab from being completely burned. Another interactive aspect of the meaning-making process is social distance. Figure 23 shows a close personal and far social distance between the participants. They are standing beside each other and acting accordingly, which shows a close personal distance, but doing contrary actions, one participant is actively filling the gun powder and the other is folding his arm and not directly helping the other, which shows a far social distance. Figure 24 shows a far personal distance as Imran Khan is using accountability against opposition parties, but the opposition members are not being portrayed; actions are being taken from a far personal level of government sections. Figure 25 portrays the public's distance, as the public is being affected directly by government decisions, while on the other hand, the public is trying to escape from the government's tough decisions or pressure. Figure 26 shows a close personal distance as he sets Punjab on fire through inflammable material and then asks for help personally. Another interactive aspect is objectivity and the subjectivity of political

cartoons. These four cartoons are subjective in nature because opinion-oriented information is being delivered.

Van Dijk's macro level of social cognition of the Figure 23 emphasizes bad things by portraying the characters of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman negatively. Figure 24 has been negatively portrayed, where only one main actor is using explosive material in a canon. It emphasizes their bad ways of using Musadiq Abbasi and Shehzad Akbar for political victimization. Figure 25 has been depicted negatively, where the out-group participant is crushing the public under his feet. It emphasizes their bad things through power relations and social inequalities. Figure 26 negatively highlights the character of Governor Punjab. It emphasizes their bad things through a depiction of setting Punjab on fire.

The micro analysis of figures 23, 24, 25 and 26 includes actor description, categorization, implication, hyperbole, irony, euphemism, polarization, burden and victimization. Figure 23 describes that the actors are involved in terror activity of filling gun powder into the bullets, but actually they are preparing to use it as no-confidence motion against PM. Figure 24 describes that PM Imran Khan is using accountability as explosive material to eradicate the opposition parties only for the purpose of populism. Figure 25 describes the power relations of PM Imran Khan with the public through a portrayal of social inequality and crushing the public under his Pishawri Chappal. Figure 26 describes the actor governor of Punjab as being involved in wrong practices to set the province on fire by using highly inflammable material. The categorization of the characters in these four cartoons includes the discursive strategy of an implicature, where cartoonists are polarizing the meaning-making processes implicitly. The cartoonist violates the meaning or miscommunicates to alter the meaning. The cartoonist uses hyperbolic expression by exaggerating the real meanings of the discourse through portraying terror activities: filling gun powder, using accountability as an explosive material of canon, crushing poor people under the shoes and setting whole province on fire. The cartoonists in figures 23 and 24 have used the euphemism strategy by linking the act of terror to the no-confidence motion and the accountability process. In Figure 23 irony can be seen in the opposite effect of the cartoon vs. textual elements printed on the bullets. The action of filling gun powder in the bullets has been polarized with the constitutional action of confidence motion. Figure 25 contains the irony of providing a solution to control inflation by crushing the poor under the feet. Expressions in these four cartoons are politically burdensome and victimizing for the participants.

Van Dijk's context model of social cognition links it with the societal perspectives of the cartoons. Figure 23 states that the use of bullets and gun powder on the turban of Maulana is socially unacceptable as it promotes the concept of terrorism linkage with Islam and political terror, or political engineering. No confidence motion is the constitutional right of the members of the constitutional assembly, but the depiction of the bullets and gun powder is derogatory. Usually, the use of a turban is a sign of honor and respect and has religious affiliation. The verbal response of the gun powder on the turban violates the cultural, social and religious rights of a community and promotes the agenda of Islam as terror. Figure 24 links this cartoon with state terrorism, as PM Imran Khan is depicted as using cannon and shells. Although it is not the job done by a Prime Minister (PM) of the country, He is not a military man. But the depiction of this figure shows Imran Khan is using accountability as state terrorism or political engineering against the opposition. This concept can be portrayed through another mode of communication that can be acceptable socially, but the use of explosive materials by the PM is defamatory or derogatory. Figure 25 supports the rise of inflation in the country through the tough decisions of the government, while on the other hand, the government is pretending to take steps to control it. Inflation and poverty are eye-opening facts, but portraying the symbolic gestures of PM Khan crushing the public under his feet brutally is disgusting and may cause a problem for his political party and agenda. Figure 26 states that the governor of Punjab sets the province on fire by taking steps that are beyond his legal rights as governor and these steps are causing anarchy and political instability in Punjab.

According to the defamation ordinance, publishing hateful, falsified information falls under libel defamation. figures 23, 24, 25 and 26 have been publicly distributed in the newspaper Dawn newspaper. The data analysis of these cartoons under the theoretical underpinnings of the study finds that the cartoonist has manipulated the meaning-making processes through the use of linguistic signs and symbols to cause threats to the offended entities' honor and to spread against them. The formulation of the meanings through visual grammar's representational and interactive meaning-making processes and macro- and micro-level sociocognitive analysis of discursive strategies via actor description, categorization, implication, hyperbole, irony, euphemism, polarization, burden and victimization conclude that the cartoonist has manipulated to meet his intention of spreading hate. Which cause harm to the reputation of Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman in Figure 23 through the depiction of terror activities, to Imran Khan in Figure 24 because of a charge

of state terrorism against opposition parties for political engineering, to Imran Khan in Figure 25 through his symbolic Pishawri Chappal crushing the public under his shoes and to Governor Punjab, who has been portrayed as the cause of political disturbances in Punjab. According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), a threat or harm to the offended entities has already occurred through the spreading of these subjectively manipulated caricatures and is not even required to be proved.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This chapter is the final stage of the study, where the researcher presents the findings of the study to answer the research questions or solve the research problem of the study, discussion, recommendations for cartoonists and future researchers and concluding remarks by summarizing the whole study.

5.1 Findings of the Study

This study analyzed the 25 political cartoons in Pakistani newspapers and found that the cartoonists used visual grammar by combining multiple modes of communication via representational, interactive and compositional meaning-making processes for the political cartoons. Representational and interactive meaning-making processes are widely used in these cartoons. Cartoonists have used narrative processes to represent the information that they intend to communicate by creating an active vectorial representation among participants. Static or stable processes play an important role in developing a sense of the representation of meaning. The participant in the cartoons creates connection by having contact (demand and offer phenomena), social distance (close personal, far personal, close social, far social and public distance) and the subjective attitude of the cartoons. Mainly, cartoonists delivered their intended meanings through the multiple modes of communication by showing representational and interactive meaning-making processes.

As far as the compositional meaning-making processes are concerned, separate and composite analysis of the multiple modes of communication of each political cartoon were interlinked with each other. All of the visual elements in each political cartoon belong to the particular event being depicted.

The cartoonists manipulate the linguistic information by using different modes of communication in a totally opposite way, which erases the original information and causes defamation. The study found that the elements of the visual grammar work the same as the grammar of sentences. Changing the position and size of the particular objects, signs and symbols can alter the meanings of the visual graphics. The cartoonists have used visual grammar to falsify the meaning-making processes and to cause harm to the offended entities. Additionally, the use of different levels of actors (low angle, high angle and same level of eyeline), gestures (smile, stare, finger pointed out, tilted eyes, cry, frown faces,

defensive gesture, etc.), different sizes of the objects and the characters and the tone of the statements (aggressive, controversial and argumentative) helped the cartoonists to subjectively social cognition.

This study has found that cartoonists influence interpretation and social cognition through falsified meaning-making processes of visual grammar and the micro- and macro-levels of sociocognitive approach. Cartoonists not only mediated through social ideologies but also manipulated the verbal and non-verbal modes of information. Most of the modes of communication in these 25 political cartoons were falsified according to the original response by the originator of the message, but the cartoonists designed them in such a way that these modes could cause damage to the honor and self-esteem of the offended entity. Falsified information can even pose a severe threat to participants in political cartoons. The wrong interpretation of political cartoons due to manipulated information causes a loss of political affiliations, popularity, honor, self-esteem and the political agenda.

This research study found five types of themes of falsification of the information and the defamation of the offended entities: the theme of severe or unjust criticism; the theme of manipulation; the theme of a country's reputation; the theme of humorous remarks; and the theme of spreading hate or threats. It shows that cartoonists used different ways to meet their agenda of defamation or severe criticism by manipulating the linguistic information on the basis of an individual, political party, organization, or country. The use of these means goes beyond freedom of expression because it does not provide the freedom to spread falsified information or to hurt an individual's honor and self-esteem. This research study found that the meaning-making processes through the multiple modes of communication in the political cartoons cooperated with the defamatory charges against the cartoonists in an active way. It is in line with the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO). All of these 25 political cartoons lied under libel defamation because they were publicly spread through the newspapers. No evidence of the loss is required to be proved in this case. When the publication process is done, the cartoonists may fall into legal trouble.

This study found that the cartoonists have used both types of mental models: situational or semantic models and context or pragmatic models. Cartoonists have used four macro levels of social cognition: emphasize on our good things, emphasize on their bad things, de-emphasize on our bad things and de-emphasize on their good things, along with twenty rhetorical discursive strategies of actor description, categorization, comparison,

lexicalization, disclaimer, evidentiality, authority, burden, positive self-presentation, negative other-presentation, example/illustration, generalization, implication, counterfactual, populism, euphemism, hyperbole, irony, polarization and victimization under the micro level of analysis. Both levels of analysis support the concept of positive self-representation and negative other representation. Additionally, the macro-levels of analysis are polarized on the basis of power differentiation, dominance and social inequalities, while the micro-levels of analysis are polarized through rhetorical and discursive strategies.

This study has also found that not only the visual modes of communication manipulate the information, but also the textual pieces involved in the meaning-making processes support the non-verbal resources. The cartoonists not only mediated but also manipulated the verbal and non-verbal modes of communication to control the mental models through subjective ideologies by using the us vs. them strategy of portraying negative others and positive self-presentation on the basis of social group differentiation.

5.2 Discussion

This researcher analyzed the cartoonists' use of falsified meaning-making processes in the defamatory political cartoons to cause harm to offended entities. This study finds out the cartoonist's manipulation of the meaning-making processes through macro- and micro-level social cognition. Cartoonists tend to design the visual and verbal modes that manipulate the original meanings. On the basis of the nature of cartoons, Osho (2008) divided cartoons into six categories: 1) general cartoons; 2) economic trade cartoons; 3) environmental cartoons; 4) Social cartoons; 5) gag cartoons; and 6) political cartoons. The researcher in the present study has taken one of the categories of cartoons identified by Osho (2008). The researchers (Shaikh, Tariq and Saqlain 2019; Barker, 2016; J. L. Edwards & Ware, 2005; J. L. Edwards, 2001) have investigated the political cartoons in the election campaigns. Political cartoons are not limited to election campaigns. It is a vast field of knowledge that still needs to be studied. The researcher in the present study has investigated the political cartoons in an interdisciplinary study overlapping with the legal domain and the linguistic aspects of meaning-making processes in the multimodal visual discourse. There are multiple types of political cartoons, depending on the nature of the purpose of the visual depiction. Ifechelobi and Nwachukwu (2021) have analyzed their research data on political cartoons under the theme of corruption and conduit to highlight the socio-psychological, religious and socio-cultural dimensions of corruption and their impact on a

society. Jabeen and Ahmad (2018) categorized their cartoons under the theme of foreign relations between countries and concluded that semiotic resources are widely being used to communicate, exaggerate and disseminate particular ideologies through the representation of the participants in the visual graphics. The researcher highlighted Pak-US relations under the theme of foreign relations through the portrayal of Bush and Musharraf. The researcher in the present study explored the different aspects of exaggerated meaning-making processes by delimiting the research data only to Pakistani newspapers and political situations. Dilmaç and Kocadal (2018) analyzed the data of political cartoons under the theme of refugees and immigrants to highlight the issue of the long stay of refugees in Turkish territory. They denoted refugees as a threat to the country's stability by analyzing Turkish politicians and refugees' discourse. Similarly, Adejuwon and Shina Alim (2009) have identified two categories of cartoons: a) cartoons of opinion; and b) cartoons of jokes on the basis of metaphorical codification and satirical or humorous genre. The researcher in the present study derived a new aspect as cartoons for manipulations. It has been derived on the basis of defamation, falsification and manipulation for the sake of humor, satire and unjust criticism. The researcher believes that these types of cartoons do not fall under the category of opinionated cartoons because sharing an opinion is always based on freedom of speech, which is totally opposite to the humiliating depiction of someone or something. The researcher in the current study has analyzed the political cartoons in the present study and finds out that political cartoons are further categorized into the five different categories on the basis of stories or events being portrayed in political cartoons. It is found that political cartoonists in Pakistan mainly portray the information under these five themes to manipulate the information or cause defamation. The major themes identified are: theme of severe or unjust criticism; theme of manipulation; theme of a country's reputation; theme of humorous remarks; theme of spreading hate or threats. This study finds that cartoonists severely criticize the political leaders and their parties, government institutions and their policies, manipulate the meanings only for the sake of fun, cause country-level defamation by portraying symbols, flags and directly mentioning the name of the country and their policies, give humiliatory and humorous remarks and spread hate against a particular offended party, person, or organization.

These types of manipulations in political cartoons are based on the subjective nature of the cartoonists. Tehseem and Bokhari (2015) argued that Pakistani cartoonists provide face-saving to one political party by face-stripping another on the basis of their affiliations.

This study revealed that political cartoons in newspapers are portrayed in a way that causes humiliation to a particular offended entity and provides face-saving for the one to whom the cartoonist has an affiliation. Ghilzai (2020) qualitatively experimented and found that 65% of political cartoons in Pakistan are controversial on the basis of affiliations to represent power and hegemony. Similarly, the researcher in the current study proved that cartoonists in Pakistan are using multiple modes of communication to cause a manipulation of the linguistic messages to influence the social cognition to support one party by defaming another.

Hussein (2019) highlighted the manipulation of the multimodal meaning-making process of the Arabic media after Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by using representational, interactive and compositional meanings. It concluded that cartoonists use social semiotics to violate meanings through linguistic and non-linguistic devices. The researcher in the current study used three meaning-making processes: representational meanings, interactional meanings and compositional meanings under the theory of visual grammar. Only the meaning-making processes in the multimodal data of political cartoons have been analyzed with the help of the theory of visual grammar, which concluded that cartoonists mainly focused on the representational and interactive meaning-making processes to deliver their messages through visual discourse. And then these identified meaning-making processes are linked with the social values, ideologies and identities of the particular culture and society, which concluded that mainly the cartoonists violated the meanings to support their own affiliations and caused defamation and threats to individuals, parties and organizations.

Wardini (2020) finds the two types of visual and verbal depiction of Donald Trump as "big mouthed," "big bellied," "stunted bodied," "big headed," "big bodied," and as the power of the leader, authoritarian style and racism (pp. 30-48). The current researcher took instantly recognizable characters from the Pakistani political cartoons and identified how the use of different types of fonts, the size and color of objects and the position of the signs and symbols can change or divert the views of the readers. The researcher has identified multiple aspects of the character's recognizable features in the analysis sections to highlight the cartoonist's violation of meanings and the unjust criticism to defame offended entities through the portrayals: the big mouthed and big nose of Imran Khan and the baby face of Bilawal Bhutto and denoting political leaders as animals. These types of political cartoons are not mainly on national interest agendas, as Waqar, Naz and Ghani (2020)

highlighted the use of persuasive language in political cartoons for the sake of national interests and concluded that Dawn contains fewer national interest-based agendas as compared to The Nation newspaper. Similarly, the researcher in the present study concludes that Dawn publishes a smaller number of defamatory political cartoons as compared to the Minute Mirror newspaper. Six political cartoons published in the Dawn newspaper and 19 political cartoons published in the Minute Mirror are declared defamatory on the basis of the analysis of the present study.

Kadhim and Abbas (2023) found that multiple discursive strategies of meanings, topics, level of description, implication, contrast, examples and illustration, disclaimer, actors, modality, evidentiality, hedging and ambiguity, topos, formal structures and sentence syntax have spread racism in the animated movie *Lion King*. The current research study has found that the cartoonists of the defamatory political cartoons spread hateful remarks against the offended entities by using manipulated meanings and violating discursive strategies. Naeem, Hussain and Shah (2022) have analyzed the discursive strategies of the sociocognitive approach under the critical discourse analysis of the four speeches of two PDM leaders, which conclude that they have positively represented their political agenda and negatively represented the government's actions through using discursive strategies of actor description, authority, distancing, number game, polarization, hyperbole and history as lessons, evidentiality and repetition. The present research study has explored the micro- and macro-structures of the mental models, including semantic models and context models. The present study has explored the use of twenty of Van Dijk's sociocognitive discursive strategies: actor description, categorization, comparison, disclaimer, evidentiality, authority, burden, negative other-presentation, example/illustration, generalization, implication, counterfactual, populism, hyperbole, irony, positive self-presentation, euphemism, Lexicalization, polarization and victimization. The cartoonists have used these strategies in the defamatory political cartoons to control the social cognition through representational, interactive and compositional meaning-making processes.

Azhar et al. (2021) highlighted social issues, injustice and criticism by analyzing the linguistic and semiotic elements of the political cartoons to attract the readers' perception through verbal responses. This study concluded that cartoonists portray harsh reality via satire, analogy, exaggeration, irony, symbolism and humor that construct opinions among readers. They argued that verbal information in political cartoons can be

avoided, but in editorials, it cannot be. The researcher in the present study disagrees with the statement and proved that according to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), both verbal and nonverbal communication in political cartoons carry equal importance and are used to deliver information to the readers. Even a single sign or symbol can alter the meaning-making process. Changing the place of the sign and symbol can change the impression of a visual discourse. So, the verbal and nonverbal communication in political cartoons is significant in portraying an intended message.

Ashfaq and Russomanno (2018) have found out that political cartoons in Pakistan contain offensive, disparaging and hateful remarks. On the basis of their analysis, ethical considerations have been provided to the cartoonists. Similarly, after analyzing the research data of 25 political cartoons under the five different themes, the researcher has formulated a list of recommendations for the cartoonists, so they may not get into the legal complications. El-Falaky (2019) explored that political cartoons not only discuss the political situation in a country but also comment on its culture, beliefs, identities and social values. This study concluded that political cartoons can be portrayed peacefully and positively by portraying cultural and social ideologies. The researcher in the current study gives recommendations to the cartoonists to prevent them from causing harm to anyone by using verbal and nonverbal signs of communication in their political cartoons. El-Falaky identified the cultural and social beliefs in the political cartoons, but the current research links the use of multiple signs of communication with the cultural and social background, by using sociocognitive approach. Political cartoons about Pakistan's political leaders, parties, narratives and government policies can be comprehended in a particular social and cultural context. The researcher identified the use of defamatory language in the political cartoons by linking it with societal beliefs and ideologies. Cartoonists cause defamation through the manipulation of meaning-making processes in visual discourse.

The researcher in the present study highlighted the use of multiple modes of communication in the political cartoons to cause defamation to the particular offended entities. It is concluded that political cartoonists cause defamation, manipulate linguistic information and criticize political leaders, parties and government policies only for the sake of fun or to meet their intended agenda. The researcher identified multiple defamatory modes of communication in the 25 political cartoons; seven from Dawn newspapers and eighteen from Minute Mirror newspapers found defamatory.

5.3 Recommendations

Below are the recommendations for the cartoonists and for future researchers to conduct further research studies in the domain of political discourse and legal interpretations of the political cartoon.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Cartoonists

1. It is recommended not to criticize severely by using the names of political leaders, parties, institutions, government policies, or countries because that may cause harm to the individual, political leaders and their party narrative, the country's reputation, etc.
2. The cartoonists should not violate the domains of the legislative assemblies and courts that have an absolute privilege under defamation laws.
3. The cartoonists should not criticize country symbols, cultural affiliation and religious views in political cartoons.
4. It is recommended to avoid portraying exact face-matching character designs in political cartoons. It directly hits the offended entity.
5. It is recommended to portray non-recognizable general characters to make comical remarks under freedom of speech.
6. The cartoonists should not violate a linguistic piece of information through a falsified pictorial depiction. Exaggeration of the information misleads readers, which causes a serious problem.
7. It is recommended to portray the information as it is delivered by the speaker with a quotation mark or a descriptive paragraph following the cartoon.

5.3.2 Recommendations for Future Researchers

1. This study is delimited to the Pakistani political cartoons; further research can be done by taking the political cartoons from different countries.
2. This study is delimited to the two newspapers of Pakistan; more newspapers can be added to the list to enhance the scope of the study.
3. The sample of the study is only delimited to the six months of the year 2022; further research can be done by taking a vast amount of the data to authenticate the findings of the study.

4. This study is only being investigated with reference to Pakistani law. Further research can be done by investigating the political cartoons of other countries according to the respective laws of those countries.
5. Further research can be conducted by changing the research design of the study to a mixed-methods research design and formulating interviews, observations and questionnaires to know exactly how readers of these political cartoons perceive them.
6. The current research study only deals with the meaning-making processes of defamatory political cartoons. Further research can be done in the domains of forensic linguistics, pragmatic analysis, narrative analysis, metaphorical framing, comparative linguistic analysis, reader reception and the intertextuality of the defamatory political cartoons.

5.4 Conclusion

Political cartoons published in newspapers in the form of figures contain defamatory remarks against political leaders, institutions, governments, or countries. These types of defamatory remarks have been analyzed in this research study by following the theoretical framework of visual grammar theory, Van Dijk's sociocognitive approach and the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance 2002. This study has taken a sample of 25 political cartoons from the population of 355 political cartoons taken from the Dawn and Minute Mirror newspapers of Pakistan over a 6-month period from January 1st to July 31st of the year 2022.

This research study fell under the domain of critical discourse analysis of the meaning-making processes of political cartoons. Multimodal critical discourse analysis has been followed as the method of data analysis to analyze the political cartoons to know the meaning-making processes and investigate the defamatory remarks. Five themes: the theme of severe or unjust criticism, the theme of manipulation, the theme of the country's reputation, the theme of humorous remarks and the theme of spreading hate or threats have been driven after finalizing the sample of the political cartoons. These five themes of political cartoons have been analyzed separately. First, the meaning-making processes of cartoons have been pointed out and then these processes are analyzed with the help of Van Dijk's sociocognitive theory and the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO).

This research study concluded that political cartoonists use multiple modes of communication to manipulate the linguistic meanings, spread their own subjective meanings and cause defamation against the offended entity. Cartoonists have posed severe or unjust criticism, manipulated the language and the intended pieces of information for the sake of fun or to meet their agenda, caused derogatory remarks by posting country names or the symbols of representation, published humorous remarks against the political leaders that are not truth-based or factual and spread hate against the offended entities by designing falsified information in the visual graphics. This study concluded that the cartoonists' have used the representational, interactive and compositional meaning-making processes of visual grammar and twenty types of discursive strategies of the sociocognitive approach: actor description, categorization, comparison, disclaimer, evidentiality, authority, irony, positive self-presentation, euphemism, Lexicalization, burden, negative other-presentation, example/illustration, generalization, implication, counterfactual, populism, hyperbole, polarization and victimization to manipulate and falsify the meanings in political cartoons. According to the Pakistan Defamation Ordinance (PDO), all categories of defamatory political cartoons posed a threat to the offended entity's reputation and honor.

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