

**UNRAVELING THE FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION IN POLITICAL CARTOONS AND
THEIR INFLUENCE ACROSS GENERATION Y
AND GENERATION Z IN PAKISTAN.**



PIDE
PAKISTAN INSTITUTE
OF DEVELOPMENT
ECONOMICS

By

Maimoona Sajjad

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Supervisor

Dr. Fizzah Khalid Butt

MPhil Public Policy

**PIDE School of Policy, Development and
Governance.**

**Pakistan Institute of Development Economics,
Islamabad.**

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Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad
PIDE School of Policy, Development & Governance

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This is to certify that this thesis entitled: **“Unraveling the freedom of expression in Political cartoons and their Influence Across Generation Y and Generation Z in Pakistan.”** submitted by Maimoona Sajjad is accepted in its present form by the PIDE School of Policy, Development and Governance, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad as satisfying the requirements for partial fulfillment of the degree in Master of Philosophy in Public Policy.

Supervisor:

Dr. Fizzah Khalid Butt

Signature: Fizzah Butt

External Examiner:

Dr. Inam Ullah Leghari

Signature: Inam Ullah Leghari

Director,
PIDE School of Policy,
Development & Governance Dr. Hafsa Hina


Signature: Hafsa Hina

Authors declaration

I Maimoona Sajjad hereby state that my MPhil thesis titled "Unraveling the Freedom of Expression in Political Cartoons and their Influence Across Generation Y and Generation Z in Pakistan" is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from Pakistan Institute of Development Economics or anywhere else in the country/world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after my Graduation the university has the right to withdraw my MPhil degree.

Date: 31/Oct/2025.


Signature of Student.
Maimoona Sajjad

Dedication

To my muse Abdullah Sabir, for his unconditional support.

To my siblings Alishba and Rizwan, for constant reassurance.

To my besties Mugheesa and Anny, for motivating me to never give-up on my dreams.


Maimoona Sajjad.

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ABSTRACT

Political cartoons being one of the most influential tools for public engagement as well as in political expression but unfortunately its overlooked. The dual role of political cartoons in providing medium for editorial freedom and shaping public perceptions are neglected in the existing studies. This study looks into two important things. Cartoonists editorial freedom and political cartoons influence on two Generations (Y and Z). Approach adopted in this research is mixed method, thematic analysis (for interviews conducted with cartoonists), descriptive analysis (for data collected through online survey form Generation Y and Z) and semiotic analysis (for political cartoons collected from newspaper and Television). Foundation of this research has been put on two theories, Gate Keeping (for editorial structures) Theory and Visual Rhetoric theory (for symbolic communication). Together these theories guided the interpretation of both the creation audience interpretation of political cartoons. Findings of the study highlighted political cartoonists do have freedom but is dependent on internal (institutional environment, editors' restrictions) and external factors (social and political pressures). Moreover, gatekeeping is widely practised within the media institutions which is directly increasing the self-censorship among cartoonists. Additionally, variation in engagement of both the generations i.e., Generation Y and Generation Z were noticed. Generation Y respondents were more likely into traditional media formats while Generation Z respondents were more tilted towards television and digital cartoons. On the contrary the assumptions about the negativity of political cartoons, data highlighted that especially among youth political cartoons influence positive political engagement, awareness and education. Overall, this study provides insights on political perception and engagement of individuals from different generations, media freedom and political communication in the context of a developing country Pakistan.

Keywords: Cartoonists, Censorship, Editorial freedom, Engagement, Gate Keeping theory, Generation Y and Z, Perception, Pakistan, Political cartoon, Visual Rhetoric Theory.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Political cartoons originated several hundred years ago and gained notoriety as early as the 18th century, when the first cartoon was published in an American newspaper (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). Then figures like Leonardo da Vinci and William Hogarth evolved the medium by introducing mockery and satire, which highlighted political corruption and societal issues (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). On a global level, these cartoons have reflected societal power dynamics, which have influenced political ideas and advanced public discourse across various cultures and political landscapes (Scully, 2014).

In Pakistan, political cartoons have played a crucial role historically in viewing the country's socio-political landscape through a satirical lens (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). These cartoons emerged around 1958-1972 as an indirect form of resistance against authoritarian regulations. Over time, these cartoons have continuously developed to reflect and criticize political challenges that are faced in Pakistan, such as corruption, governance issues, and societal norms (Waqar et. al, 2020). Even though there are constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and press, Pakistani cartoonists frequently traverse substantial editorial restrictions and censorship, which limit their ability to express freely (Riaz et. al, 2020).

For various reasons, understanding political cartoons in Pakistan is necessary. The first reason is, that political cartoons serve as available tools for political education and rendezvous, basically for the younger generations who progressively interact more with visual and digital media (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021). The second reason is that, in a country like Pakistan contending with democratic challenges and evolving media landscapes, examining the relationship between editorial freedom and political expression can shed light on broader media policy and governance issues (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). Lastly, the potential positive impacts of these cartoons can be explored. They can challenge existing statements that primarily associate them with negativity, highlighting their capacity to advance constructive political dialogue and education (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021).

Political cartoons in Pakistan are shaped by regulatory frameworks, political pressures, and technological advancements. Digital platforms can offer new avenues for propagation and broader audience reach, but they are also a source of misinformation and increased censorship

risks (Zarifian et. al, 2022). Despite such challenges, political cartoons continue to influence public opinion and perception by engaging audiences and making complex political issues simple, so they are relatable to a wider audience (Azhar et al., 2021). For instance, cartoonists like Shahtoon demonstrate the struggle to maintain creative integrity and such editorial demands, illustrating the fragile balance between expression and suppression (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021).

Despite the extensive literature on political cartoons, there are still several critical study gaps. Notably, there is a limited comparative analysis of editorial freedom for cartoonists across different political and media environments (Akengin, 2022). Though this study does not focus on cross-country comparison, but is centered on examining editorial freedom in the context of Pakistan. Furthermore, current studies frequently fail to consider the specific effects of different media, such as print and television, on political engagement and perception among various age groups. Furthermore, there is limited research on the positive impact of political cartoons on political education and engagement, with most studies focusing on their role in promoting skepticism (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). Therefore, the study aims to investigate the level of editorial freedom given to cartoonists in Pakistan. Additionally, it will compare the effects of political cartoons in print and on television on Generation Y (individuals that are born during 1981-1996 belong to Generation Y) and Generation Z (individuals that are born during 1997-2012 belong to Generation Z). Also, the study will evaluate the potential positive impacts of political cartoons on political insight.

This study employed a relationship between gatekeeping theory and Visual Rhetoric Theory to evaluate the design and content of political cartoons and their influence on political sensitivity and engagement. As Roberts (2005) articulated, Gatekeeping Theory examines how media gatekeepers—editors, media owners, and regulatory bodies filter and control the spreading of political content, thereby shaping public access to specific political messages. In environments like Pakistan, which is a sensitive environment, gatekeepers are crucial in determining which cartoons can be published, often influenced by government editing and societal norms (Roberts, 2005).

Latif (2021) defines Visual Rhetoric Theory as how visual elements of satire, metaphor, and symbolism are incorporated into such cartoons so they can communicate complicated and complex political ideas effectively. Also, this theory emphasizes the strategic use of visual design, which helps influence the audience's interpretation and engage them, making political

messages more accessible and impactful (Messaris, 2009). These theories provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing how political cartoons navigate editorial constraints and utilize visual strategies to shape public perception and foster political engagement across different generations.

In conclusion, the study aims to address the crucial gaps in understanding political cartoons' role in Pakistan by concentrating on three distinct objectives employing the gatekeeping and visual rhetoric theory. First, the extent of editorial freedom granted to cartoonists in conveying political messages through their cartoons in the challenging and restricted the media landscape of Pakistan. Second, to compare the effects of print and televised political cartoons on the political perception and engagement of Generation Z and Generation Y. Lastly, to evaluate the association of negativity of political cartoons and their negative connotation in public.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM (SoP):

Research shows that political cartoons are a powerful medium for forming political public opinion regarding socio-political issues. Cartoons provide a distinctive platform for cartoonists and the public to comment on political ideologies, government actions, political figures, and social issues. Nevertheless, due to Pakistan's sensitive political environment, cartoonists have to face several challenges in publishing political cartoons with meaningful messages. They have to face censorship issues, political pressure, and social backlash, which, in turn, affects their ability to create meaningful cartoons to convey important political messages. Additionally, studies have shown that political cartoons influence the political perceptions of individuals. In Pakistan, there is limited research on how Generation Y and Generation Z perceive and engage with politics through different mediums, particularly print and television. Moreover, there is an assumption about political cartoons that they are always satire and reinforce negative perceptions about government and politics. But it needs to be explored whether political cartoons can be positive; in other words, do they have the potential to impact political perceptions and engagement positively. These are the loopholes that this study aims to explore.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM:

Based on the narrative of SoP as stated in the preceding text, I narrowed down my research to "Unraveling the freedom of expression in political cartoons and their influence across

generations.” For political expression and commentary, political cartoons play a critical role. But still, there is limited research on political cartoons from a cross-generational aspect. The production and reception of political cartoons are influenced by numerous factors and how different audiences perceive them. For analyzing political cartoons this study adopts a macro, meso and micro-level framework. At the macro level, the study discusses the broader factors such as government media policies, political censorship (including constitutional provisions on press freedom and PEMRA regulations), and global trends that influence the production and dissemination of political cartoons. At the meso level, the focus is organizations (media organizations). At this level, gatekeeping theory is practiced by most media organizations, which impacts the creative process and distribution of cartoons. The gatekeeping theory serves as the guiding lens to examine editorial hierarchies, corporate interests, institutional norms, and content approval mechanisms that either enable or restrict the production and dissemination of political cartoons. This level investigates how newsroom culture, ownership structures, and media commercialization shape the creative boundaries within which cartoonists operate. Finally, at the micro level, the study looks into the individuals' perception and engagement of Generation Y (individuals that are born during 1981-1996 belong to Generation Y) and Generation Z (individuals that are born during 1997-2012 belong to Generation Z) with both print and televised cartoons and cartoonists (threats, self-censorship) experiences. Furthermore, I operationalized my topic into the following research questions and objectives.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of freedom has been given to cartoonists to convey messages through their political cartoons?
2. Do print and televised political cartoons have significantly different political effects on the political perception and engagement of Generation Z and Generation Y?
3. Can political cartoons have a positive impact on political perception, and assess the prevailing assumption of negativity?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To determine the extent of editorial freedom granted to cartoonists in conveying political messages through their cartoons.
2. To compare the political effects of print and televised political cartoons on the political perception and engagement of Generation Z and Generation Y.

3. To evaluate the association of negativity of political cartoons and their negative connotation in public perception.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The method adopted for the literature review of this study is a chronological-thematic method. This method is a combination of historical analysis with thematic exploration. This helps enrich literature by giving a wide-ranging view of political cartoons' evolution and their socio-political impact. It begins with tracing the footprints of political cartoons from history and observing the transformation in their forms and functions over time. Following the traces of history, it moves to the thematic sections, where it is sorted into types of political cartoons, their roles, functions, and symbolic meanings within discourse. This is a dual approach; firstly, it helps in understanding political cartoons as a form of art, and secondly, political cartoons as a medium of social and political expression.

Using this method for organizing literature not only provides a historical track but also provides a deeper understanding of specific themes, i.e., global perspectives, technological advancements, editorial freedom, generational impact, and law and order. For this research topic, this particular structure is adopted because it highlights how political cartoons have been influenced in the past and how they have influenced the socio-political environments over time. Further, the integration of a theoretical lens by adding visual rhetoric and gatekeeping theory provides strong support to this study by connecting historical evolution to contemporary challenges. These theories help to bridge the gaps between editorial freedom and shaping public opinion across generations

2.1. Historical evolution of political cartoons

Political cartoons were the earliest lithographs to receive wide circulation, with people gaining a large share of their political knowledge and education (Marie, 1972). Talking about the historical evidence, political cartoons have been around for several hundred years in the European and North American contexts, while in other parts of the world, they go back to at least a hundred years (Cassar & Vella, 2016). Further historical discourse identifies Benjamin Franklin as the originator of political cartoons. The First political cartoon in an American newspaper is coupled with him, which was captioned "Join or Die" (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). The evolution of political cartoons continued through the 18th century, as figures like Leonardo

da Vinci and William Hogarth introduced caricaturing and satirical techniques to highlight the corruption within British politics (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). This marked the beginning of a powerful tradition where cartoons became tools for political persuasion and critique. This leads to an examination of the functions and significance of political cartoons.

2.2. Cartoons and their types:

Giyanani and Trivedi define cartoons as simplified, often humorous illustrations that convey messages through symbols and signs (Giyanani & Trivedi, 2024). However, cartoons that can take various forms, including print media and animated television shows, evolving from traditional art forms to modern digital expressions (Fadhillah, 2022). Literature tells us about the different genres of cartoons, i.e., political, gag, comics, and playful cartoons. Political cartoons play a role in satirizing current events and political issues, often employing humor and irony. They characteristically feature a high semiotic density, requiring readers to engage with complex themes and current affairs (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2018). Gag cartoons are focused on humor, often presenting a single joke or punchline, appealing to a broad audience without extensive context (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2018). Comics serve as a multimodal narrative form, meaning they combine multiple modes of communication such as visual imagery and written text to construct meaning (Yefymenko, 2022). They utilize techniques like speech balloons and narration boxes to convey stories (Yefymenko, 2022). Their structure can vary from linear to more complex temporal arrangements (Yefymenko, 2022). Playful cartoons are characterized by a lighter tone and simpler messages, often aimed at entertaining rather than critiquing (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2018). A natural progression from this is a more focused exploration in the next section.

2.3. Functions and significance of political cartoons:

According to DeSousa Midhurst (1982) political cartoons have different functions, i.e., entertainment, aggression reduction, agenda setting, and framing. Political cartoons serve a multifaceted role in entertainment, wielding the power to elicit laughter by depicting myriad scenarios and personalities (Ashfaq & Hussein, 2013). Political cartoons include several aspects of life, i.e., education (Cassar & Velle, 2016), elections (Serio, 1972), political propaganda (Ashfaq & Hussein, 2013), etc. Further, they can also address sensitive topics in a more agreeable way than conventional discourse, making them effective tools for social criticism (Dominiczak, 2017). The significance of these cartoons expanded as they reflected

global power dynamics, which then influenced and shaped political ideas at the national level (Scully, 2014). Following this line of thought, the next section delves into the various types of cartoons, exploring their distinct characteristics.

2.4. Political Cartoons: A Global Perspective

Political cartoons are not just an artistic genre, but also an essential tool for understanding and assessing global political events, leaders, and ideologies (AKENGİN, 2022). According to Liepa, Šaudīņa, and Oļehnovičs (2021), political cartoons use humor, sarcasm, and visual metaphors to influence public perceptions. Due to their richness, these cartoons illuminate geopolitical stories and historical contexts in various countries. Numerous scholarly studies have examined how political cartoons spread different ideas. Political cartoons influence, critique, and engage audiences through various approaches, as analyzed by Mažutaitytė (2023). This will enable a deeper understanding of political cartoons' impact on political, cultural, and social contexts (Scully, 2014). Political cartoons are examined from national and international viewpoints to gain a complete understanding.

2.4.1. The United States: a target of Chinese propaganda

Cartoons on Chinese politics have been used to spread propaganda, especially against the US. According to Ugnė Mažutaitytė's examination of Global Times cartoons (2020-2022), defamation and demonization are common tactics used to portray the US as hypocritical and manipulative. According to Mažutaitytė (2023), these cartoons often portray the US as a "backstabber," profiting off world difficulties. Mažutaitytė (2023) suggests that this propaganda approach, combining humor and political themes, subtly shapes popular perceptions of international relations. Political cartoons shaped popular opinion on slavery and political factions during the 1884 presidential election (Marie, 1972). This happened during the election. In addition, political cartoons have influenced US elections throughout history.

To make matters worse, political cartoons affect state-to-state ties. Political cartoons about Pakistan, the US, and India have been used to comment on and affect diplomatic relations, reflecting changing foreign policies and political eras (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). Cartoons have influenced diplomatic relations. To compound matters, political, social, and economic problems have changed Pakistani media's portrayal of the US (Ashfaq, 2014). The analysis found that geopolitical dynamics changed completely after September 11, 2001. These moves

affected US sanctions and military backing for Pakistan. According to Ashfaq (2014), this affected how Pakistani political cartoons perceived the US at the time.

2.4.2. Russia: Shifting Depictions of Putin

Political caricatures of Vladimir Putin have changed over time. This transition is repeated. Before the Crimea takeover, Vladimir Putin was a terrifying leader with global power. This was true before Crimea's takeover. However, the Crimea annexure and the Ukraine crisis changed this image into ridicule. A caricature of Vladimir Putin riding a pink toy unicorn aptly portrays this transformation. These cartoons contrast with earlier depictions of Putin as a powerful horseman (Kopper, 2024). This shows how political cartoons may convey global leadership and power views. Political cartoons can show these contrasts. These cross-cultural alterations help us understand how leadership and power are questioned in different circumstances in political cartoons worldwide (Scully, 2014). This is because they enable international comparisons.

2.4.3. The European Union: Metaphors in Crisis

According to Liepa, Šaudīņa, and Oļehnovičs (2021), political cartoons in English and Latvian contexts were thoroughly examined. This study examined how metaphors affect popular perception of the EU. Visual metaphors are used to illustrate major political events like Brexit and the Greek financial crisis. The EU is often called a "body of water" or "container." A 2021 cartoon by Liepa, Šaudīņa, and Oļehnovičs illustrates these analogies. The cartoon shows Greece besieged by sharks during its financial crisis.

Furthermore, these metaphors clarify the complex political ties within the EU. This kind of image can show how fragile EU unity and stability are in cartoons. According to Scully (2014), political cartoons from historically colonized nations, like those from Europe, usually portray colonial powers in an unfavorable light and draw parallels between past and present political issues. Political cartoons from former colonies, like those in European contexts, often depict colonial powers negatively, drawing connections between historical and contemporary political issues (Scully, 2014).

2.4.4. Armenia and Azerbaijan: A Geopolitical Conflict

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh is another example of how political cartoons simplify complex geopolitical issues. In a cartoon, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is depicted standing on a platform symbolizing Armenian culture, while Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev is shown on an oil barrel (Akengin, 2022). This illustrates the cultural and economic dimensions of the conflict. Using such stark imagery, political cartoons offer audiences a way to grasp intricate geopolitical tensions through simplified, yet powerful, representation. Political cartoons in regions like the Middle East also serve as resistance, challenging authoritarian regimes and reflecting societal changes (Flores-Borjabad, 2018).

2.4.5. Japan: Localized Resistance and Reconstruction

In post-disaster Japan, political cartoons have played a significant role in addressing local concerns and mobilizing communities. The work of Japanese cartoonist Asakura Yuzo after the 3.11 disaster is a prime example (Stewart, 2014). Political cartoons have become a key tool for organizing and addressing local concerns after the Japan disaster. Japanese artist Asakura Yuzo's post-9/11 work illustrates this (Stewart, 2014). He used unconventional approaches to address a wider range of post-disaster issues in his "Disaster picture-diary," published in Fukushima Minpo (Stewart, 2014). This allowed him to involve the community. Asakura shows how political cartoons can depict local and global issues in cultural contexts. This is especially true with Asakura. Regional issues dominate Asakura's work.

2.4.6. The Philippines: Critiquing Government Responses

Darryl Imperial's 2020 study found that Philippine political cartoons during the COVID-19 pandemic criticized government measures. Semiotic analysis was common in Philippine Daily Inquirer cartoons. These cartoons were meant to criticize the central administration for ignoring frontline workers' problems. Important cartoons show the administration covered in mud and blasted for its weak response. However, local authorities are more aggressive in providing public aid (Imperial, 2020). These depictions, which also allowed political criticism, captured Filipinos' anger throughout the outbreak. According to Flores-Borjabad (2018), Middle Eastern political cartoonists like Ali Ferzat employ satire to oppose authoritarian regimes and promote social change. Cartoons depicting Middle Eastern politics commonly show this disagreement.

Rapid technological advances have changed how these cartoons are made, distributed, and consumed, transforming the medium and its enormous influence. While this is happening, political cartoons continue to represent global politics.

2.5. Political cartoons in Pakistan:

Ghilzai and Bajwa's research found that political cartoons in Pakistan have typically provided a hilarious viewpoint on the country's socio-political context. Cartoonists have commented on many topics, from social standards and culture to corruption and governance (Ghilzai & Bajwa, 2020). Artists have commented on them through cartoons. Political cartoons were used to challenge authoritarian regimes during military rule, according to a 2020 study by Waqar, Naz, and Ghani. Additionally, censorship regulations hindered free speech. Political cartoons remain vital societal criticism in the internet age. This is despite greater transmission chances and increased reaction risks (Bowie, 2023). Cartoons depicting terrible political events can move away from satire, which can affect audience reactions based on the subject matter's seriousness and ideological proximity (Sanz, 2020).

2.6. Political cartoons and political messages:

Political cartoons play a pivotal role in satirizing current events and political issues, often using humor and irony to convey layered meaning. They are characterized by a high degree of semiotic density, compelling readers to engage with complex themes and contemporary affairs (Pedrazzini & Scheuer, 2018). Through satire, cartoons critique societal issues, highlight conflicts, and reflect cultural attitudes, thereby fostering political discourse and commentary in a more accessible manner (Adeoti, 2023). Gerald Van Amburg further emphasizes that political cartoons, through humor and satire, offer a unique and engaging lens to present serious topics, making them more digestible for a broader audience (Amburg, 2022). This method allows for portraying hidden political issues and controversies—what often unfolds behind the closed doors of political arenas. For example, the Panama Leaks event highlighted the wealth gap. This goal was achieved by showing black money concealment, which highlighted social double standards (Sarwar et. al, 2021). Another consideration is that editorial cartoons have a wider influence than satire. Azhar et al. (2021) say editorial cartoons shape public opinion. According to Azhar et al. (2021), cartoons can shape collective attitudes, public opinion, and social and political views. Cartoons can be useful. We will examine worldwide political cartoon

viewpoints shaped by cultural and political factors. This change will let us study political cartoons worldwide.

2.7 Global Challenges to Political Cartoons

2.7.1 Advancement in Technology and Changing Dynamics

Political cartoons are being threatened by digital technology. Zarifian, Volkova, and Lazutova (2022) state that political cartoons are already undergoing substantial shifts in role and value. Despite the difficulty of predicting the full impact of technological developments, these shifts are already occurring. Digital media and other factors have affected cartoon creation and consumption. Budgetary limits, internet competitiveness, and cartoon space decrease are these challenges. Because traditional broadsheets are shrinking, publishers must reduce or eliminate cartoons to make room for ads. Zarifian, Volkova, and Lazutova (2022) argue that this cost-cutting tactic threatens print cartoons. According to Zarifian, Volkova, and Lazutova (2022), they highlight the growing conflict between traditional media and digital demands. These changes highlight their developing conflict.

Despite technological advances changing the medium and transmission of political cartoons, editorial freedom and censorship remain key. Cartoonists trying to negotiate political influence and government control face this specifically.

2.7.2 Editorial freedom and censorship:

Countries differ in legal systems, editorial practices, and free expression. This is especially true for Pakistan and the US, two distinct nations. Editorial cartoonists often portray political leaders as honest or corrupt to influence readers' political views (Muhammad et. al, 2020). This is done to sway audience politics. Pakistani media is greatly influenced by political cartoons (Azhar, et al., 2021). This is especially true for delicate areas like politics, the military, and the judiciary. Pressure on political cartoonists varies greatly by area. Authors Ashfaq, Shami, Toor (2019). Research shows that editorial freedom is often restricted, especially in political climates. Political cartoonists in Pakistan face government antagonism and restrictions when covering difficult topics like Pakistan-US-India relations (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). This shows Pakistani political cartoonists encounter hostility and constraints. According to Ashfaq, Shami, and Toor (2019), these interactions illuminate the complicated link between government political authority and media independence. Cartoonists face difficult conditions with strong expression limits.

2.7.3 Audience reception and interpretation:

Despite editorial independence and censorship limiting what can be said, audience reaction is the biggest influence on political cartoon power. According to Pinar-Sanz (2020), the viewer's prior knowledge and context affect how they interpret and appreciate the cartoon's comedy. This is crucial because viewers should consider it. These cartoons use visual metaphors to make inaccurate ideas or features more acceptable, according to Pinar-Sanz (2020). Cartoonists make difficult political matters more accessible and encourage diverse perspectives by using visual comparisons (Sanz, 2020). We employ visual parallels. Political cartoons appeal to both educated and illiterate viewers (Azhar et. al, 2021). In 2021, Azhar et al. Cartoons are popular because they can explain complex ideas to those with little formal education. Political cartoons reach more people than traditional cartoons due to their accessibility (Azhar et. al, 2021). This benefits political cartoons. Azhar et. al (2021) say the medium's simplicity allows it to engage a wide audience while providing subtle political criticism. The simple medium supports this idea. This applies regardless of whether the media is bold or subtle. Audience reaction is vital to political cartoons' influence. Audience response lends political cartoons a special place in Pakistan's geopolitical environment.

2.8. Editorial freedom, censorship, and the challenges faced by cartoonists in Pakistan:

According to Riaz et. al, (2020). Defamation laws impede media freedom. Article 19 of Pakistan's 1973 constitution further says the constitution guarantees free speech, expression, and newspaper publication. However, defamation laws severely limit these privileges. Political cartoonists are especially vulnerable to these constraints since they criticize society and political traditions and systems. Zarifian et. al (2022) state that Pakistani cartoonists must comply with tougher editorial standards, which limit their expression. This contrasts with the US, where editorial policies have pushed many cartoonists to freelance to gain artistic flexibility. Several studies have indicated that editorial control and freedom vary greatly between Pakistan and the US for cartoonists. However, some American cartoonists, like Kevin Kallaugh, were able to gain more liberty and trust, resulting in higher-quality work (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021). Some American cartoonists, like Milt Priggee, have expressed their freedom as freelancers through their ingenuity after being restrained by editors. However, political cartoonists in Pakistan face much greater restrictions than in other countries.

Cartoonists must balance creative integrity with impressing editors, publishers, and audiences (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021). Scholars observed in 2020 that Pakistani cartoonists have devised ingenious ways to overcome censorship and express their thoughts; however, these efforts often endanger professionals (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). It is reported that a Pakistani newspaper published a controversial political caricature, which led to the cartoonist's firing (Ashfaq et. al, 2019). This instance illustrates the precarious balance Pakistani cartoonists must strike between editorial limitations and creative expression.

Pakistani laws and practices affect political cartoonists' freedom and censorship. Strong ties exist between sources. Because of this, we must research how policy, law, and order affect free speech and media formation.

2.8.1 Policy, law, and order:

For many causes, political forces, technological advances, and legal frameworks have shaped Pakistani media. From state-controlled broadcasting to private networks and online platforms, Pakistan's media ecosystem has changed over time. This change began early in Bangladesh's media landscape. Significant improvements in the law, including constitutional laws, media legislation, and regulating institutions like the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulating Authority, have caused these changes. Recent developments have seen substantial legal advances.

Pakistani media developed throughout several eras, each impacted by major political and regulatory changes. Pakistani media has changed significantly over these times. According to Hussain (2012), the 1964-founded Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) dominated early Pakistani media. The government controlled public debate during this time, reducing the number of opinions expressed. According to Hussain (2012), Public Television (PTV) was the government's mouthpiece, spreading state viewpoints. However, the channel did not critically analyze its policies. According to Hussain (2012), the 1990s saw a major media liberalization. The arrival of private television stations represented a turning point toward privatization (Hussain, 2012). The PEMRA Ordinance 2002 institutionalized this change, setting the stage for the rapid growth of private broadcasters (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002). This liberalization allowed private channels to introduce alternative perspectives and challenge the government's narrative, offering citizens various opinions and information (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002). Further, it highlights how this transformation created more independent

and commercially driven media outlets, moving away from state control (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002).

2.8.2 Key laws and regulations shaping the media:

The legal framework for regulating media in Pakistan is rooted in the country's constitution, with key laws and ordinances providing structure and oversight to the media sector (Alam, 2015). As detailed (Alam, 2015), Article 19 of the constitution of Pakistan guarantees the right to freedom of speech and expression, including freedom of the press; still, it allows for restrictions in the interest of the "glory of Islam", public order, and national security. These restrictions have profoundly impacted media freedom, often leading to censorship or disciplinary actions against media outlets that challenge the state (Alam, 2015).

The policy paper on independent media regulation in Pakistan discusses the role of PEMRA, established under the PEMRA Ordinance 2002, as the primary body responsible for regulating electronic media (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002). PEMRA's mandate includes issuing licenses to private broadcasters and ensuring compliance with government regulations (Alam, 2015). However, it critiques PEMRA for its perceived lack of independence and susceptibility to political influence. For example, instances from 2019 when several news channels were abruptly suspended for covering opposition leaders demonstrating how political interference continues to challenge media freedom in Pakistan (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002).

Additionally, regulations, such as the Defamation Ordinance 2002 and the Press Council Ordinance 2002, play a key role in shaping the legal landscape for media (Alam, 2015). The Defamation Ordinance aims to protect individuals and institutions from false or damaging statements. While the Press Council Ordinance outlines ethical standards for print journalism (Alam, 2015). For maintaining accountability, these regulations are also seen as tools that can be misused to stifle critical voices (Hussain, 2012).

2.8.3 Transformation of media in Pakistan across different time periods;

The transformation of media in Pakistan can be broken down into specific timelines, each marked by significant political and technological changes (Hussain, 2012). The early period from 1947 to the 1980s was defined by strict state control over print and broadcast media (Hussain, 2012). During this time, there were few avenues for independent journalism, and the

state maintained a firm grip on public narratives, as seen with the monopoly of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) and Pakistan Television (PTV). This era was characterized by the media's role as a propaganda tool for the government, promoting a singular national identity without room for dissenting voices (Hussain, 2012).

In the 1990s under increasing public demand for information and the global trend of media liberalization, Pakistan saw the emergence of private media outlets (Hussain, 2012). This was further formalized in the early 2000s with the PEMRA Ordinance of 2002, which opened the media space for private players and led to a significant expansion in the number of television channels and radio stations (Hussain, 2012). A report notes that this period marked a shift from government-controlled narratives to more diversified content (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002). However, it also introduced challenges, such as sensationalism and the race for ratings, which sometimes compromised the quality of journalism (Democracy and Media Matter, 2002).s

The most recent phase, from the mid-2000s to the present, has been marked by the rise of digital media and social platforms, drastically altering the way information is consumed and disseminated (Hussain, 2012). The proliferation of online platforms has allowed for greater public engagement and citizen journalism. Still, it has also raised concerns about misinformation and the lack of regulatory frameworks to manage digital content effectively (Alam, 2015). This phase represents both an opportunity and a challenge for Pakistani media as it navigates the complexities of a digital-first world (Alam, 2015). A historical example of the media's role was during the 1965 war between Pakistan and India, where media coverage was heavily censored to promote a narrative favorable to the government, suppressing reports of military setbacks (Hussain, 2012).

From the above discussion about Pakistani media, its transformation, regulations, laws, etc., it becomes clear that the journey toward a truly independent and free press is far from complete. The insights from the literature underline the need for continued reform and vigilance to ensure that the media can fulfill its role as a watchdog in a democratic society.

2.9. Research Gap:

Political cartoons have long played a vital role in shaping political discourse, offering a unique combination of visual rhetoric and satire to comment on contemporary issues. However,

several areas remain underexplored in the current literature. One significant gap is the limited focus on editorial freedom for cartoonists in different political and media environments. While many studies highlight instances of censorship or backlash, an insufficient comparative analysis evaluates how cartoonists can freely express political dissent across diverse political systems and media platforms, particularly in the context of the Global South, including Pakistan and other non-Western nations (Akengin, 2022).

Furthermore, there is a shortage of comparative studies that examine the impact of medium-specific effects—the differences between print and televised political cartoons—on political engagement and perception, particularly across generational cohorts as a monolithic medium, neglecting the nuanced ways different platforms may affect the interpretation and reception of political messages. This is especially relevant in the digital age, where televised or online political cartoons may reach a more diverse audience than traditional print forms, potentially leading to different political outcomes (Ashfaq, 2019).

Another underexplored area is the positive impact of political cartoons on political perception. Much of the existing scholarship assumes a primarily negative connotation, focusing on how political cartoons can foster cynicism or disengagement. However, limited research evaluates whether political cartoons can serve as constructive agents for political education or engagement, particularly in younger generations, who are more likely to engage with political discourse through visual and digital mediums (Ashfaq & Russomanno, 2021).

Political cartoons' editorial independence, medium-specific effects, and possible benefits must be examined. This study will focus on how political cartoons affect different generations and new internet venues. These gaps emphasize the need for an inquiry. This investigation may reveal new information about political cartoons or deepen our understanding of political perception and activity in the 21st century.

2.10. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.10.1. Epistemological and ontological positions:

The ontological and epistemological positions adopted in this study were constructivist ontology and interpretivist epistemology. These positions were used to investigate the perceptions of individuals and the symbolic fundamental representations rooted in political

cartoons. The arrangement of these positions helped, firstly, to understand the way the meaning of political cartoons was conveyed across generations and, secondly, editorial freedom according to socio-political environments. The reason behind the adoption of interpretivist epistemology is that it enabled a deeper understanding of how individuals from Generation Y and Generation Z interpreted political cartoons, visual rhetoric, and symbolic elements. According to the interpretivist epistemological domain, knowledge was considered subjective. Political cartoons were also subjective in nature, which helped in bringing forth the reactions and perceptions of individuals. Allowing for a deeper understanding of interpretations both at a personal and social level. Previously, this epistemological position had been used in studies focusing on subjective reactions and satirical content. Whereas in this study, the focus was on editorial and generational aspects. Applying it to this study enabled an understanding how political cartoons were interpreted by Generation Y and Generation Z and how meanings were constructed from political cartoons. Moving forward to the constructivist ontological position. According to constructive ontology, reality was subjective (socially constructed) and varied according to individuals or groups. The reason for the adoption of this ontological position was that the meanings of political cartoons, as well as the perceptions, were influenced by cultures and socio-political landscapes. This positioning of ontology had been adopted in studies done in the past, most of them were about social perception and media studies. This enabled understanding the angle of political identity and opinion constructed by media. In the current study, it helped in analyzing political cartoons and delve deeper into the shaping of reality according to socio-political structures. In conclusion, for this study, editorial freedom was captured through interpretivist epistemology. For generational perspectives, constructivist ontology was adopted.

2.10.2. Results of existing empirical research:

The results of the empirical research on political cartoons revealed some recurring themes that aligned with the theories used in this study (Visual rhetoric and Gatekeeping). Through the lens of interpretivist epistemology and constructivist ontology, it was argued that political cartoons were socially constructed. The first recurring theme in the literature was political cartoons that criticized governance and leadership by using satire and humor. For example, political cartoons in the Philippines and Pakistan highlighted corruption issues, public aggression, etc. As an interpretivist, it highlighted that based on the socio-political realities, individuals derived subjective meanings from political cartoons. The second recurring theme from the literature

reflected the socio-political and cultural landscape. Some of the studies done in Pakistan identified the struggles faced by society and national interests. Additionally, the constructivist stance was that political cartoons, through visual images, constructed the understanding of political realities. The third recurring theme was about political perception and engagement of individuals. Studies showed that political cartoons played an important role in shaping public perception and engagement. Political cartoons simplified complex meaning into basic form, which could be understood by individuals of all literacy levels. From an interpretivist perspective, individuals constructed the meaning of the political cartoons based on their background knowledge and culture. The fourth recurring theme was about editorial freedom and censorship. Where, most of the time, gatekeeping was practiced, which limited the editorial liberty of cartoonists. Constructivists discussed that these limitations and restrictions impacted the narratives presented through political cartoons. Interpretivist and constructivist positions presented that political cartoon were not just tools for communication but also culturally constructed products. These recurring themes aligned with the research objectives in the following way: for the editorial freedom that editorial limitations were socially constructed and intervened into Pakistan's political context. The medium-specific impacts talked about how different media impacted the engagement and interpretation of audiences. For the last research objective, as an interpretivist, it stated that audiences interpreted cartoons according to their knowledge; in that way, political cartoons could create positive as well as negative.

2.10.3 Theoretical Framework:

This study examined how gatekeeping theory and visual rhetoric theory affected political cartoons' appearance and content, which had an impact on political perception and conversation. The research was built upon previous studies on this topic. Gatekeeping examined how editors filtered political content (Roberts, 2005). The idea of visual rhetoric, developed by Rosalina Abdul Latif (2021), examined how visual images conveyed meaning. When combined, these themes gave a framework for studying how political cartoons affected various audiences, particularly Generation Z and Generation Y.

2.10.3.1 Gatekeeping Theory:

The Gatekeeping Theory, developed by Kurt Lewin (1947), explained how media gatekeepers filtered and controlled information. Editorial staff, media owners, and regulatory bodies acted as gatekeepers. This task fell to those who had chosen political messaging for the public. "This

theory highlighted the role that the gatekeeper played in shaping the public's access to particular political content depending on editorial goals and political sensitivities," Roberts argued. "The gatekeeper was the person who decided who got access to what political content." Political cartoons needed gatekeeping rules just like other media. In politically sensitive countries like Pakistan, editors made decisions whether to publish cartoons based on government censorship or social norms (Roberts, 2005). Another study verified how technological advancements threatened traditional gatekeeping methods. The research also pinpointed how editors controlled print and TV content (Chin-Fook & Simmonds, 2011). Gatekeepers repeatedly blocked government-critical or religious caricatures in Pakistan, where media control is prevalent. Gatekeepers implemented a more conservative stance than liberals. This gave them narrative control and limited cartoonists' editorial independence. Political cartoons that used subtle graphic tactics to avoid criticism can get away with it (Roberts, 2005). Cartoons like these remained popular. The question of how much editorial leeway cartoonists had to transmit political messages. The Gatekeeping Theory answered this topic. Pressure from outside gatekeepers affected editorial freedom. She illuminated how gatekeepers censor content based on social and organizational factors, decreasing the public's access to diverse political discourse (Roberts, 2005).

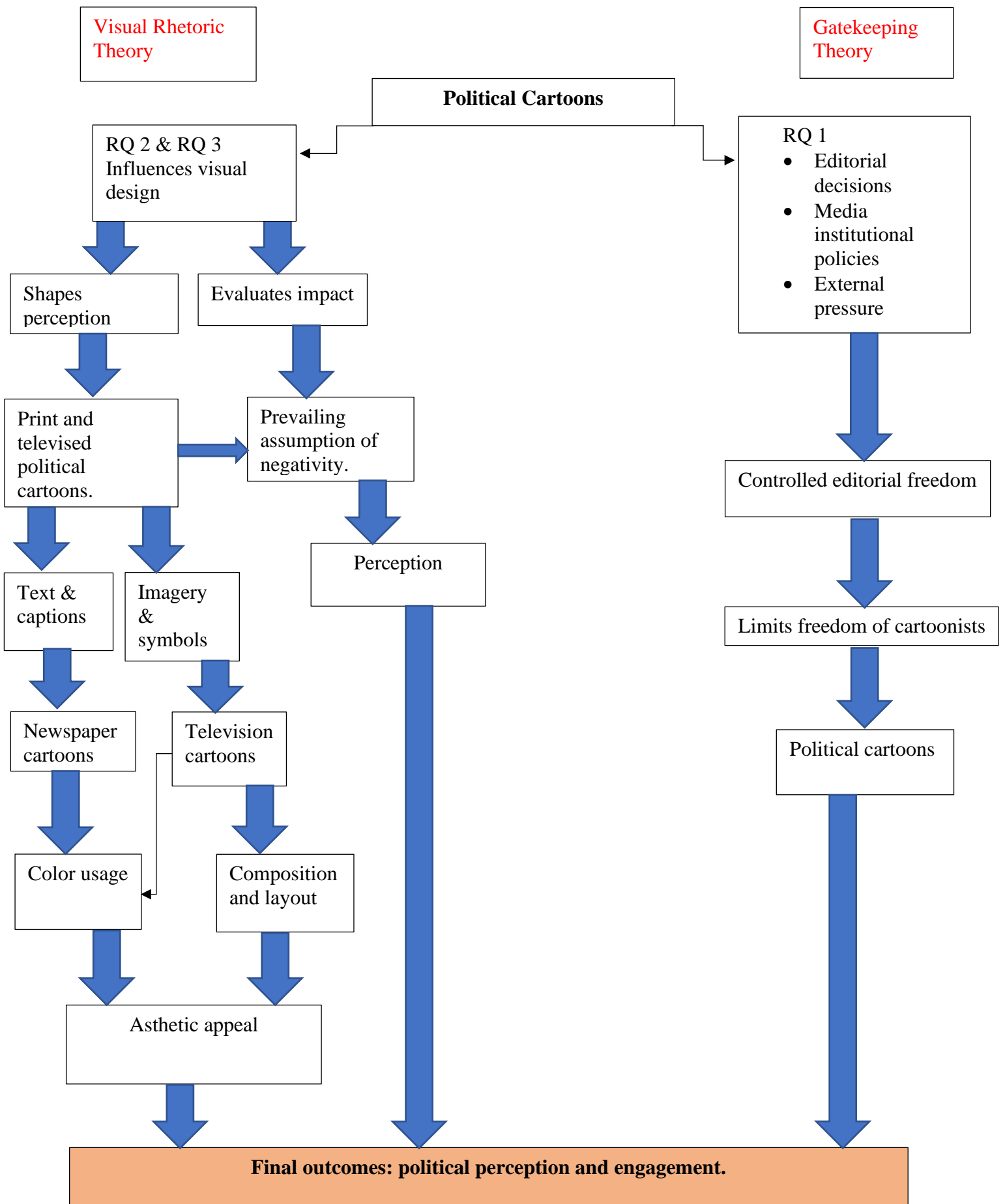
2.10.3.2 Visual Rhetoric Theory:

The theory proposed by Roslina Abdul Latif encompassed the visual images acting as communicative artifacts. This theory highlighted the symbolic or communicative dimensions of visual objects and how they were interpreted by audiences (Latif, 2021). In political cartoons, design elements such as satire, metaphor, and visual symbolism were strategically crafted to evoke specific responses, making them powerful tools for shaping public perception (Latif, 2021). Political cartoonists strategically used visual rhetoric to influence how audiences interpreted political messages. Visual elements, such as color, satire, and composition, conveyed complex political ideas in an accessible, often humorous format. This aligned with the ideas in Paul Messaris' paper, where the persuasive power of visual images is discussed in terms of how they transcended language barriers and communicate effectively to a broad audience (Messaris, 2009). For example, in political unrest, cartoonists frequently used symbolic images of national figures or flags to convey subtle criticism of the government without directly violating censorship laws (Latif, 2021). This allowed the message to reach the audience while avoiding harsh gatekeeping restrictions.

Visual Rhetoric Theory helped answer the second research question—do print and televised political cartoons have significantly different effects on the political perception and engagement of Generation Z and Generation Y? The design choices made by cartoonists were tailored to resonate differently with each generation. Pamela's media gatekeeping research illuminated this content filtering. Generation Z seemed more open to broadcast cartoons or internet memes due to their increased visual literacy from digital media. This was because they've seen digital media. Traditional print cartoons appealed more to Generation Y.

The intentional use of visual elements in cartoons challenged political cartoon pessimism. For the third research question, whether political cartoons could improve political perception, and to analyze the assumption of negativity, visual rhetoric theory suggested that cartoonists used humor and satire to promote positive political involvement. This technique allowed caricature artists to criticize political structures and encourage positive conversation. Caricature artists can accomplish both.

The interplay between Visual Rhetoric Theory and Gatekeeping Theory showed the complex dynamics that shape political cartoon design and distribution. Political cartoons involved these dynamics. Together, they provided a thorough framework for assessing how political cartoons affected public perception and political participation. Combined, the two provided this framework. Cartoonists gently portrayed political concerns through graphic design, often within editorial limitations. Gatekeepers controlled public content, while cartoonists employed graphic design to make political remarks. Political cartoons' role as vehicles of political criticism across media and generations requires a basic knowledge of this relationship.



Source: Author

The conceptual framework explains that how Visual Rhetoric Theory and Gatekeeping Theory supports this study. Where Gatekeeping theory explains that how editorial decisions, media institution policies and external pressures control and limits editorial freedom of cartoonists leading to controlled context of political messages that are conveyed through political cartoons. While Visual Rhetoric Theory explains how it influences visual designs of political cartoons, through its text and captions, imagery and symbols, colors, composition and layout which ultimately leads to shapes perception and influences political engagement. This formula is applied to both televised cartoons as well as newspaper cartoons, contributing to aesthetic appeal and meaning making. All together these two theories demonstrates both (creation and restrictions) dynamics of political cartoons. Where Visual Rhetoric Theory has the capacity of changing perceptions and engagement across generations, simultaneously Gatekeeping theory limits their scope. In a nut shell this framework demonstrates that how both the theories combine and create a balance environment for political cartoons leading to the final output of political perception and engagement.

2.11. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In Pakistan, where political cartoons constituted a vital form of political communication that had not been adequately investigated, this study was significant. Political cartoons had been extensively studied in Western nations, notably their influence on public opinion and editorial independence. However, there was little research in Pakistan on how political cartoons affected different generations. The literature had not completely examined how print versus television affected political views and engagement, particularly among Generation Z and Generation Y. This was problematic since these generations were politically active. The research filled the gap by exploring how political cartoons affected political awareness and discourse in politically sensitive countries like Pakistan. A better understanding of the phenomenon also resulted from this research.

This study illuminated editorial control's restrictions on cartoonists' political critique, which was important. Another reason this study was important. The evidence highlighted editorial control limits. This project examined editorial independence and its effects on political communication in a culture where freedom of speech was legally protected but constantly challenged. Additionally, it examined editorial independence as well as analyzed how political cartoons could promote constructive political activity to counter the idea that they were always

malevolent. To gain a more sophisticated understanding of how political cartoons influenced public opinion, the research questions the premise. The probe proceeds for this reason.

This work was relevant to public policy, especially regarding press freedom and the media role in democratic engagement. The interaction between them interested me. The conclusions of this study had implications for public policy that could also inform Pakistani media and political engagement policy. It achieved this by recognizing cartoons' importance in political education and proposing ways to protect journalistic freedom. The findings lend legitimacy to Pakistan's efforts to harmonize with global freedom of expression and democratic norms. Pakistan is working toward this.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To address the aims and objectives of the study, research methodology provided the framework to ensure the validity and stability of the results. It explained how research questions and objectives were communicated and, from the data collected, how results were derived (Bryman, 2012).

A *mixed-methods research* approach was employed, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods, to tackle the research objectives. The mixed-methods was chosen because it offered a comprehensive view of how different mediums, political cartoons, and editorial freedom affected the political perception and engagement of Generation Y and Z in Pakistan. Through this approach, the study explored the subject area both statistically and through in-depth insights from cartoonists.

The quantitative section involved a survey designed to measure the impact of political cartoons on political engagement and perception. It helped in capturing different trends and patterns in how different generations responded to different media (print and televised) political cartoons. Whereas the qualitative section involved interviews with cartoonists for a deeper understanding of editorial freedom and the influence of gatekeeping on political cartoons. Integrating both methods helped to explore the research problem more comprehensively.

3.1. Research design:

An explanatory research design was followed in the study, as it aimed to probe deeper into the complex relationship between political cartoons, editorial freedom, medium-specific effects, prevailing assumptions of negativity, and how it shaped the political perception and engagement of Generation Y and Generation Z. To know the interplay between the variables, along with the effect of all the variables on each other in numerous ways this specific research design was used (Bryman, 2012).

3.2. Methods of Data Collection:

Two methods of data collection were employed in this study: a quantitative survey and qualitative semi-structured interviews.

- 1- Surveys: For the primary data collection, a quantitative data survey was conducted. The target audience for the survey comprised individuals from Generation Z (born between 1997-2012) and Generation Y (born between 1981-1996), including university students, college students and young faculty members. Participants were asked to evaluate their interaction with political cartoons and to what extent these political cartoons affected the political engagement and perception of participants. The survey included two types of questions: Likert scale items designed to measure participants perceptions and engagement towards political cartoons, along with multiple-choice questions evaluating their frequency of exposure and preferred mediums.
- 2- Semi-structured interviews for qualitative data collection. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with cartoonists in Pakistan for a better understanding of editorial freedom. This method was chosen because it allowed flexibility, maintaining focus on the objectives of the study and still delved deeper into the key issues.

3.3 Sampling

For the quantitative survey, a targeted purposive sampling technique was employed, as the study focused on two specific generations i.e., Generation Y (born between 1981-1996) and Generation Z (born between 1997-2012). The selection of these two groups were deliberate because of the core focus of the research questions, especially in terms of comparing political perception and engagement across generations. As compared to any other sampling technique which might include respondents out of the scope but with purposive sampling only the relevant age groups were targeted. This helped ensure the inclusion of specific and relevant respondents for the survey, maximizing the accuracy and relevance of the survey results.

For qualitative data, the same purposive sampling was used because interviews were conducted with cartoonists. Since there were cartoonists of all kinds in Pakistan with specific fields of interest, i.e., comic, gag, editorial, etc., purposive sampling allowed a more effective selection of cartoonists by picking specifically editorial cartoonists. This contributed to the diversification of the sample. Cartoonists might belong to different backgrounds, levels of experience, age groups, etc., which increased the reliability of the data.

Purposive sampling method was also adopted for the collection of political cartoons from newspapers and television. Newspaper cartoons were selected from DAWN, one of the most

well-known and read newspapers of Pakistan among literate individuals covering the period from 2023 to 2024. Television cartoons were selected from two different sources, i.e., Geo cartoons (2014-2015) and Donkey King movie (2018). The major recurring themes in Pakistani political cartoons were political, social and economic issues. These are the primary areas of Pakistan's political commentary which align with the objectives of this study. These were not predetermined themes but appeared as central categories as a result of review of the existing literature and observation of the selected cartoons.

3.4 Units of Data Collection

Units of data collection for objective one were individual cartoonists (total number of cartoonists were 7) because of their expertise in the field. Interviews were conducted, which gave a more detailed look at editorial freedom and the challenges faced by political cartoonists while publishing politically sensitive content. For objective number two, the unit of data collection was Generation Z and Generation Y (total 233 respondents) individuals and selected political cartoons, which focused on the medium-specific effects of political cartoons on the political perception and engagement across generations. For objective number three, the unit of data collection comprised a collection of 11 political cartoons from newspapers and television. These included DAWN newspaper cartoons (2023-2024), Geo-cartoons (2014-2015) and The Donkey King movie (2018). The time frame of 2023-2024 was selected to capture the most recent political climate of Pakistan, ensuring the reflection of contemporary issues, editorial practices and generational engagement with political cartoons in analysis. The 2014–2015-time frame was chosen because it marked a phase when televised political cartoons and satire gained popularity, highlighting contemporary national political developments and media liberalization. Moreover, the selection of 2018 animated film was due to its satirical content and representation of political cartooning in cinematic form, pin pointing that how satire reaches mass audience beyond newspapers.

3.5 Locale

The locale chosen for this study was from across Pakistan. One of the major reasons, the survey was conducted online through Google Forms. Individuals belonging to Generation Y (born 1981-1996) and Generation Z (born 1997-2012) can fill out the form be it from any province or city in Pakistan, provided they were regular media users with some exposure to political cartoons. This gave extremely diverse data for the study, which made it more unique and reliable. While interviews were conducted through online platforms (WhatsApp and Google

Meet) with the cartoonists. The reason for conducting online interviews was that most of the cartoonists were living in Lahore, Peshawar, and Karachi, and the ones who were in Islamabad and Rawalpindi had having tight schedule, due to which they asked for an online interview. Also, opting for WhatsApp audio call for online interview seems a bit surprising, but it was due to some cartoonists being unable to use Google Meet.

3.6 The Procedure of Data Collection

For data collection processes, both qualitative and quantitative, the process was clear. For quantitative data online survey was conducted through Google Forms, which included Likert scale questions as well as multiple-choice questions. There were multiple reasons for adopting online **surveys** as a method of data collection. First, it was more convenient **for** respondents in this digitalized era. Second, without any interference or pressure from the researcher, the respondents filled the form more accurately without missing any questions. Third, as the nature of this study data was collected from Generation Z and Generation Y from any province, city, etc. so the reliability of the data increased. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with cartoonists for qualitative data. For the interviews, cartoonists were contacted through emails, WhatsApp, and social media platforms of cartoonists. Afterward, the interviews were conducted according to a time, day, and method of interview (online through WhatsApp, **Google Meet**) convenient for the cartoonists. The interviews gave an in-depth understanding of editorial freedom and medium. specific impacts from cartoonists' perspectives, also about the challenges and opportunities of the cartoonists. For political cartoons, semiotic analysis was done. It focused on the visual and semiotic aspects. It mainly focused on color combination, composition, and placement. As well as the recurring themes and metaphors used in political cartoons. The adopted themes were economy, social issues, and politics cartoons were selected. Newspaper cartoons were collected from DAWN, while television cartoons were collected from **the Donkey King** movie and Geo cartoons. **The theme** selection criteria were followed in the selection of specific frames from the televised cartoons.

Table 1 Cartoonists Information

Serial no.	Code	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation	Experience	Current working status
1	C1	50s-60s	Male	BS in Fine Arts	Cartoonist	28+ years	Active cartoonist

2	C2	50s-60s	Male		Cartoonist	33 years	Active cartoonist
3	C3	63 years	Male	Arts education in college and NCA	Cartoonist	40+ years	Create political cartoons + painter
4	C4	In his 20s	Male	Bachelors of Arts	Cartoonist	Informally 6-7 years, formally 1.5 years	Active cartoonist
5	C5	70+	Male	Arts education from National College of Arts (NCA) and BA in Fine Arts	Cartoonist	55 years	Working minimally
6	C6	68 years	Male	Graduated in Fine Arts and Painting	Cartoonist	40+ years	Retired
7	C7	72 years	Female	Degree in Fine Arts	Cartoonist	Since childhood	Active as a comic cartoonist

Source: Author

Table 2 Socio-demographic Profiling of Survey Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Generation	Generation Y (28-44 years)	99	42.5%
	Generation Z (13-27 years)	134	57.5%
Gender	Male	111	47.6%
	Female	122	52.4%
Education	FSc	23	9.9%
	Bachelor's	77	33%
	Masters	88	37.8%

	PhD	17	7.3%
	Other	28	12%
Occupation	Student	90	38.6%
	Professional	101	43.3%
	Unemployed	20	8.6%
	Other	22	9.4%

Source: Author

3.7 Positionality statement:

As a researcher and student of MPhil public policy, I stepped into the world of political cartooning from civic and academic perspectives. As an outsider with no previous connections, either personal or professional, with the cartoonists that were being interviewed, **it** made it a more pure and interesting study (in other words, no biases). My interest in this specific topic **was** elevated by watching cartoons daily. Observing its unique quality of disseminating awareness about critical topics like social behaviors, political issues, social issues, etc. one of the best things was approaching this topic as an outsider, because it kept me curious, objective, and open in my approach. To avoid any kind of biases, I adopted thematic coding and transcriptions of interviews. I not only focused on my analytical framework for this study, but I also focused **on** and kept forward **cartoonists'** voices and their experiences for a better and **deeper** understanding.

3.8 Data analysis:

For quantitative data analysis, descriptive analysis was used to explore the patterns and trends, as the graphs and pie charts were already created by Google Forms. For qualitative data analysis, visual semiotic analysis was used for the interpretation of political cartoons chosen for the study because it is a specialized study of visual media. It focused on composition, imagery, colors, and symbols, and all of these characteristics were present in political cartoons. Semiotic analysis made it easy to dissect the meaning of political cartoons. Thematic analysis was carried for the transcriptions of interviews. The use of thematic analysis helped organize the data and identify and interpret the underlying meanings and patterns present in the data.

3.9 Research ethics:

Throughout the research process ethical considerations were carefully observed to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and credibility of the study. Before data collection participants were properly informed about the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. No identity of respondents or the interviewers were disclosed to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, and all responses were used solely for academic purposes. Online survey maintained the identity of the respondents anonymous and before the interviews each cartoonist was provided with clear information regarding the research objectives and their consent to record and quote their views. moreover, the cartoons selected for research were strictly for academic purposes and respecting copyright and intellectual property rights. This study followed all research ethical standards of all the respondents while maintaining transparency, honesty and respect throughout all stages of data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Semiotic Analysis:

Semiotic analysis is a method of interpretation of how meanings are constructed and communicated through signs and symbols. It also examines the relationship between signs and their meanings (Chandler, 2022). Additionally, talking about visual semiotic analysis specifically, visual semiotic analysis is more inclined to study images, symbols, colors, and design elements (Chandler, 2022). Also, Ibrahim & Sulaiman (2020) say that semiotic analysis is the method of interpreting and analyzing symbols and signs in communication. The key aspects/elements of visual semiotic analysis, given my different studies, are icons, indexes, symbols, cultural context, intertextuality, color, shape, layout, contextual interpretation (Chandler, 2022; Ibrahim & Sulaiman, 2020).

In this study Roland Barthes semiotic model 1957 is used to analyze the selected cartoons. According to Barthes semiotics analysis is “Study of signs. Which consists of a signifier (a word, an image, a sound, and so on) and a signified (its meaning)” (S, 2017). Further he identified three levels to analyze cartoons/images. First, denotative level the literal meaning (the description of visible elements). Second, connotative level (symbolic meanings that are attached to those elements) and Third, Myth/ideological level (socio-political or cultural values attached to those elements) (S, 2017).

Through Roland Barthes model 1957 each cartoon was analyzed in three steps. First, its literal or denotative elements were described. At second step the connotative meaning or in other words the symbolic meaning attached to the elements were identified and lastly the myth/ideological meaning were described relating it to the socio-political and cultural contexts of Pakistan. This method was chosen because of its three-tiered framework which made it concise, adaptable and effective for analyzing political cartoons. This approach makes the reasoning process smooth, transparent and supported through a proper framework.

Though the selection of political cartoons for this research covers a wide range of subjects i.e. corruption, women education, media practices, economic instability, rising prices and electoral politics. But they are not just randomly selected but rather they are thematically connected

through their critique on social, economic and political situation of Pakistan. This diverse collection of political cartoons not only gives depth to analysis but it also highlights that how uniquely political cartoons commentary on a wide range of issues existing in the society.

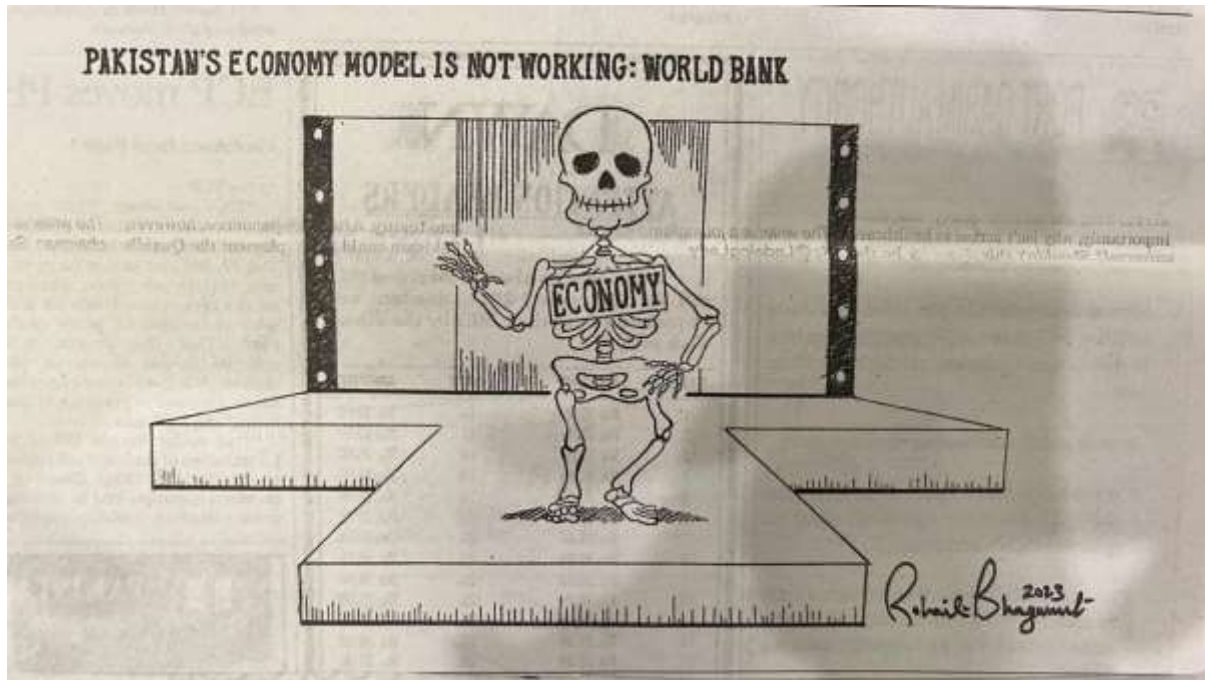


Figure 1

Denotative meaning: The cartoon depicts a “skeleton” which is labelled “*ECONOMY*”. A stage which resembles a ruler/ geometric scale. In the background, there is a backdrop which contains vertical lines resembling bars. And a caption “*PAKISTAN’S ECONOMY MODEL IS NOT WORKING: WORLD BANK*”. Moreover, the **connotative/ symbolic interpretation** of the cartoon shows that the skeleton, which is labeled as economy, symbolizes the economic system of Pakistan. which states that it's on the verge of collapse or decay. Combining the text written in the caption with the geometric scale shapes stage indicates that the economic model of Pakistan has been evaluated by the international organization, the World Bank, which is quite clear in the caption. The bars in the backdrop look like prison bars, which indicates that the economy is constrained and unable to grow or recover from the loss/damage that has already been done. While the posture/gesture of the skeleton on hand on hip, others raised can have two indications: one defending itself, while the second appealing for help. Furthermore, the intertextuality of cartoon shows that Pakistan’s economic policies are facing severe scrutiny

by the World Bank; that is why it is tied to the global economic assessments. Additionally, the **myth/ideological** context of this cartoon is targeting the policy makers of Pakistan as well as the leaders/ruling power. Highlighting the extreme failure of the institutions, leadership, and policy makers to create a sustainable economic model of Pakistan, comments by the World Bank make the situation and views more critical. The overall semiotic codes of the cartoon are symbolic codes which demonstrate the severity of the economic situation of Pakistan by using the skeleton as a metaphor for death and decay. Spatial code talks about the exact placement of the skeleton, as it is placed in the front center, making it the ultimate important topic of argument. Lastly, the written code, which is the caption, bridges the cartoon image and the real-world evaluation given by the international organization (World Bank).



Figure 2

The **denotative analysis** of the cartoon shows that it is divided into two time periods: 2018, the top part, and 2024, the bottom part. As well as it is also divided into four sections (top left, top right, bottom left, and bottom right). The top left is a drawing of a political person who is pointing at the politician at the top right corner, who is shown to be in jail. Now, in the second time period, 2024, at the bottom displays that the roles have been revised in this time period. In the bottom right corner, the politician who was jailed in 2018 is now out of jail and making fun of the politician at the bottom left, who is now in jail, having been out of jail. While a

caption is written in the middle of the image, “POLITICAL KARMA”. The **connotative meaning** of the cartoon indicates the recurrent nature in the political setting of Pakistan. Power dynamics shifts have been identified by the time period mentioned. Exaggerated emotions, i.e., laughter, mocking, hopelessness on the faces of the caricatures of the politicians, show the revenge-driven political tactics or political strategies used by the ruling power against other parties who has humiliated them in the past. While the prison bars depict the accusations of corruption, etc., against the political figure. All this is held together by the caption “POLITICAL KARMA” written in the middle of the cartoon. According to the **myth/ideological context** of the cartoon shows that Pakistani politics is moving in cycles, where politicians are fighting to be in power, and they do that by accusing the other party of corruption and any other accusations they could think of to make their ruling time period as long as possible. And due to this, the country's growth, public growth is compromised.



Figure 3

Denotative analysis the image is divided into two halves: top and bottom. The top half shows the relation/bond between politician and voter before the election. Where a politician in a suit (a slight smirk on his face) and a voter in simple clothes wearing a cap, VOTER written on it, are sitting in a car together with the phrase “LOVE YOU” and hearts. While the bottom half of the image shows the relationship between politician and voter after the election. Where the politician is driving off (also some lines are rising from the back tire of the car) while

dropping/leaving the voter (with expressions of distrust) behind. And a phrase “*SEE YOU*” from the politician (with no expressions on his face). The **connotative analysis** of the cartoon provides critique on the behavior of politicians before or during the election campaigns, and then the abrupt changes after the elections. The smirk on the face of the politician in the top half of the image shows the hidden agenda that he had planned to follow. The hearts show the love of a politician for the votes from the voters (not the voters). The heart from the voter in the car shows trust and love of the politician within the heart of the voter. While in the bottom half, the rising lines from the tire of the car indicate the speed of the car that the politician is speeding and driving off, leaving behind the voter who has fallen out of the car. The expressions of the voter show distrust in the politician, while the politician, with no facial expressions at the moment of driving off, displays no interest in the voter; the interest was only with the vote. Also, the text transformation from “*LOVE YOU*” to “*SEE YOU*” highlights the transactional political nature in Pakistan. Additionally, sarcasm is present in the phrase “*SEE YOU,*” which means that politicians are more loyal to the votes than the voters, and they will return only when they need the votes, i.e., just before the elections. The **myth/ideological analysis** shows that overall cartoon highlights the self-interest of the politicians.



Figure 4

The **denotative elements** in the above cartoon are a man in traditional attire holding a big hammer in his hand, standing in front of a building and looking at the building from a distance, also a text “*IT IS A DANGER FOR ME*” written next to the man. While the other elements in

the cartoon are the building labelled as “*GIRLS SCHOOL*” with a symbol of female gender placed on top of the building. The man wearing traditional attire, i.e., a turban, shalwar kameez, and having a beard symbolizes that he belongs to a rural area. The hammer in his hand signifies destruction, violence, or suppression. And the caption “*IT IS A DANGER FOR ME*” combined with it demonstrates extremist and conservative points of view of the people in rural areas regarding girls’ education. **Connotative analysis** shows the building “*GIRLS SCHOOL*” and the symbol of female gender placed on top of it represent opportunities and progress for women through education, empowering women, giving them equality, and societal advancement. As the cartoon was published in Pakistani print media, its implied meaning voices an important and critical message about the society of Pakistan. where it shows that, being a patriarchal society, women's empowerment, women's education are seen as a threat by most individuals or groups with extremist ideologies. Additionally, **myth/ideological analysis** demonstrates that historically, women’s education has faced opposition, threats, and even destruction from extremist groups, especially in rural areas. For instance, the incident of Malala Yousafzai, where extremist groups targeted girls’ schools, just so that they could spread terror among people and suppress women’s education, so they could maintain their patriarchal system. Overall, the cartoon gives a message that half of the country’s population is women and yet they are oppressed, their education is considered to be a threat depicts the regressive mindset of the people.



Figure 5

The **denotative level** of the above cartoon shows a man, an IV drip, a weak cow, and a caption that states “*PM HOPES IMF LOAN WILL HELP STABILISE ECONOMY*”. The IV drip is held by the man, where the man looks like the current prime minister of Pakistan with a smile on his face. The IV drip symbolizes IMF loan, while the cow, which appears to be extremely weak and bonny, represents the economy of Pakistan, which is in an extremely critical state. For **connotative level** the smile on the face of the man shows that he is satisfied and happy that the IMF loan will get back the economy of Pakistan on track. The overall cartoon, combining the text and other elements, demonstrates that the Prime Minister relies on IMF loans; time and again, going back to the IMF for further financial help is not something that would fix the economic condition of Pakistan. Moreover, for **myth/ideological level** the weak cow lying off the ground symbolizes the vulnerability and deteriorating economy of Pakistan, where IMF loans are not a permanent/ sustainable solution.

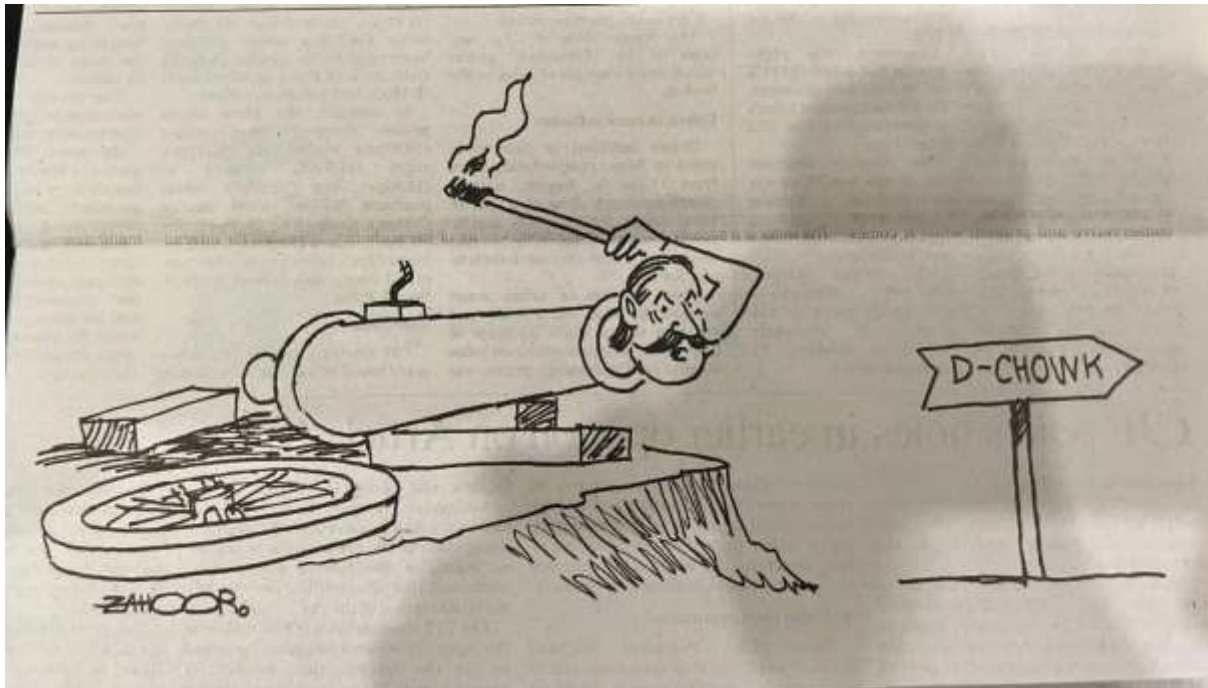


Figure 6

The **denotative level** of the cartoon shows a person, a broken cannon, a lit matchstick, and a sign board labelled “D-CHOWK” pointing to the right. The person symbolizes a personality of a political party who is peaking out of the cannon with an expression of determination, but is thoughtless. The broken cannon indicates that it is not in a proper state to perform its function. The lit matchstick indicates that the person wants to reach their target, which is D-chowk, as fast as possible. The **connotative analysis** of the cartoons displays that this specific cartoon from print media of Pakistan was published in 2024 during the time period of Shahbaz Shareef rule where the opposition party PTI were performing protest again and again in Islamabad (the capital of Pakistan) at D-chowk (the place where all the important institutions buildings are located including the PM house). The cannon signifies political party, while its broken nature identifies the broken and dysfunctional nature of PTI. The person peeking out from the cannon and trying to reach its target shows that he is part of that particular party, and for his motive, he wants to reach D-chowk. **Myth/ideological level** of the cartoon sheds light on ineffectiveness and dysfunctional strategies and system of PTIs protests. Additionally highlighting that with no proper structure and strategy their attempts to reach the institutions and challenge its working is a failed attempt.



Figure 7

The **denotative level analysis** of the cartoons shows a steep slope, a man running down the hill wearing tattered clothes with confused facial expressions, a barrel falling down the hill, waves behind the barrel, and a caption which reads as “*ANOTHER STEEP RISE IN FUEL PRICES*”. The man in tattered clothes signifies his financial state, and his expression shows the fear and confusion he is facing. The waves behind the barrel show the speed of the barrel, and the steep slope shows the increase. **Connotative level** combined the text and the element in the cartoon gives a complete picture of what the cartoonist is talking about. The complete meaning signifies the barrel, which represents the high prices of fuel, while the man tattered clothes and expression identifies the social status of the man as being lower or middle class and with the high prices how the lower- and middle-class individuals are facing issues. Additionally, the **myth/ideological level** highlights that the face expressions and running of the man shows helplessness of the man. Reflecting upon the rising fuel prices and it burdens the middle class and poor, symbolizing economic inequality and lack of government measures to protect vulnerable groups.



Figure 8

The **denotative elements** in the cartoon are a person wearing a hat, which is labelled “ECP,” where ECP stands for Election Commission of Pakistan. The hands of the person are showing some important gestures, one hand raised showing gestures of taking an oath, while the other hand is hidden behind his back, plus fingers crossed. The written text is “*I SWEAR POLLS WERE FREE AND TRANSPARENT.*” Delving deeper into the **connotative meaning** of the elements in the cartoon. The man symbolizes the representative of the Election Commission of Pakistan, an institution which is responsible for the free and fair elections in the country. The formal commitment for free and fair elections is represented by the raised hand for oath. On the other hand, behind his back with fingers crossed shows dishonesty or corruption. Additionally, the statement highlights the bold claim of the institution. As well as the droplet of sweat shows the nervousness of the person because of such a big scam he is committing. The **myth/ideological meaning** in overall image, combining the text and the elements together, gives a meaning that there lies a huge gap between the statements given by such important institutions and their actual practices. Critiquing the credibility of electoral institutions, where public trust is betrayed due to the lack of transparency and hidden corruption.



Figure 9

The cartoon **denotative elements** identified are animated monkeys, which include a total of four monkeys. Three of them are statues, while the fourth one is a proper, well-suited monkey. The aesthetics (dim lights, office curtains) of the room show it to be a newsroom. Including a speech bubble which reads as “*Monkey news moto: Bura dekho, bura suno or bura he bolo qk bura he bikta hai.*” Its translation is *watch bad, listen bad, speak bad, because bad sells.* **Connotative level** in this cartoon, the monkey in a suit signifies an important media personality or head of a media agency. While the aesthetics of the room show the seriousness of the environment. As the placement of monkeys in a newsroom is an important personal identifier, an irrational impression of news media. The overall **myth/ideological message** present in the cartoon is that media is more into its ratings, which they achieve by sensationalizing negative content rather than doing ethical journalism to benefit the audience. Additionally, this cartoon is providing critique of the media's irresponsible practices.



Figure 10

The **denotative elements** of cartoon paints two males, having a conversation in a domestic living room, TV playing in the background, and relaxed postures of both males. The male's relaxed posture and a conversation which is written in speech bubbles, which reads as "*Esy esy dil kharash naray seekhy hen k election se pehly vote deny aogy*" (*I have learned such emotional slogans that you will come to vote before elections*) by the person on the left, while the response by the person on the right is "*OHH! You mean dil khush kardeny waly.*" (*oh! You mean that heart-warming ones*). **Connotative level** the domestic setting (the furniture, muted color tones, the flower pattern carpet, the chandelier, the photo frame, the old-fashioned TV). All this symbolizes an everyday environment and setting of almost every household in Pakistan. This conversation and relaxed posture of the males show that one on the left is going to be nominated for elections, for which he has written manipulative and convincing slogans for the audience, which he will be using during his election campaign. Moreover, the person on the right depicts someone who knows this person and all his tactics. Their relaxed posture shows how casually they both are discussing a very important issue. The TV in the background represents the traditional media role in shaping the public's perception about the politics of the country. The overall **myth/ideological sense** of the cartoon is that it shows how casually politicians discuss the politics of the country while sitting in their comfort zone, not caring and thinking about the actual problems of the public, which need to be resolved. This also shows how the public is only used for their votes. Additionally, it signifies the dishonesty and skeptical tactics used by the nominated representatives for the election.



Figure 11

The **denotative elements** in the cartoon identified are a monkey in a suit sitting at a table with an expression of fear, a tiger in a green royal robe pointing at the donkey on TV, TV in background on which a donkey in an average outfit is displayed which both hands on his waist, and dialogue in speech bubbles. The tiger says, “*App likhlen mere bat Shehzada he jeetayga*” (*mark my words, price will be the winner*). On the other hand, the donkey displayed on the TV in the background with an average outfit and both hands on his waist, saying, “*Arry baba likhy pary hoty tou donkey hoty?*” (*Oh, come on! if I were educated, would I be a donkey?*). The overall setup shown in the cartoon is of a newsroom. **Connotative elements** in the cartoon shows monkey as a journalist, while placement of a monkey in place of a cartoon person identifies the satire and critique of journalists in Pakistan. This indicates that the donkey is an ordinary person from the public who is not educated. Also, it highlights the satire and mimicry in the cartoon about how the ordinary population, or more clearly, the individuals of the country, are illiterate. While the tiger in a bright green robe identifies him as a royal person or a very close person to the royal family, who has been invited to this talk on the news channel. Furthermore, the facial expressions of fear on the face of the monkey show that the heated

situation between the tiger and the donkey on TV will end, and it might also affect him. His pointing posture and dialogue display that he is a person close to the royal family, and he confidently claims that whatever happens, the prince is going to win. This also highlights an important issue of illiteracy in Pakistan. The **myth/ideological message** by the cartoon is that it is drawing attention to the time of elections in Pakistan, where the royals, the already present political parties throughout history, or to be more precise, the political parties that emerged from the very first moment of democracy in the country, followed the route of nepotism. Now giving a chance to new and capable candidates for the purpose of development. So that when an ordinary person comes out of nowhere and stands for elections, they become aggressive. Not caring about the real meaning of democracy, development of the country, betterment of the general public, etc., but just following the path of nepotism for their self-interest. Lastly, the media houses and journalists are also not providing transparency in news updates, but rather they are just enjoying and facilitating the elites for their own ratings, success of the channel, and self-interest.

4.2 Thematic analysis:

Table 3 Themes and codes

Editorial freedom	Self-censorship and safety	Generational responses	Symbolic expression	Power of cartoons	Mediums and reach	Future of cartooning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete freedom (in some newspapers) • Pressure from editors. • Topic restriction. • Unwritten policies. • Killed cartoons. • Sudden job loss. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats and intimidation. • Fear of being fired or attacked. • Avoiding religion/sex. • Mental health impact. • Removed content under pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional youth reactions. • Polarized perception. • Social media as youth's platform. • Intellectual senior feedback. • Fixed mindset in youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual metaphors. • Allegory. • Use of satire. • Storytelling through visuals. • Subtle caricatures. • Positive cartooning. • Concealed critique. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool of resistance. • Influence politicians. • Used for awareness. • Shape public discourse. • Cartoons harder to suppress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print is prestigious but shrinking. • Social media expands reach. • TV/radio used creatively. • Same cartoon shared across platforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decline in profession. • Insecurity economically. • Less number of cartoonists. • Censorship and layoffs. • Space shrinking.

Source: Author

4.2.1 Editorial freedom

For political cartoonists one of the most critical concerns is editorial freedom. While interviewing some of the senior cartoonists (C5 and C3) shared their experience of editorial freedom and creative liberty under certain periods of time in their career, on the other hand, many other cartoonists expressed that this freedom is limited as well as conditional. For instance, C1 cartoonist talked about his experience in two different newspapers, that how “The Frontier Post” has given him complete freedom of creativity while the second newspaper, “DAWN”, has imposed strict restrictions. Further, he shared how, due to the probability of rejection how he followed self-censorship before submission of the cartoon. It was revealed by cartoonist C3 that *“During the PTI government, so many of my cartoons were rejected that if I compile them, I can publish a book out of it, which I should give the title Killed Cartoons”*.

Cartoonists also talked about the lack of editorial policies because freedom is dependent on the broader political climate and individual editors’ viewpoints. Cartoonist C6 openly stated, *“Some of the topic areas are no-go areas, i.e., judiciary, military and religion”*. Due to this invisible boundary (which is stated by unspoken media norms) made they choose their subjects for cartoons wisely. However, the editorial freedom in Pakistan is quite surprising, where some cartoonists have it while others don’t, and it all depends on political pressures as well as the newsroom dynamics.

4.2.2 Self-Censorship and safety

Among cartoonists, one of the deeply rooted coping mechanisms for personal and professional safety and survival is self-censorship. Two of the renowned cartoonists, C5 and C1, mentioned explicitly that to avoid dangerous consequences, they do filter their work, ideas, etc. Cartoonist C1 shared personal experience *“One of my cartoons I created, the establishment was threatened due to that. Which resulted in firing at my house in the middle of the night. After that, I was extremely stressed that I had to see a psychiatrist”*. However, this highlights that even after editorial approval, the outer environment, or in other words, the external pressures, stimulates the content and nature of political expression.

On the other hand, cartoonist **C3** avoids self-censorship and leaves the decision to the editor. moreover, one female cartoonist, **C7**, added that she totally avoids topics like religion and politics to ensure their safety. In most cases, indirect self-monitoring is adopted by the cartoonists due to the expectancy of backlash or violence though which results in shaping the complete creativity process. Because of the danger present in the external environment, cartoonists have automatically adopted the patterns through which they could be creative but not also hurting audiences' feelings, and in this way, the level of danger is low. But all this impacts the creative power of cartoons, which is to critique issues and political situations.

4.2.3 Generational responses

The reception and interpretation of political cartoons is strongly influenced by generational differences. It is reported by the cartoonists that Generation Z views political cartoons quite faithfully and responds to them emotionally. The cartoonist **C4** vividly described the generational contrast: *“I was planning to make a cartoon of three different generations within a family: a grandfather reading a newspaper, a father sitting and watching TV, while grandson on his phone and all for news purposes”*. This powerful illustration simply echoes a strong point of view about the fragmentation in media habits and a variety of political maturity in different age groups.

Moreover, two of the cartoonists, **C2** and **C6**, clearly stated that the responses from older generations are more constructive and philosophical, while on the other hand, responses from young generations are more likely if the cartoon tends to go against or challenge their political beliefs. From this, it is quite obvious that in this digital age, visual satire is highly polarized, where younger generations most of the time lack the background knowledge of the political cartoon and neglect the subtle critique present in the cartoon. About this generational gap, it is quite a challenge as well as an opportunity for the cartoonists to create and adopt new ways and ideas to engage the younger generations.

4.2.4 Symbolic expression

To convey complex and intense political messages, cartoonists use certain symbolic and rhetorical strategies to bypass censorship. Including metaphors, allegory, satire, and caricature,

which enables cartoonists to critique powerful institutions, political personalities, etc., without directly pointing at them. Cartoonist **C3** disclosed that images hold more power than simple text: *“Images communicate past literacy and language barriers. Images are even understood by illiterate people”*. Despite illiteracy, political cartoons convey their messages, which makes political cartoons an extremely potent medium. Additionally, he included his symbolic props by adding height, proportion, etc. to his cartoons, which makes them stand out with a deeper meaning.

However, cartoonist **C4** added in his interview, *“I use zigzag pattern to convey my message, which means within my cartoons I use daily life objects, combining them with my important message, and creating a cartoon in this way, it bypasses the editorial restrictions and gets published”*. For instance, one of his cartoons was about the missing persons of Balochistan, in which a young Baloch girl grows up into a woman while still holding the same placard for her missing father. This shows the power of storytelling in political cartoons. Another cartoonist, **C6**, added that he used metaphors from global newspapers, which enhanced his artistic philosophy. In a nutshell, symbolism acts as a shield for cartoonists behind which they can create awareness and critique the high-level institutions and political personalities without direct backlash.

4.2.5 Power of cartoons

In Pakistan, political cartoons act as tools for satire, public awareness, and resistance. Despite all the hurdles of censorship, cartoonists are still motivated to use their work as a means of influencing public perception and confronting power, be it political or institutional. Senior cartoonist **C6** quoted that *“cartooning is not entertainment, it is resistance”*. Adding that with a simple cartoon, hypocrisy and contradictions of powerful individuals can be revealed, while this unveiling of such powerful individuals cannot be achieved by articles. As the other cartoonist added that *“political individuals might seem upset about their political cartoons, but secretly, they admire the creativity and symbolic significance of the cartoon”*.

While the other cartoonist, **C5**, adopted a different approach in his work, *“I floated the term positive cartoon. Most of the cartoonists say that there is no such thing as a positive cartoon, but it is my own creation”*. which he believes is a blend of critique and constructive massaging

within a political cartoon. His cartoons were the reason behind many institutional introspection and change, highlighting the power of political cartoons. Whereas, cartoonists *C4* and *C7* identified their work as means for amplifying social issues and creating awareness. All together, cartoonists not only see their cartoons as visual commentary but more like a powerful tool to reflect and reform society.

4.2.6. Mediums and reach

Medium of publication plays a vital role in perceiving and disseminating political cartoons. Cartoonists highlighted that in this digital era, print media is declining, though it still holds historical significance and institutional respect. Cartoonists *C1* and *C3* stated that, with the passage of time, social media has increased its audience, which still comes at a cost of polarized and emotional feedback, says cartoonists. Cartoonist *C5* talked “*While working in Jang newspaper, a survey was done by Jang, findings from that survey were that 17% of Jang newspaper readers were those who bought or read the newspaper just for the sake of his political cartoons on a daily basis*”.

However, the new frontline for public engagement is the digital media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter). *C4* stated that if one cartoon reaches 10,000 people through print media, parallel to it that same cartoon reaches 50,000 or more people through online platforms. Senior cartoonist *C6* also identified that this is a form of democratization, but it does have risks in itself. New forms of censorship through PECA laws and online surveillance have increased. Hence, wider visibility is offered by digital media, but it puts cartoonists in a more critical situation.

4.2.7. Future of cartooning

In Pakistan political cartooning future is uncertain. Some cartoonists like *C5* believes that it will continue by quoting “*like cricket, coming and going*” while others are not sure. Cartoonist *C1* quoted “*there is no future*” because of layoffs, decreasing readership, and lack of institutional support. While *C3* and *C6* added that due to increased censorships, economic instability, and decreased editorial courage, it leads to unsustainable careers for cartoonists. s

Despite all these difficulties, cartoonists are still drawing political cartoons, hoping life and existence of their cartoons. Although a handful of cartoonists are left but with the help of digital platforms, their impact is increased. Cartoonist **C6**, after retirement, is still using his art for public awareness. In the changing dynamics of the environment and institutions, platforms for political cartooning have decreased while government monitoring has increased. But after interviewing all those cartoonists, it is clear that they are not working for money, but more likely, they are dedicated to their work. Future of political cartooning is not solely dependent on institutions, but a major chunk of it depends on cartoonists themselves.

4.3 Descriptive analysis of survey:

Survey data collected through online google forms from a total of 233 respondents (at this point the survey reached its saturation level). To analyze and delve deeper into the data descriptive analysis is used which helps to understand the demographics, engagement as well as perception of respondents along with that the editorial freedom and censorship including the prevailing assumptions of negativity that is attached to political cartoons.

4.3.1 Demographics

Sample of the study was a combination of two generations i.e., Generation Y (1981-1996) and Generation Z (1997-2012). Out of a total of 233 respondents, 42.5% respondents from Generation Y, which in numbers are 99 respondents out of 233, while 57.5% respondents from Generation Z, which are about 134 respondents out of 233. This ratio highlights the increasing interest of younger generations in political engagement as well as an increase in digital literacy.

Age

233 responses

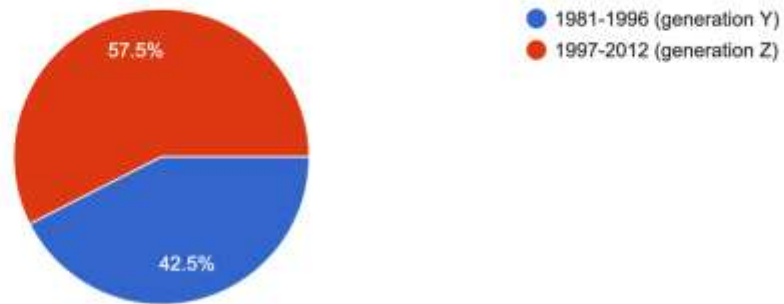


Figure 12

Gender

233 responses

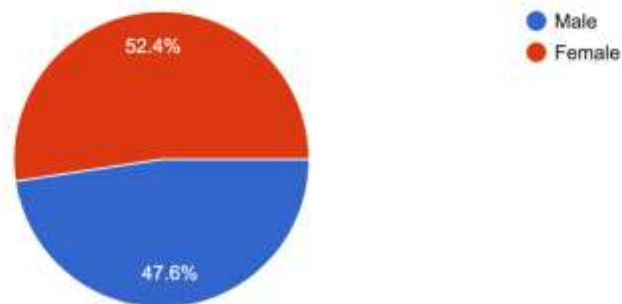


Figure 13

Coming to gender distribution it was almost equalized, 52.4% females while 46.6% males. This almost equal distribution of gender shows balanced participation, as well as indicates

that both genders male and female are equally interested in political cartoons and political engagement.

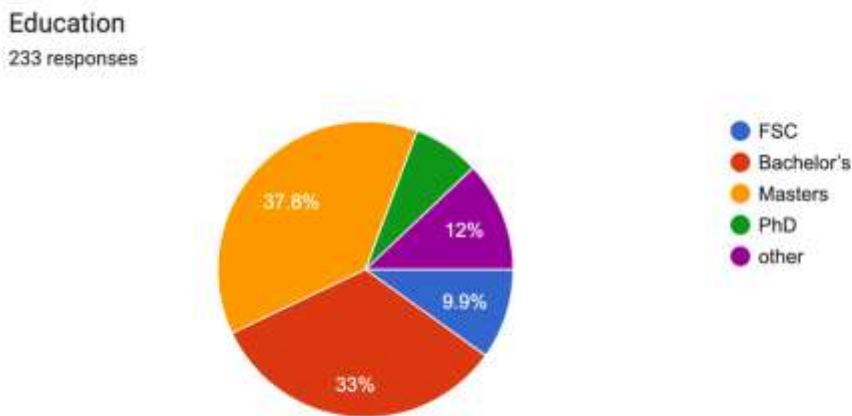


Figure 14

Additionally, the educational qualifications showed the largest portion of respondents has completed master's degree which is about 37.8%, on second 33% of respondents had their bachelor's degree, 7.3% people holders of a PhD were, 9.9 % respondents had completed their FSc, and the rest 12%. This ratio indicates that most of the respondents were highly educated, which further elaborates that individuals with a higher level of education are more likely to be interested in, engage with political cartoons as well and critically analyze political content through political cartoons.

Occupation
233 responses

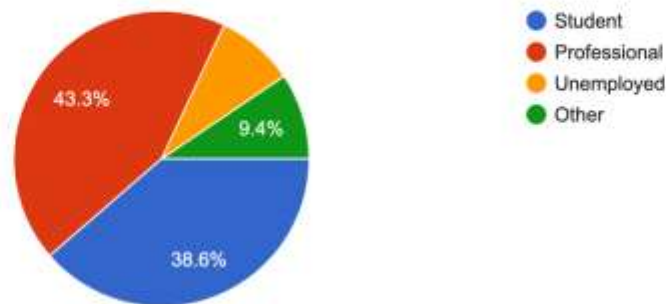


Figure 15

In response to occupation, a large number of people responded to professionals, who were about 43.3%, moving on to students, the second largest percentage of about 38.6%, then came others, covering about 9.4% and lastly, unemployed, about 8.6% respondents. This indicates that literate individuals show a high percentage of interest in political cartoons. Which also highlights that their exposure to current affairs plays a vital role in engaging with political cartoons.

Are you a registered voter?
233 responses

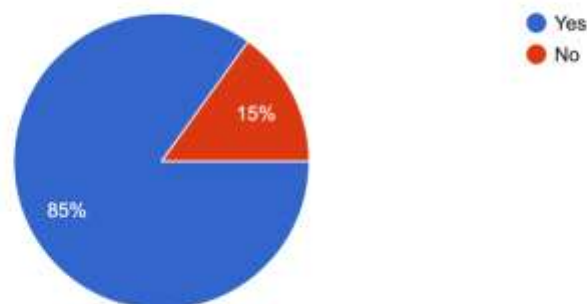


Figure 16

Moreover, in response to registered voters 85% responded “yes” while 15% responded “no,” which clearly highlights public awareness. Additionally, the public is also aware of its

democratic rights and participates in the democratic process. On the other hand, individuals from Generation Z were also included, which shows that some of the Generation Z population are under 18 years due to as they are not yet registered voters, but still show interest in political cartoons and politics.

4.3.2 Media choices and political engagement

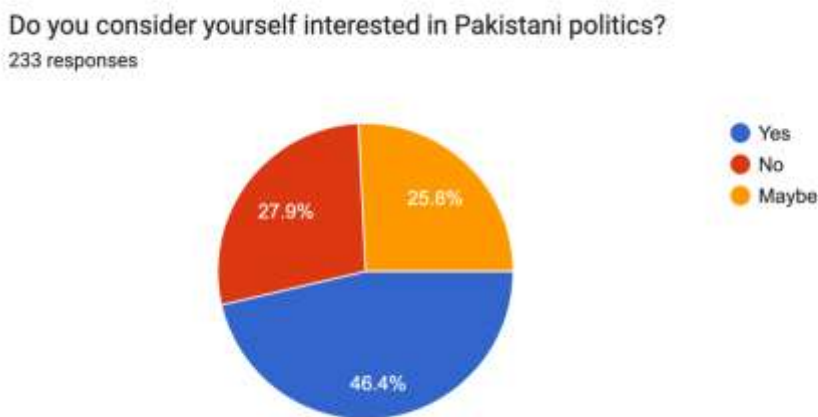


Figure 17

In response to the question about the interest in Pakistani politics, 46.4% people responded yes, which showed their keen interest in politics, while 25.8% people responded “maybe” and 27.9% responded “no”. Percentages show that half of the respondents are curious and follow Pakistani politics, while the remaining half of the respondents remain uninterested.

Where do you get your news about politics?
233 responses

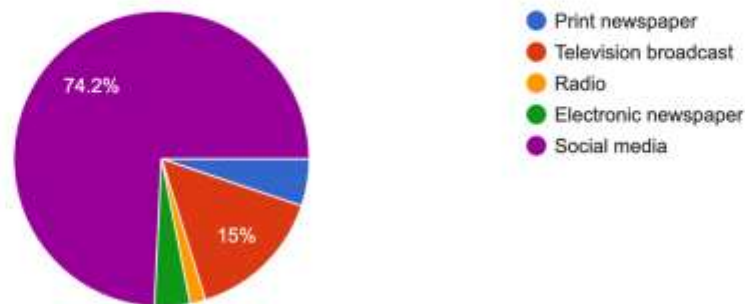


Figure 18

When respondents were asked about that from where do they get their news about politics majority of the people responded to social media which was about 74.2% which makes 173 respondents out of 233, the second highest ratio was of 15% of the people who chose television broadcast for their news about politics, while 5.2% people opted for print newspaper, 3.9% for electronic news paper and 1.7% for radio. These indications are about the dominance of social media over traditional news platforms in this advanced digital era. This not only shows the dominance of social media over other traditional media formats, but it also highlights the generational preferences, i.e., Generation Z preferred social media platforms for their political news consumption, while Generation Y showed scattered presence for their political news consumption.

4.3.3 Political cartoons influence and comprehension

During the survey, several political cartoons were shown to respondents related to economy, social issues, and political issues. And two questions were asked about each cartoon: first, do you understand this cartoon? second, does it affect your political understanding/mindset in any way? In response to the first question about all the cartoons, 75% people responded “yes.” In response to the second question for each cartoon's respondents showed varied trends. In percentages, about 60% respondents responded to “yes” or the other option “in some way”, and the rest responded to “no”. This highlights that political cartoons are not just used for entertainment purposes, but they help the public understand politics. Social and economic conditions of the country. Moreover, this pinpoints that political cartoons are not only for the

literate, but they also convey their message to the illiterate population of the country and shape public opinion.

4.3.4 Censorship and editorial freedom

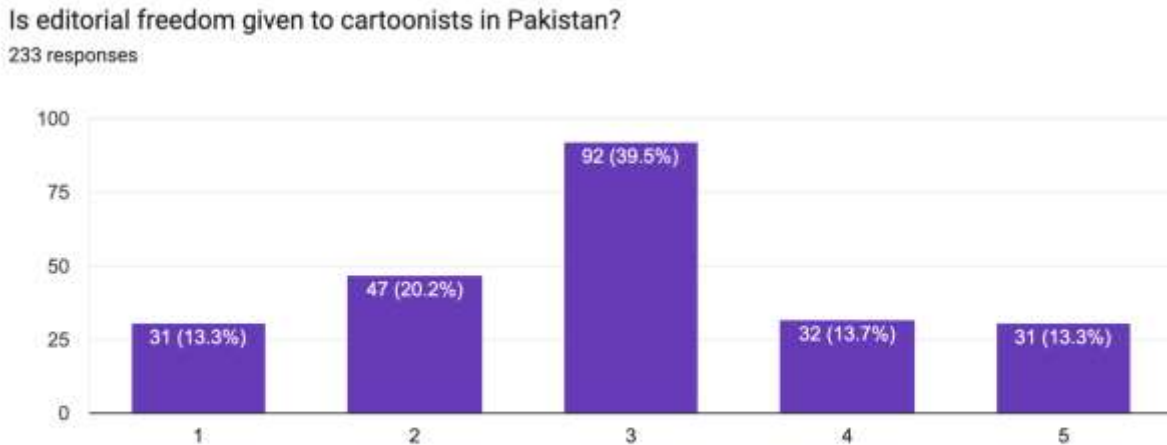


Figure 19

Likert scale questions were asked of respondents about the editorial freedom and censorship in Pakistan. On a scale of 1-5, 1 was identified as strongly disagree (no freedom), 3 for neutral, and 5 for strongly agree (full freedom). The figure above shows that the majority of the people responded neutral, which is about 39.5% respondents. The higher percentage indicates that many respondents are uncertain about editorial freedom, probably due to the complex and uncertain situation of media freedom. While at both extremes, full freedom and no freedom, respondents' responses are the same. Indicating that editorial freedom is not considered absolute in Pakistan, but it is highly conditional and context dependent. Additionally, it denotes that there is editorial freedom, but it comes with a tendency towards restrictions.

To what level do political cartoonists face censorship in Pakistan?

233 responses

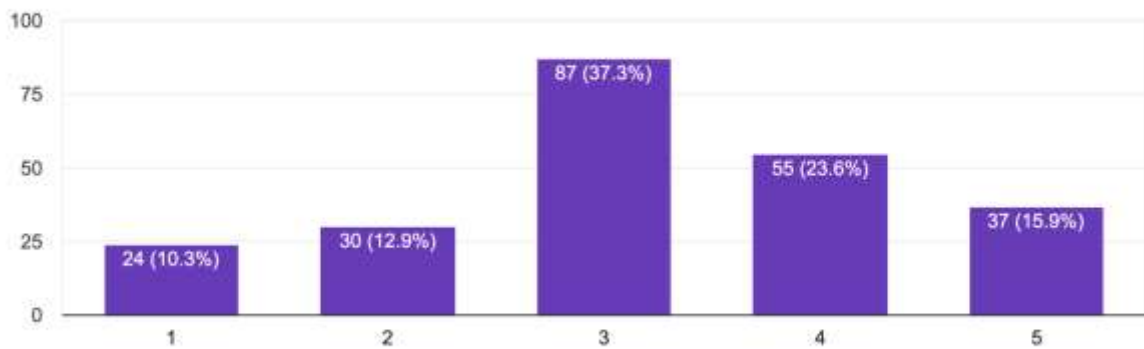


Figure 20

When asked about censorship in Pakistan, the most common response to censorship in Pakistan was 37.3% which is a 3 on the Likert scale (neutral). Indicating that individuals are not sure about the impact of censorship on cartoonists, perhaps because of its indirect nature. While 23.6% people responded “to some extent,” and then comes 15.9% people responded, “to a very great extent”. This shows that the public believes that censorship in Pakistan exists, but its intensity varies (depending on different media platforms, political context, subject).

Is the quality of political cartoons compromised due to editorial restrictions?

233 responses

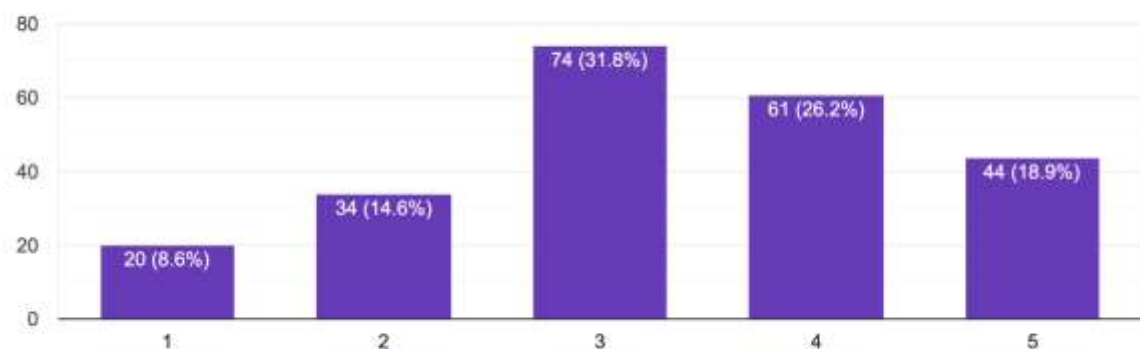


Figure 21

When the respondents were asked about whether the quality of political cartoons has been compromised due to the editorial restrictions, the majority (31.8%) of the respondents agreed upon this. Which point out the public perception that creative expression is compromised because of editorial restrictions.

4.3.5 Role and emotional impact

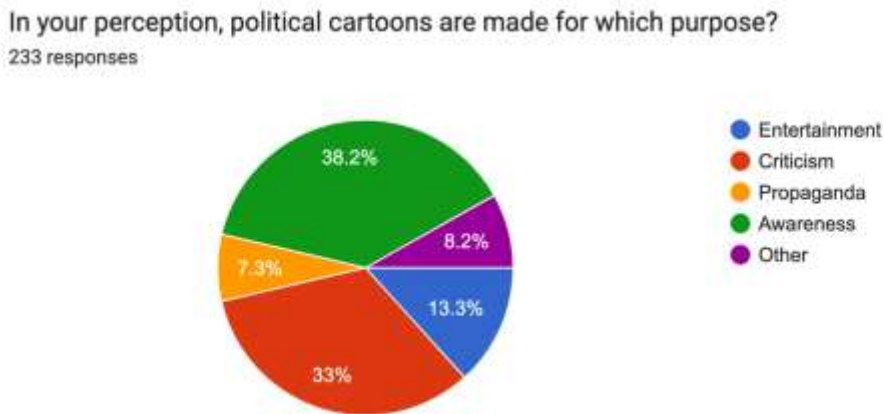


Figure 22

In response to the purpose of political cartoons, 38.2% people responded to “awareness”, 33% people responded to “criticism”, 13.3% responded to entertainment, 7.3% people responded to propaganda, and 8.2% people responded to other purposes. This percentage of respondents shows that political cartoons are not just for entertainment, but rather, they are more importantly considered as tools for awareness and criticism on social, political, and economic issues.

What emotions do you feel initially, whenever you see any political cartoons on current occurring?
233 responses

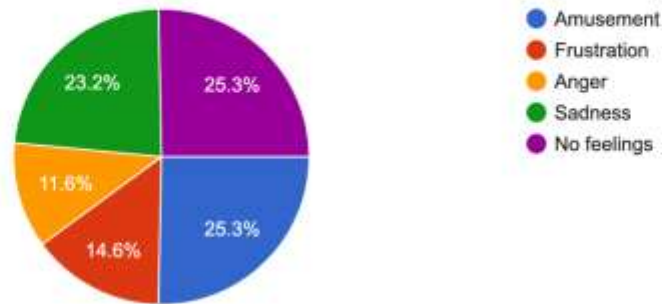


Figure 23

When asked about the emotions of individuals after looking at a political cartoon, 25.3% people responded with no feeling as well and the same number of people (25.3%) responded with amusement. 23.2% answered, 14.6% people chose frustration, and 11.6% people responded to anger. This pinpoints the diversity of emotions individuals feel after seeing a political cartoon. This also talks about a hidden message about individuals' experiences and ideologies.

In your opinion, political cartoons impact your thinking or change your perception about political issues, leaders, or policies in negative terms?

233 responses

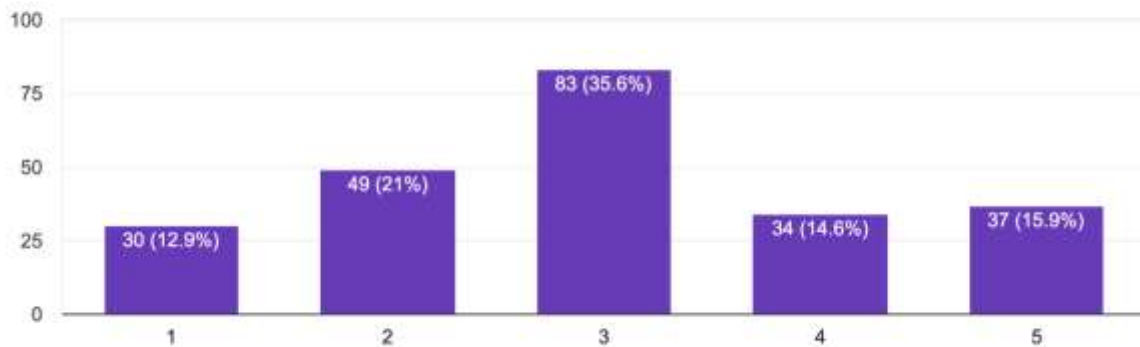


Figure 24

At the end, when asked about the change in perception about the leader, politics, etc. majority of the individuals agreed that political cartoons do change their point of view in a negative direction, but other individuals' responses were different. Some agreed and some disagreed.

Nevertheless, political cartoons do play an important role in shaping public perception, but along with that, it also depends on the background knowledge, ideologies, and experiences of the individual.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, this descriptive analysis highlights that political cartoons play a significant role in shaping public perception and their engagement. Secondly, medium for political cartoons preferred by the young generation is social media, which in terms of reach and readership is also extraordinary as compared to traditional media formats. Lastly, despite common practice of censorship and restrictions, political cartoons still manage to reach and send meaningful messages to the public.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

In a world continuously fluctuating between freedom and restrictions, curiosity was awakened to deeply understand the functioning of political cartoons. The purpose of this research was to investigate three things: first, to what extent is editorial freedom granted to cartoonists in conveying political messages through their cartoons. Second, to compare the effects of print and televised political cartoons on the political perception and engagement of Generation Z and Generation Y, and lastly, to evaluate the association of negativity of political cartoons and their negative connotation in public perception.

Responding to the first research question, clarify the level of editorial freedom awarded to cartoonists. The semi-structured interviews were powerful evidence of a form of constraints, pressures, and gatekeeping processes involved. Cartoonists reported overt and covert forms of censorship, and they variously had to maneuver not to get into legal or physical trouble by self-censoring. Major barriers to expressing political views, as cited by most of the respondents, are laws aimed at blasphemy, laws against defamation, as well as institutional taboos. Such forms of constraint are reminiscent of the Gatekeeping Theory, which emphasizes the role of powerful actors who regulate the passage of information (in the context of the theory, this would be the media owners and the regulations).

These qualitative data are well backed by the survey data. Answering the question of whether censorship exists in Pakistan, 37.3 percent more people voted in the middle-ground, and 23.6 percent felt that there is some form of censorship. This ambivalence demonstrates a setting under which censorship is an ordinary fact, but not one that can openly be recognized. Additionally, a margin of 31.8 percent of the respondents responded in the affirmative that editorial constraints have reduced the quality of political cartoons, which supports the arguments of the cartoonists that, as cartoonists, their freedom in creativity is always curtailed.

This conflict is also described by the semiotic analysis of chosen political cartoons. Visual metaphors and symbolism. Cartoons depended a great deal on visual imagery to avoid direct criticism, which is an oblique mode of expression with both fear and ingenuity. As is the case, repeated symbols of blinded figures, the shattered scales of justice, or gagged mouths are used

as a coded denunciation of judicial or political oppression. These details correspond to the Visual Rhetoric Theory, according to which the meaning has to be conveyed not only with the help of words but also with the help of the symbolic depiction that avoids verbal censorship.

The second goal was to induce the comparison of the impact of print and televised political cartoons on Generation Z and Generation Y political perception and their engagement in politics. This was answered using survey findings and interview findings. Out of 54 survey responders, 57.5 percent were members of Generation Z, and 47.5 percent of Generation Y. A significant difference has appeared in their acceptable medium and mode of interaction. The use of digital representations of political cartoons, e.g., Instagram pages and short cartoon trailers, was found to be of greater interest to the respondents of Generation Z, with the cartoons on the pages of newspapers being enjoyed to a greater degree by the respondents of Generation Y.

As did the interview data, a split generational. It was noticed by cartoonists that younger readers are more likely to connect with satire via social media, where they admire the ability to leave comments and share digital cartoons immediately. Conversely, the mature members are used to sophisticated, subtle humor found on the pages of the editorial sections of newspapers. This distinction implies that the medium has a major influence not only on accessibility, but also depth or interpretation of political messages, where in digital formats, visual punchlines rather than detailed criticism may be favored.

This is supported by the divergence that is provided by the semiotic analysis. Cartoons aimed at digital audiences employed thick, unreal lines, memes, emojis, and a simplified form of written language to capture the attention of the viewers rapidly, which attracts Gen Z to their rapid consumption of media. Print cartoons, in the meantime, were more complex in construction and multilayered in symbolism, which was the result of readability and inclination of Generation Y. This lends credence to the fact that medium and generational context define how political messages are perceived and internalized.

The third research question was proved again due to the positive effect of the political cartoons on the political perception, i.e., clarifying the existing convention that political cartoons are always negative. In interviews, it was discovered that cartoons do point out the vices in governance, corruption, and hypocrisy in different cases, but this is not all that they aim at. In

describing their work, cartoonists referred to it as constructive criticism and open accountability to society, a mirror to the allegedly blind society. This can be compared to the Visual Rhetoric Theory, which contrasts the aspect of satire as a criticism and an act to recognize something.

This hypothesis could be proved by the survey data: there was a significant difference between generations. Political cartoons were perceived as more entertaining and intellectually stimulating by Generation Z, whereas Generation Y used to identify them as equally sardonic and sharp-tongued. Nevertheless, the two generations shared the belief that cartoons create awareness, 35.2 percent of polled claimed to have been motivated or encouraged after reading political cartoons, and only 17.6 percent reported to have been angry or disillusioned following exposure to political cartoons. This is a clear contradiction to the hypothesis that cartoons are cynical.

Semiotic analysis also showed us that cartoons investigate an aspect of irony, satire, and symbol juxtapositions in order to preserve the response of reflection as opposed to the appearance of ridicule. By way of example, by the depiction of remains marked with the economy, cow with the IV, the girls' school marked as danger, or political karma, etc., there is a suggestion of decay, as well as a need to clean it up or offer some form of rebellion. These images do not encourage negativity; however, on the contrary, they encourage the spectator to think, deride, and reimagine political structures, which is a major strength of visual rhetoric.

Conclusively, there is a strategic field of censorship, generational anticipation, and semiotic portrayal that political cartoons have to brave in Pakistan. They are still a strong tool of political communication, even though they are a limited medium, and they have to adjust to the changes in technologies and audience tastes. Their changing status, as defined by the editorial restrictions and the ingenuity of their creators, portrays the pains and prospects of political speech in current-day Pakistan.

5.1 Conclusion

Through the lens of Gatekeeping and Visual Rhetoric Theories, this research study has explored political cartoons in Pakistan. Findings showed that editorial freedom is present in Pakistan, but it comes with certain conditions and invisible boundaries. But cartoonists had found out a creative way to convey their messages by using symbolism, metaphors, etc., and

adopting self-censorship for their survival. Survey data confirmed that generational difference does impact the consumption and interpretation of political cartoons. Where Generation Z is more interested in digital and visual media formats, while on the other hand Generation Y is more into traditional and print media formats. The research challenges the prevailing assumption of negativity attached to political cartoons. Findings highlighted that political cartoon are used by cartoonists to convey complex political messages in a simple way as well as to aware public awareness about important social and political issues. Hence, political cartoons play an important role in shaping public opinion.

5.2 Policy Recommendations

Grounded on the findings of this research, some of the policy recommendations are given below.

- 1- Revision of PEMRA ordinance 2002 and amendment in the defamation ordinance 2002, including the blasphemy laws. All this will ensure the independence of cartoonists as well as a reduction in censorship. As found in the interviews (about censorship and government restrictions), this will ensure the protection of cartoonists from any charges pressed on them. This will clearly draw a line between hate speech and genuine critique.
- 2- Creation and institutionalizing national editorial guidelines, helping in addressing the self-censorship found in the research. As there are no national guidelines present at the moment which each institution/ organization has created its own rules and laws that cartoonists need to follow, resulting in killing cartoonists' creativity.
- 3- Create a protected environment for cartoonists (Cartoonist Safety Council) to monitor “the real fear of cartoonists,” found in interviews, i.e. issues like threats, job loss, or any kind of harassment faced by cartoonists due to political/social pressure.
- 4- Introduce different courses at different levels of education. To bridge the generational gaps, as highlighted by the survey that Generation Z is more tilted towards digital platforms. Additionally, to fill the gap between academia and journalism.
- 5- Media organizations should create a small group of individuals who ensure to save the archives of all political cartoons for future research and cultural purposes, as a lack of political cartoon archives was found in research.

5.3 Limitations

As other researchers face limitations, this research study came across some of them. First, the sample size of the survey was selected through purposive sampling, so it might not give a diverse experience and points of view from across the country. Second, the lack of female cartoonists limited the gendered point of view. Also, the policies of media institutions varied, which might have gotten in the way of capturing contrasting views. Third, the sensitive nature of the topic made it a bit hard for cartoonists to talk openly about the censorship and restrictions. Lastly, the survey was circulated, but it was mostly filled out by literate individuals, so this might not fully capture the perspectives of illiterate and rural people. Additionally, the archives of political cartoons were limited, and most of them were not even archived, which made it hard to delve deeper into them.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLITICAL CARTOONISTS

- 1- Can you please give insights on political cartooning and explain your experience in this context?
- 2- What was your motivation to come in this field?
- 3- From your perspective which style or approach could be best for cartoon creation to convince the audience?
- 4- Were there any obstacles while creating the political cartoons or the circumstances were suitable to do what you think
- 5- Was there any prohibition to create political cartoons on certain topics?
- 6- Do you remember any incident when your political cartoons were influenced politically to modify them?
- 7- Have you faced censorship by telecommunication authorities when you published/showed political issues through your cartoons? Have you or any other artist faced this issue?
- 8- Do you think media policies or laws have any influence on cartoonist's the ability of creating political cartoons?
- 9- Do you think any medium of publication, such as social media or print media, can change the way of people's thinking after watching your political cartoons?
- 10- Do different media platforms follow same policies and editorial guidelines or is there any variation?
- 11- What factors can contribute to make political cartoons more effective and more impactful on people's mind?)
- 12- How have different generations like Gen Y, and Gen Z responded to political cartoons?
- 13- Do you think political cartoons can play any decisive role through Pakistan's media platforms?
- 14- Does political cartoons only used for negative criticism or also for healthy criticism like for the development and problem solving?
- 15- From your perspective, do political cartoons have this ability to change the mindset of people towards some specific political party?
- 16- How do you see the future of political cartoons in Pakistan?

APPENDIX – B

Questionnaire for the survey:

Demographics:

1- Age

- 1981-1996 (generation Y)
- 1997-2012 (generation Z)

2- Gender

- Male
- Female

3- Education

- FSC
- Bachelor's
- Masters
- PhD
- Other

4- Occupation:

- Student
- Professional
- Unemployed
- Other

1- Are you a registered voter?

- Yes
- No

2- Do you consider yourself interested in Pakistani politics?

- Yes
- No

3- Where do you get your news about politics?

- Print newspaper
- Television broadcast
- Radio
- Electronic newspaper
- Social media

4- What is your understanding of political cartoons, below are some examples of political cartoons. Respond to that.



5- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

6- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- To certain level



7- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

8- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way

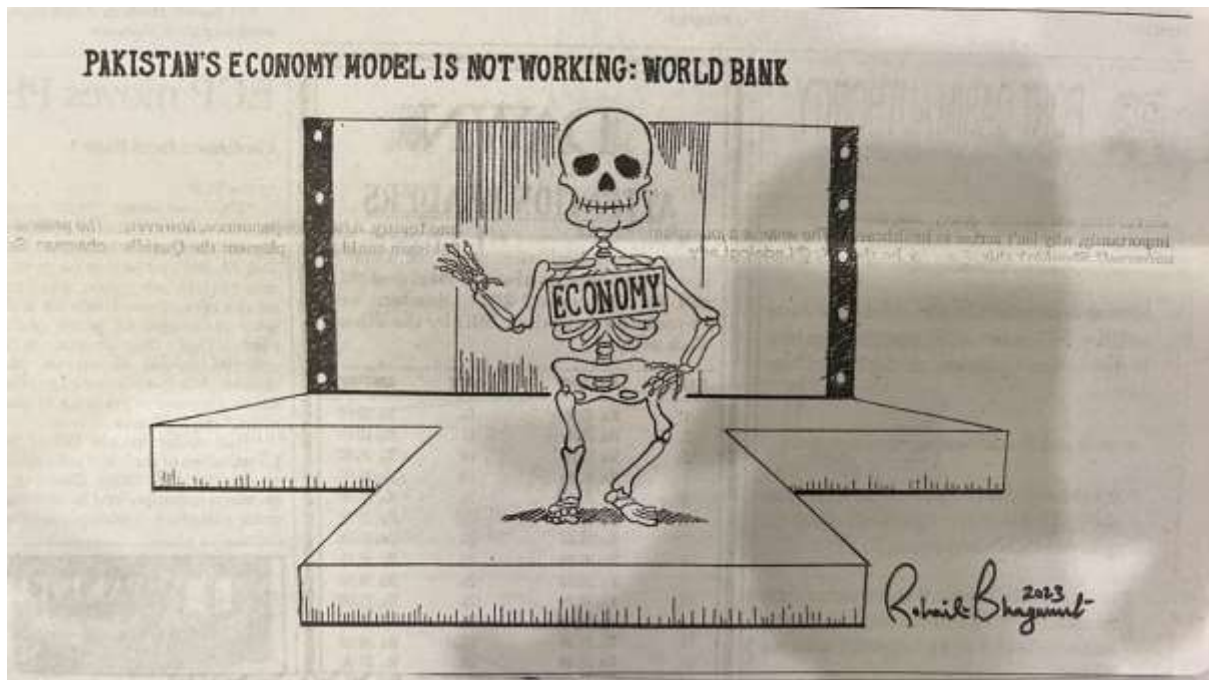


9- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

10- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



11- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

12- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- May
- In some way



13- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

14- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



15- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

16- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



17- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

18- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



19- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

20- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



21- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

22- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



23- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

24- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- In some way



25- Do you understand this cartoon?

- Yes
- No
- Somehow

26- Does it affect your political understanding/ mindset in any way?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe.
- In some way

27- Does political satire affect your interest in politics?

- Yes
- No

28- Is editorial freedom given to cartoonists in Pakistan?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

29- To what level do political cartoonists face censorship in Pakistan?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

30- Is the quality of political cartoons compromised due to editorial restrictions?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

31- More likely which medium of political cartoons according to you is censored?

- Print
- Televised
- Both equally
- Not sure

32- Is Generation Z more influenced by political cartoons or Generation Y?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Both equally

33- According to you which medium is preferred by Generation Y for political cartoons?

- Print newspaper
- Electronic newspaper
- Social media

- Television broadcast
- radio

34- According to you which medium is preferred by Generation Z for political cartoons?

- Print newspaper
- Electronic newspaper
- Social media
- Television broadcast
- Radio

35- Do you think political cartoons have negative connotation?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

36- Do you think political cartoons are realistic?

- Yes
- No
- May be
- To some extent

37- “To what extent do you think, political cartoons are made for the intention of criticism instead of entertainment?”

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

38- “What emotions do you feel initially, whenever you see any political cartoons on current occurring?”

- Amusement

- Frustration
- Anger
- Sadness
- No feelings

39- “Political cartoons mainly contribute negative perception about political personalities or leaders or their policies.

- Very much
- Somewhat
- Neutral
- Not much
- Not at all

40- “In your perception, political cartoons are made for which purpose?”

- Entertainment
- Criticism
- Propaganda
- Awareness
- Other, Please Mention: _____

41- “In your opinion, political cartoons impact your thinking or change your perception about political issues, leaders, or policies in negative terms?”

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree