NEWSPAPER CARTOONS AS NATIONAL INTEREST AGENDA SETTING TOOL-EXAMPLES FROM PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT: *This paper focuses at demonstrating how newspaper cartoons are used as a vehicle of setting national interest agenda. The cartoons texts were exerted from three major newspapers of Pakistan, i.e. The Express Tribune, Daily Pakistan, and Daily Ausaf during the year 2016f. Eight hundred and thirty two cartoons were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Specifically, content analysis was used to classify the themes confined in the cartoons representations. The qualitative method was taken to examine the cartoons through semiotic analysis method. The results indicated that 68% of the themes focused on substantive issues. Thus, this paper contributes to the cartoon research by contribution theoretical insight to the cartoon variety.*

Key Words: Newspaper Cartoons, National agenda setting, Newspaper, Economy, Foreign Policy, Security, Corruption, National Interest

INTRODUCTION

For years, political cartoons have proven to be operative and influential learning tools that involve viewers of all background. They provide brief, humorous, quick-witted snapshots of all types of issues from politics and law to education and general public energetic efforts. It is pertinent that the mass-media has now become a dominant communication channel that charms extensive public attention using different tools of expressing thoughts and ideas from a specific point of view. Newspaper cartoons constitute a type of media text who's oral and graphic features have made them an interesting research field across different academic areas. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the role played by newspaper cartoons in setting the national interest agenda through emphasizing themes and melodies via the mass media published in leading newspapers of Pakistan. Specifically, the study focuses on the different issues which are published in leading newspapers regarding, social, economic, politics and security etc. The study also illustrates how newspaper cartoons be used by mass media as a tool to make a national interest agenda during a specific period of time.

Newspaper cartoons are a sketch or comic strip holding a political or social message that generally narrates to present happenings, typically found on the journalistic side of the newsprint. These are used to precise opinions, construct valuable thoughts and provide specific knowledge on current socio-political issues [1]. Due to direct way of communication, cartoons address a problem for general people clearly. While a classic newspaper editorial is filled with an excessive many words to impart information and ideas, a political cartoon reduces an entire article down to simple images. It is found in newspaper across the sphere, newspaper cartoons have shown an influential vehicle for credible public judgment and evaluating or praising political statistics. Cartoons at present age become one of the most important means in a newspaper's arsenal of political scrutiny. In contrast a news article, the cartoon has the aptitude to almost promptly dissect a political issue. Newspaper cartoons have the power to provoke a diversity of reactions because cartoon artists; craft their work to precise political opinions that are often debatable [2].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Cartoons differ in determination, whether they seek to amuse, as does comic art; make life more acceptable, as does the social cartoon; or convey order through administrative action, as does the effective newspaper cartoon [3]. These are graphic semantic with an assortment of symbols verbal and nonverbal - that are encumbered with meanings [4]. Newspaper cartoons have seemed in the editorial side of newspaper and have truly comprised the study of political cartoons [5]. Many scholars suffer the lack of thoughtful interest paid to the study of this genre [6].

Preceding readings on newspaper cartoons have fixated on their nature and functions [7]. Benoit and other scholars inspected the communicative meaning of newspaper cartoons, where it was discovered the effect of newspaper cartoons on public opinion regarding Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr matter about the accusation provisional actions of President Clinton [8]. Morrison examined the exclusive topographies of political cartoons and their impact on the public opinion [9]; Medhurst and DeSousa attentive on the verbal form of political cartoons[10]; Wigston showed a case study on Aids and Newspaper Cartoons, where he inspected the role of newspaper cartoons in Aids struggle in South Africa [11]; Cary found political cartoons as gears for communication [12]; Bivins focused mostly on content analysis of newspaper cartoons [13]; Baldry and Thibault focused on newspaper cartoons and public image [14]; while Handl studied newspaper cartoons in Australian newspapers and recognized the dominant themes which represented the typical Australian citizens and the political parties [15].

By the late 1880s, newspaper cartoons started to appear frequently in U.S. newspapers [16]. In starting, newspaper cartoons had a mocking focused, though one scholar noted a definite shift in the early 20th century from political to social themes [17]. Some of these early cartoons have been ascribed with persuading politics and even elections [18].

In present ages, there has been a growing research on cartoon images across different field of studies. The role of this research initiated this as an interdisciplinary research field crossing different research limits such as education, sociological sciences, psychology, health research, pragmatics, biology, physics and communication etc. Within media homily the cartoon descriptions develop a solid field and create attention as a genre for investigators. In the

beginning of this study the first researcher was Benjamin Franklin who was said to have first published cartoon in an American newspaper, depicting the well-known slogan "Join or Die" depicting an image of the snake detached [19]. The researchers define different constructs and variables for the study of cartoons and its image analysis. As Lamb [20] considers cartoons as serious objects used to satire political leaders and their contemptible policies. In another study, it was discovered and examined that 2000 political cartoons concerning Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr Affair, which focused on the inquiries, impeachment and trial of the president Clinton [21]. Current editorial cartoons endure to assist as an acceptable format for exposure of debatable opinions, often with the resolution of influencing public opinion [22].

In contrast, other scholars have examined newspaper cartoons as a replication of public opinion rather than an initiator of thought. However the literature, here, presents opposing assumptions. Edward and other scholars for case, argue that cartoons are a precise depiction of public opinion [23], while others point to evidence representative that cartoons do not unavoidably reflect the general view, nor assist as appropriate portraits of historic actions [24].

In terms of how political cartoons show social pictures, Han focused on how political cartoons denote public opinions in campaign mode. More precisely Han focused on political satire, where he inspected the Japanese Cartoon Journalism and its pictorial statements on Korea [25].

The perceptual theory was used to deliver hypothetical contextual on satire. The satire is a bookish term used to refer to an amusing reproach of behavior meant at mocking societal accountabilities by the use of satire or cynicism. Satire is the use of ridicule to slate something to uncover his flaws. Traditionally, political cartoon is familiar as one of the initial methods of political satire [26]. The most relevant to this study is the perceptual theory of satire. Any models or standards it propagates, are created from within the satirist's opinion, not imposed externally. Perceptual theory explanations for the nature of satire as well as the habits people understand satire. The theory clarifies how readers make interpretations on the humorous effects fixed at politicians, prominent characters and public officers and main national issues which are usually the targets of the satirical attacks.

RESULTS

To meet the research problems and questions, the data was collected from three leading newspapers of Pakistan i.e. The Express Tribune, Daily Pakistan, and Daily Ausaf that specifically publish cartoons. The study uses qualitative methods through the practice of semiotic study to examine the newspaper cartoons. The investigation is based on the explanation of the sign system drawing on the connotation and denotations features of the cartoons scripts. The written texts were studied under the guidance, specifically defined by Halliday potential language system [27]. In this way, the cartoon scripts /text was used as the main unit of analysis to analyze how cartoons are used to set national interest agenda setting tool. A content analysis method was used to find out cartoon themes into topical themes reflecting current happenings.

The sample comprises 832 (N=832) cartoons texts extracted from three leading newspapers of Pakistan, namely: The Express Tribune, Daily Pakistan, and Daily Ausaf. The cartoons were extracted during the period October, 2015 to September, 2016. The Express Tribune comprises of 366 cartoons (n=366) of the samples followed by Daily Pakistan with 212 (n=212) and Daily Ausaf 254(n=254). For the purpose of understanding seven cartoons were exactly nominated and examined in the paper. Fascinatingly, the thematic erection form substantive patterns reflecting the Pakistani national interest agenda setting context.

In order to confirm reliability and consistency, Cohen's Kappa technique for calculating inter-observer agreement is used. This statistic is used to measure inter-rater reliability when observing or otherwise coding qualitative variables. The Kappa is reflected to be a development over using % contract to compute this kind of reliability. The Kappa has a variety from 0-1.00, with greater values indicating better reliability. Usually, a Kappa > .70 is considered satisfactory. To establish Cohen's Kappa, we need to compute the percentage of agreement between the two coders by dividing the total number of agreement by the total number of counts. Therefore, here the calculated Cohen's kappa (k) is 0.81. The level of agreement is measured outstanding when it be within the range 0.75 and beyond. Hence, the level of agreement in this case is excellent which express that the results of this method designate an inter-order reliability of 0.81. These provide the procedures upon which Pakistani cartoons were categorized. For the perseverance of illustration, Table 1 boons substantive issues of the Pakistani political cartoons.

Table No.1 Presents frequency distribution of themes in Pakistani political cartoons

Substantive Themes	Express Tribunal		Daily Pakistan		Daily Ausaf	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Corruption	29	7.9	17	8.0	31	12.2
Democratic Governance	60	16.4	23	10.8	33	13.0
Economy	48	13.1	**35**	**16.5**	14	5.5
Foreign Policy	**71**	**19.4**	15	7.1	**50**	**19.7**
Living Standard	32	8.7	23	10.8	9	3.5
Security	42	11.5	13	6.1	22	8.7
Total	282	77%	126	59%	159	63%

The agenda setting theory was used for this study, to provide theoretical insight on how newspaper cartoons are used to depict interesting matters in newspapers as a policy of setting national agenda to reorient and shape public opinion. Agenda Setting Theory is one of the Media Effect Theories connected to this study that accounts for the association between the media and the community. It also explains the way media function towards information broadcasting in a society through different types such as news, cartoons, and commercials. The Agenda-setting Theory is a media effect theory established by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. This theory provides a clarification on the current association between the extent at which media give attention to a specific story and the level of importance through which people attach to such a story. Basically the agenda setting operates at two levels, first and second level of agenda setting. In the first level focuses on the objects of transmission; for instance, politicians, political gatherings, occasions and public officers; the mass media informs the public what to think about through their reporting, this called non-substantives. The second type focuses on how the public think about the objects by highlighting their attributes and national settings; this is called substantives [28].

The following research questions were finalized for the study:
1. How is newspaper cartoons used as a toll to set national interest agenda setting toll?
2. What are the main themes of Pakistani political cartoons during the period 2015-2016?
3. What are the most and least highlighted factors being coverage in leading newspapers of the Pakistan during a specific period of time?

DISCUSSIONS

To analyze the collected data there were used the concept of substantive and non-substantive themes. Majority of the themes shows the substantive responses.

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Table No. 3 shows that "Daily Express Tribunal" newspaper signified more substantive themes, representing 77% of cartoons samples extracted from the newspaper compared to non-substantive themes that comprise 23% of the samples. Table No. 1 also shows that under the substantive themes the most emphasized theme is "Foreign Policy (19.4%) and the least highlighted theme is "Corruption" (7.9). Table No.3 displays that "Daily Pakistan" also focused further on substantive (59.40%) themes but less as compare to Daily Express Tribunal. Fascinatingly," Economy" is the most common theme having the highest percentage (16.5%) and "Security" is the theme which fails to get more space in newspaper cartoons in "Daily Pakistan" (6.1%). Table No. 3 displays that "Daily Ausaf" also highlighted more substantive themes (62.60%). Table No.1 shows that, the more focused theme in "Daily Ausaf" is "Foreign Policy" (19.7%), while the least focused theme is "Living Standard" (3.5%).

In table No.1 it is concluded that the "Daily Express Tribunal" is mostly indicating the substantive themes as compare to other newspapers as chosen for study (77%). Results in the table No. 2 shows that overall the most important and highlighted substantive theme for national interest agenda setting for Pakistan is "Foreign Policy" (16.3%) and the lowest substantive theme highlighted in leading newspapers of Pakistan are "Security" and "corruption" (9.3%). In this regard for more in-depth understanding and illustration seven cartoons were specifically selected and analyzed.

Figure No. 1 shows the democratic bad governance situation in the country. It shows the old employees, who are standing in front of the public office to receive their pension funds. The thematic text shows that the system is slow and down, which also denotes the computerized data base issues and poor digital system in the country.

Figure No. 1 Bad Democratic Governance, Daily Express Tribunal, July 9, 2016

There is also a woman who is setting in the ground while crying; it also shows the very bad services of public sector office for general citizens. The image of the sun in figure also shows the timing of the day, which is almost mid-day; this also describes the system slow down issues in the very beginning of the office working time. The newspaper tries to highlight the public office issues, to solve it.

The figure No.2 shows about the foreign policy matters. The images shows there are prime ministers of Pakistan and India, who are forced by United States of America to keep talks on different issues.
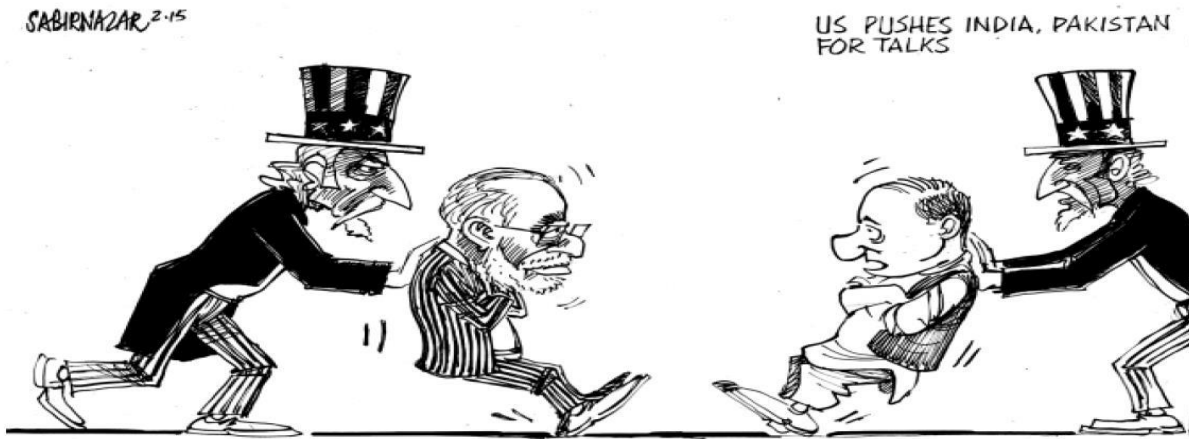
Figure No. 2 Issues on Foreign Policy, Daily Express Tribunal, December 5, 2015

The image tries to convey public opinion about the foreign policy that it should be according to the national interest and public opinion, not by foreign pressure. Between India and Pakistan, there are many issues and clashes about security. This image also tries to convey the message to keep away the foreign pressure to deal the issues with neighbor countries and make policies according to national interest and public opinion.

The figure No.3 shows about the economic problems of country. There is a bulldozer, which is lifting a public owned corporation, "Pakistan International Airline, plane"; this means PIA is a very huge burden on the economy of Pakistan.
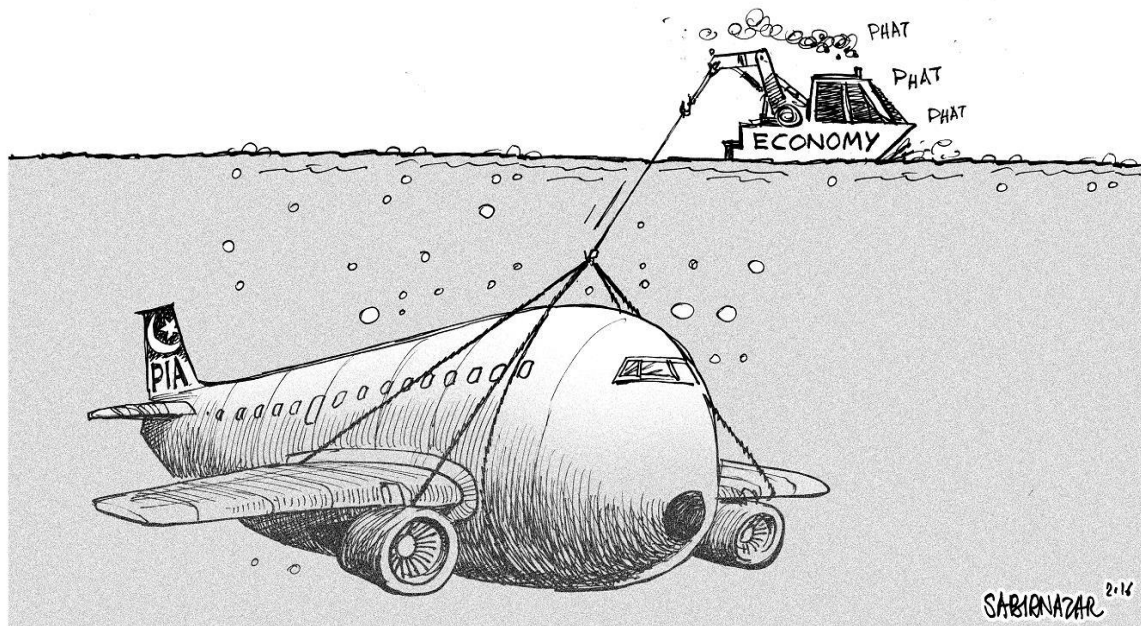

Figure No. 3 PIA and Economy, Daily Express Tribunal, February 3, 2016

The image also shows the public opinion to focus the PIA issue and take a serious action about the economic calculations of PIA. It also depicts that PIA is a burden on the economy of Pakistan and it should be get off or privatized because it is a national owned corporation and going on loss.

The figure No. 4 depicts the living standard in the country. In the published image the focused issue is about the road situation after the raining. The written text shows the opinion of an Engineer, who is happy about the situations after raining. The arguments showed the road situations, where, the wholes are closed by water after raining.

Figure No. 4 Living Standard, Daily Pakistan, August 31, 2016

The roads are full with water and there is no any action of government to repair and make plan to remove the water from roads. The general public wants to convey their message to government officials to take a serious action to remove the water. The engineering of road construction is also highlighted as it is a result of poor planning which cause the water dumping in the road.

Figure No. 5 shows about the corruption situation in the country, in left side, it shows a mam as a sample for National Accountability Bureau (NAB), who is weak and is in current situation and in right side a sample man who is strong and shows the past .
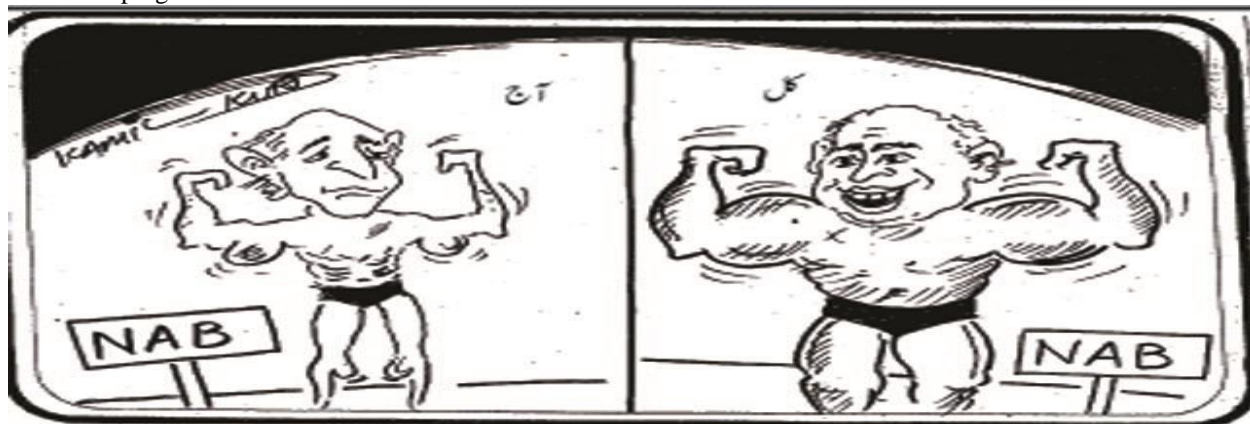

Figure No. 5 NAB, Corruption, Daily Pakistan, February 21, 2016

This image is about the organization which was established to remove the corruption within country. It is highlighted and the public attention was captured about the departmental functions nationally which are weaken now.

Figure No. 6 shows the political insights about political activities at country. The image shows an airplane on which the political leader is about to departure.
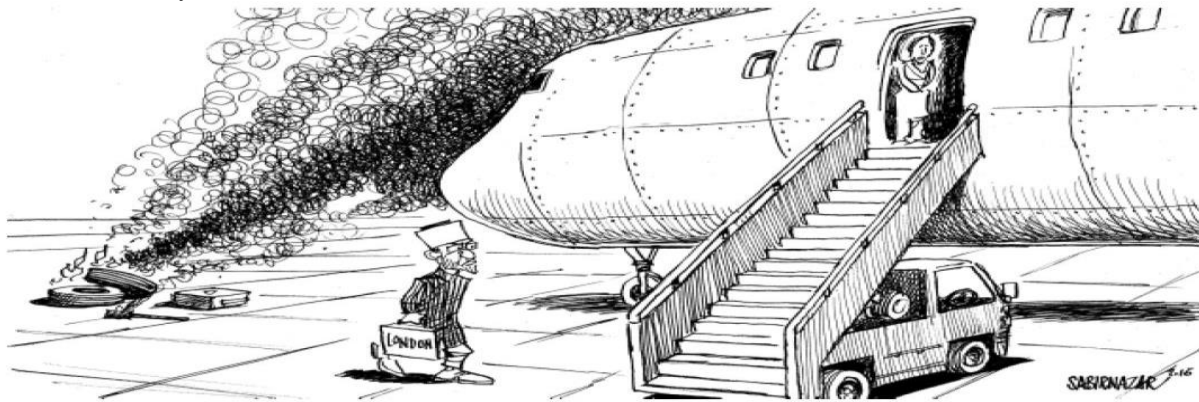

Figure No. 6 Politics, Daily Express Tribunal, July 13, 2016

In the background there is shown the strike situation where different tyres brunt.

The figure No.7 shows the security situation in the country. It shows the Pakistani map and a situation after bomb ballast.

The text which shown in the figure depicts the general people behavior about the security situations in the country, where they wants to go Iran or Switzerland.

Figure No. 7 Security, Daily Ausaf, January 22, 2016

The attention needs in this figure is to mold the general people behavior to live within country whatever the situation they have here.

In other side, the table No.2 shows that only 31.9% of the sample portrayed non-substantive issues. Non-substantive issues focus more on depicting behaviors and characteristics of politicians and political parties. Perhaps this could be credited to the fact that the issues under this thematic category are not as sensitive and critical to people as substantive issues that people are so greatly interested about. Agenda setting is much concerned about what people are interested with and think about at a given time as in this study the time period was 12 months from October, 2015 to September, 2016.

The finding of the study tells how cartoons are used in media discourse to set a national agenda. Through newspaper cartoons, the media remark on current national issues in order to convert people and keep them informed and abreast of current issues that affect their lives. Furthermore, the cartoons show how agenda is set by concentrating on specific issues of attention at a particular instant through recurrent and wide coverage of such issues nationally. The role of media in setting agenda is much substantial in reorienting the people affecting to related issues that are so important to the public interest which public may not describe easily. The agenda setting is also an easy way to demonstrate the general people attention towards more hard and important issues which cannot be easily published in any textual form.

How political cartoons are used to set agenda especially as national interest agenda setting, was one of the research question of this study. Table No.1 depicts the cartoons thematic structure which comprises appropriate issues to people and society at a given moment from October, 2015 to September, 2016. According to the literature there are two types of themes in newspaper cartoons, substantive and non-substantive, in this study the themes were also divided into these two categories. This model can be used for more in-depth research findings in any other way of political and

editorial cartoon study. The study found out that the more focus in the leading newspapers of Pakistan is on substantives issues (68.1%).

Another research question was about the main themes of Pakistani political cartoons during the period of October, 2015 to September, 2016. The table No. 1 shows that the main themes which were extracted from the text of the editorial themes. The main themes which depict the leading newspapers are Corruption, Democratic Governance, Economy, Foreign Policy, Living Standard, Politics and Security.

The last research question was to know about the most and least famous theme in newspaper cartoons. The table No. 2 shows that the main theme published in leading newspapers of Pakistan, during October 2015 to September 2016 is "Foreign Policy" (16.3%). The tiniest published theme in the chief newspapers found "Living Standard" (7.7%). These newsworthy issues were captured in the Pakistani newspapers cartoons to set national interest agenda which is aimed at initiating social and political reforms in a given society.

The themes depicts from the leading newspapers of Pakistan were used to know the national agenda in views of the public and newspaper cartoons. The period taken for the study was 12 months from October, 2015 to September, 2016. The themes as mentioned in table No.1 can be used for further study in any special study by highlighting any one issue. Here the themes were taken as a whole for national interest agenda setting. Through this methodology any national agenda weather it may be social or political can be set for further policy making as a national interest agenda.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has revealed how cartoons are used to accomplish communicative tasks in Pakistani media and how the cartoons are creatively used to set national agenda thus providing political and national commentary and discussion in humorous and crafty fashion through which national interest agenda themes can be determined. The study has exposed that

the cartoon genre establishes a tough medium of communication through which the media set national agenda by focusing in main issues which cannot publish easily in textual form. Therefore Pakistani leading newspapers served as agent to establish national interest agenda setting tool. This paper definitely contributes to the cartoon research by contribution theoretical understanding through the use of agenda setting theory to offer a better attentive of how newspapers cartoons are used to highlight the national issues in media. Usually, newspapers cartoons contribute to the understanding of media depiction of different issues, people and events. This study also helps to study about the cartoonist behavior and more about the national interest issues. These types of study can also be used for social and political reforms especially for the national policies to handle the public based issues. Finally, the cartoons are talkative regardless of language and other communication barriers thus future studies should also focus on the feasibility of newspapers cartoons towards understanding a particular focus issue nationally, and how they can be yoked to build and shape public attitude.

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